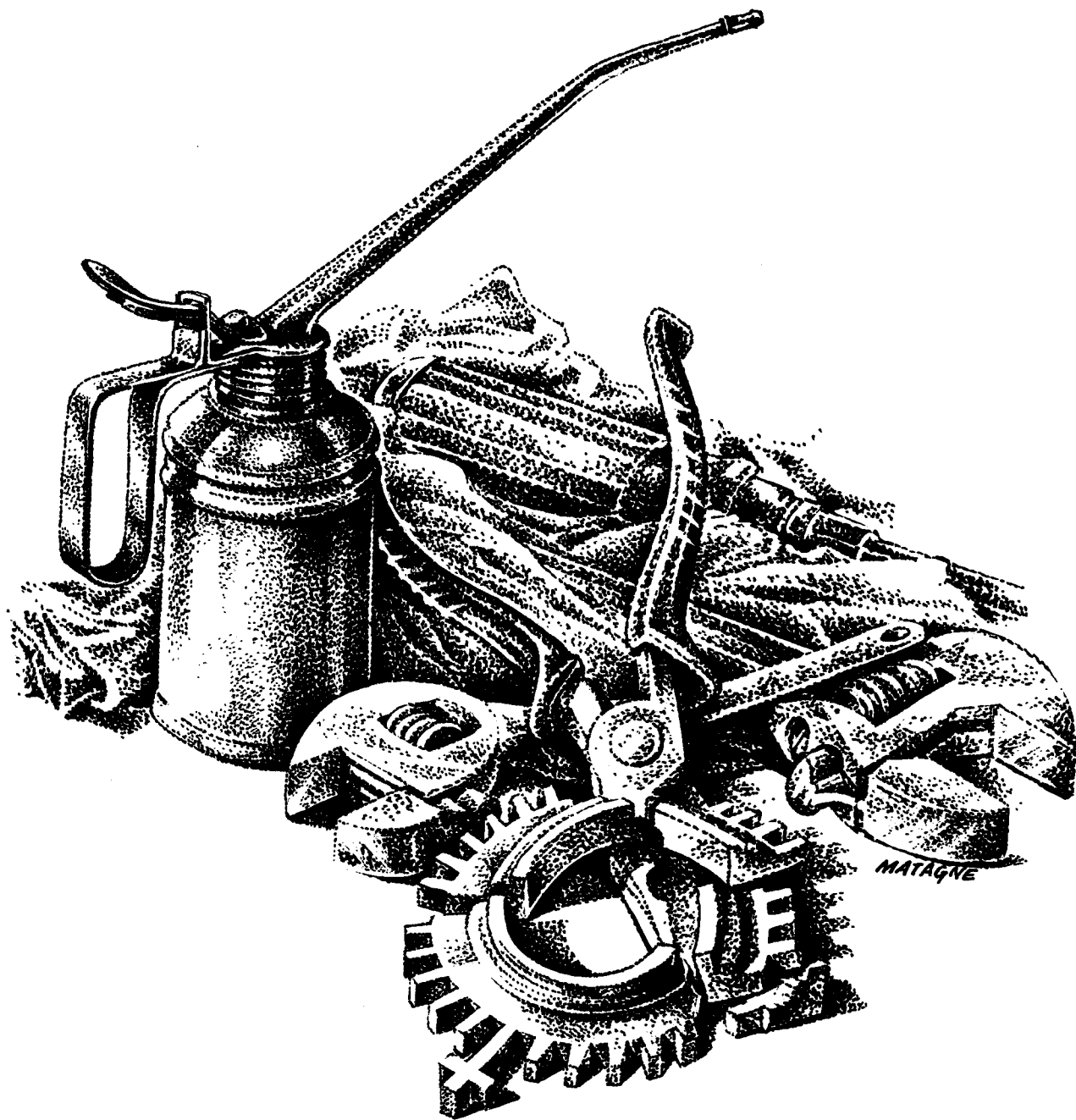


Women of Europe

LIBRARY

Women of Europe N° 30 - March/April 1983



X/166/83-EN

This bulletin is published by the

COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

Directorate-General Information

Information for Womens' organisations and press

Rue de la Loi 200

B-1049 - Brussels - Tel. 235 11 11

IN THIS ISSUE :

The changing European Community	p. 3
Equal treatment in occupational social security schemes	p. 6
The Committee on Equal Opportunities	p. 7
Rendezvous in Nairobi	p. 8
New technologies and female employment	p. 9
Equality : the Commission monitors the laws	p. 11
European Court of Justice	p. 12
European Parliament	p. 13
March session	p. 13
April session	p. 16
Parliament's Committee of Inquiry	p. 16
Education and vocational training (public hearing of the Committee of Inquiry)	p. 23
Extraordinary session on unemployment	p. 24
Facts, Institutions and Laws	p. 27
8 March : Against unemployment, for peace	p. 44
Militant activities	p. 46
Research, meetings and books	p. 62

OUR CORRESPONDENTS IN THE COMMUNITY

Belgium	: Nanette Nennan, 33 rue E. Bouillot, Boîte 9, 1060 Brussels
Denmark	: Danske Kvinder Nationalraad, N.Hemmingsensgade 8, 1153 Copenhagen
France	: Jeanne Chaton, 43 Avenue Ernest Reyer, 75014 Paris
Germany	: Christa Randzio-Plath, Hadermanns Weg 23, 2 Hamburg 61
Greece	: Effi Kálliga-Kánonidou, 10 Neofytou Str., Athens TT 138
Ireland	: Janet Martin, 2 Claremont Close, Glasvenin, Dublin 11
Italy	: Beatrice Rangoni Machiavelli, Piazza di Spagna 51, 00187 Rome
Luxembourg	: Alix Wagner, 7 rue Henri Frommes, 1545 Luxembourg
Netherlands	: Marjolijn Fivelingo 207, Zoetermeer
United Kingdom	: Peggy Crane, 12 Grove Park Road, Chiswick, W 4
European Parliament	: Lidya Gazzo, 12 Avenue de Tourville, 75007 Paris
Production	: J.A. Pirlot
Editor	: Fausta DESHORMES Information for women's associations and press 200 rue de la Loi <u>1049 Brussels</u>

Editorial work on this issue of "Women of Europe" was completed on 5 May 1983

THE CHANGING EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

The editors wavered a great deal before publishing the drawing on the cover. Is it not too pessimistic? Is it not likely to discourage ? Is the situation as grim as all that ?

Then information from all the countries in the Community accumulated on our desks. And we found that women everywhere are expressing the same idea, taking action with the same aim in mind : this society of ours needs to be improved. In offices, factories, universities, among couples, a force which has been restrained for a long time now wants to invent, imagine, create, change ...

Women are indifferent to politics ? Nonsense !

On the contrary, with a keen political sense, they are creating new centres of power, they are forming new solidarity networks, they are making innovations in the most unexpected fields. As often as possible they are actually changing this society of ours. And they have no fear of the difficulties.

So in the end we decided to publish the drawing. For this is the real state of affairs : there are over five million unemployed women in the European Community.

Women of Europe

Youth Forum

Some 200 representatives of youth organizations took part in the General Assembly of the European Communities' Youth Forum in Luxembourg. The Assembly's concerns centred on unemployment among young people and the situation of young women. It will be remembered that the Youth Forum is the European Community institutions' interlocutor in matters concerning young people: the proceedings were thus followed closely by European Commission officials and by several members of the European Parliament, including Mr Piet Dankert, President, Mrs Heinke Salisch, on behalf of the Committee on Social Affairs, and Mr Elmar Brock on behalf of the Committee responsible for youth policy.

It was decided to continue with the "employment campaign", whose impact on the European institutions was acknowledged. Furthermore, the Youth Forum is to continue with its action in the fields of vocational training, the European Social Fund and exchanges of young workers.

With more particular reference to young women, the General Assembly adopted several recommendations and demands which the Forum will have to champion, more especially in the field of academic education, vocational training and in connection with the European Social Fund, which, in the Assembly's view, should consolidate its action specifically in favour of women. Stress was also laid on equal protection for workers, whether full-time or part-time employees.

A Forum working group was given a special brief to keep these questions under review at the European Parliament and European Commission on a regular basis.

Useful address : European Communities' Youth Forum
66 Avenue de Cortenbergh - Boîte 10
1040 - Brussels

Perinatal research

Since as long ago as 1978 the coordination of perinatal research has formed part of the Community's medical research programme. Study of all the phenomena surrounding birth is an excellent field in which Community cooperation can be put into practice. During the summer of 1982 the Council of Ministers again decided to continue with this course of action.

Two projects are under way at present. One is the systematic checking of congenital abnormalities. In 1980 200 000 births were indexed in this way using a standardized procedure facilitating comparisons and deductions.

The other current project concerns "criteria for perinatal checks". About thirty clinics in the Community are cooperating closely in order to establish criteria which might come into general use.

Useful address : Commission of the European Communities
Directorate-General for Science, Research and Development
200 rue de la Loi
1049 Brussels

1984 elections

The European Parliament elections by universal suffrage are to be held from 17 to 20 May 1984 : the Council of Ministers has reached an agreement in principle on these dates. It proved impossible to fix a single date, in view of the habits peculiar to each country, some always voting on a Sunday, others on a weekday.

However, the Council of Ministers was obliged to take note of the fact that there was no possibility of setting up a uniform electoral system for the European elections. In addition to other major difficulties, the United Kingdom's opposition to a system based on proportional representation was felt to be unshakeable. The possibility of a uniform procedure is therefore to be considered with the 1989 elections in mind.

Speaking on behalf of the European Commission, Vice-President Natali expressed "deep regret" at the Council of Minister's setback. It would seem that the States sought above all not to "have to change anything in their current legislation". For the time being there only remains a slim hope of limited progress : ensuring that nationals of one Member State who are resident in another Member State of the Community are entitled to vote.

Translations

In reply to a parliamentary question, Mr Burke, Member of the European Commission, gave details of the number of pages translated into the various languages by the Commission's translation Departments during 1981 :

French	104 029
German	113 439
Italian	87 451
Dutch	79 965
English	116 844
Danish	71 658
Greek	51 121

624 507

Dear readers, please be understanding...

Perhaps these figures will provide some excuse for the delay in publishing "Women of Europe" in the various languages.

Education

The first Community action programme devoted to "the transition from education to working life" was well received by the Ministers for Education of the European Communities and since January 1983 a new stage has been under way.

One of the features of the action undertaken is the very widespread exchange of information among the various people involved which there has been throughout the programme. The officials in the various countries, but also the teachers, the pupils and numerous experts have intensified their co-operation by mutual awareness of the progress made, the difficulties experienced and the successes achieved.

The "Newsletter", which has circulated information on a quarterly basis, devotes its April 1983 issue to the special situation of girls.

Useful address : Newsletter - EEC Action Programme
Stadtwaldgürtel 33
D 5000 Köln 41

SOCIAL SECURITY : NEW PROPOSALS ON EQUAL TREATMENT

At the initiative of Commissioner Ivor Richard, the European Commission has put forward a draft Directive "on the implementation of the principle of equal treatment for men and women in occupational social security schemes"

For the record : the three Directives submitted by the European Commission and adopted by the Council of Ministers concern:

- equal pay ;
- equal treatment as regards access to employment, vocational training and promotion, and working conditions;
- equal treatment for men and women in matters of social security in statutory schemes.

The first two of these Directives are already in force, the third is to come into force at the end of 1984.

The new text submitted by the Commission therefore extends to occupational schemes the equal treatment measures already adopted in statutory schemes. "Occupational schemes" are midway between statutory social security schemes and purely private insurance contracts. Examples are schemes based on collective agreements, schemes set up by the representatives of a profession in which people are self-employed (craft workers, doctors, lawyers etc), or works schemes, i.e. set up by employers for the benefit of their workers.

The draft Directive therefore applies to all schemes which provide protection against sickness, invalidity, old age, unemployment, industrial accidents etc.

The draft states that the principle of equal treatment shall imply "that there be no discrimination whatsoever on the basis of sex, either directly or indirectly by reference in particular to marital or family status, especially as regards :

- the scope of the schemes and the conditions of access there-
to ;
- the obligation to contribute and the calculation of con-
tributions ;
- the calculation of benefits" ...

Mindful of the discrimination which already exists in the countries of the Community, the European Commission has given a few examples of what will no longer be acceptable :

- fixing different retirement ages based on sex ;
- setting different conditions for the grant of benefits or restricting such benefits to workers of one sex only;
- specifying, directly or indirectly, on the basis of sex, those persons who may participate in an occupational scheme ;
- etc.

The Member States are being exhorted to make vigorous efforts to combat all forms of discrimination, which must have disappeared by 1 January 1986.

The Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities

At the meeting of the Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities held in Brussels at the beginning of March, a warm and unanimous tribute was paid to Lady Lockwood, who was in the chair for the last time. Lady Lockwood's great competence, combined with her discernment and sense of organization, enabled the Committee to carry out its work in a harmonious and effective manner right from the earliest meetings.

Mrs Marcelle Devaud (France) was elected to the chair. She will be assisted by Mrs Sylvia Meehan (Ireland) and Mrs Helle Degn (Denmark).

Beforehand, the Committee had discussed the way in which energies could be mobilized to support the Community Programme on Equal Opportunities for Men and Women. According to a working paper prepared by Lady Lockwood, women had to ensure that no one stole a march on them and on the contrary should take action at all levels before a decision was reached by the Council of Ministers. Women's organizations, both sides of industry, opinion makers and parliamentarians should all be alerted by the national committees responsible for equal opportunities in each country.

In the course of the discussion it became apparent that a large number of the members of the Committee shared the views held by the Chair and that measures had already been taken in various countries. It was agreed that all would pass on the idea to their respective national committees and that there would be increased contact with parliamentarians.

It was also with the bringing together of forces in mind that the Youth Forum contacted Lady Lockwood, requesting that it might be admitted as an observer to meetings of the Advisory Committee. There is nothing in the statutes to allow observers to be authorized but it was agreed that close contacts would be arranged. Any comments by the Youth Forum, with particular reference to unemployment among young women, would then be communicated to the members of the Advisory Committee.

With regard to the informing of women, the Advisory Committee heard a statement by Mrs Fausta Deshormes, who is in charge of this field at the European Commission. The members of the Committee agreed to provide the European Commission with information about recent national campaigns and about those in progress or to come, something which would be conducive to an exchange of experiences that could only be beneficial.

The Committee examined several case files on hand, including the one relating to parental leave (Point A7 of the Action Programme). The Committee stressed the principle of "individual leave" for fathers and mothers which was not transferrable from one to the other. With reference to positive action, (Point B9 of the Action Programme), the Committee heard a statement by Eliane Vogel-Polski. The Committee expressed the hope that the European Commission itself would be a model as regards positive action in favour of women. A working party would prepare the general outline of what might become a Community legal instrument in this field. The Commission might organize a seminar in Greece at the end of 1983 in order to make the parties concerned aware of the issues involved and to pave the way for normative action by the European Commission.

The subject of taxation and the employment of women having been broached, the Committee expressed the opinion that only individual taxation of the spouses prevented working women from being penalized. It was requested that the European Commission should send a memorandum to the Council of Ministers in order to promote individual taxation. A report along these lines would be sent to the Commission.

With reference to vocational choices (Point B11 of the Action Programme), Mrs Odile Quintin, Head of the Bureau for questions concerning employment and equal treatment for women, summarized the measures taken by the European Commission. It was the Commission's intention to set up a network of equal opportunities advisers, consisting of officials from the national Ministries for Education, Labour or Vocational Training.

This network would have a dual task : providing information and fostering awareness on the one hand, but also providing stimulation and encouragement on the other. The fields of action to be given priority would be the new technologies and "desegregation" in employment. Mrs Evelyne Sullerot, who had been approached, had agreed to suggest the basic principles and the criteria for the action of such a network. The members were requested to begin giving thought to the people who would be best suited to form part of the network.

Useful address : Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities
Secretariat : Bureau for questions concerning employment
and equal opportunities for women
Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and
Education
200 rue de la Loi
1049 Brussels

Rendezvous in Nairobi

The United Nations Decade for Women will come to an end in 1985. A world conference is under preparation to scrutinize the progress made and to set new objectives. There is already talk of "rendezvous in Nairobi", even though the venue has not yet been finally fixed.

In preparation for this conference, a first meeting was held in Vienna, with O.O. Obafemi, the Nigerian representative, in the chair. It is actually the UN Commission on the Status of Women which is making preparations for the conference.

Which topics should be put on the agenda, what background literature should be made available to those attending, which rules of procedure should apply, which information exercises should be carried out ? There is a vast amount of work to be done.

The main themes of the Copenhagen Conference (equality, development and peace) and the subsidiary themes (employment, health, education) have been confirmed in principle for the forthcoming conference. The background literature on these themes will come, as was the case in Copenhagen, from the States, United Nations specialist institutions and inter-government and non-government organizations, and also from a report by the UN General Secretariat.

The Community was present in Vienna as an observer ; its representatives were Mrs Wolf and Mrs Quintin, on behalf of the Council of Ministers and the Commission of the European Communities respectively.

NEW TECHNOLOGIES AND FEMALE EMPLOYMENT

How will the new technologies affect female employment ? This is a question which had to be asked by the FAST (1) programme, launched by the European Commission in order to set the Research and Development objectives and priorities at European level, since as certain research projects on employment and the new technologies gradually reached maturity, it became apparent that women were highly likely to be badly affected.

There is no shortage of theoretical analyses of the new technologies and employment but few studies have tackled the specific problem of female employment. This was why a decision was taken to ascertain the exact state of affairs as regards literature and research in this field. A team of about ten specialists, led by Christine Zmroczek-Shannon and Felicity Henwood of the University of Sussex, have examined the matter thoroughly. Their report is alarming.

The study has brought huge gaps to light. The problems as a whole have not been explored and studied properly. It is only in the last two years that there has been any sign of an increase in research work.

In particular, there is a serious lack of work on the impact of the new technologies on women working in manufacturing industry, in health services, in education and in the social field. It is as if only clerical workers and office work were worth considering.

There is very little good research work on the relationship between women, vocational training and the new technologies. The same comment applies to research into "remote working" or a "return to the home", which directly concern women. Examination of this issue is dominated by speculation and speeches. Yet there is no evidence that the new information technologies necessarily result in an increase in work at home. Besides technology there are many other factors which are just as powerful : economics, institutions, socio-cultural habits. Nor is there any more evidence that "work at home" is a factor in equality of opportunity and the improvement of women's status.

If women engage in "remote working from home" but also keep all their family responsibilities, they will be doubly exploited. Unfortunately the interaction between paid work and family life, between socio-cultural or political activities, women's role in society have virtually not been studied up to now.

Overall the new information technologies will have a much worse effect on women than on men. The causes of this state of affairs are the traditional mechanisms of segregation on the labour market, social factors, the lack of vocational training for women etc.

There is no evidence that as a result of the new technologies women will manage to get out of occupations which require low qualifications, are badly paid and are low-ranking.

In order to work out consistent policies as quickly as possible, there is an urgent need to carry out a systematic study of certain fields, including : the new technologies and female employment in the social services, health services and education ; the new technologies and their indirect effects on female employment ; the new technologies, the organization of the work and vocational training of women.

(1) 200 rue de la Loi, 1049 Brussels

THE DIRECTIVES ON EQUAL TREATMENT

THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION MONITORS NATIONAL LAWS CLOSELY

Equal treatment as regards access to employment and to vocational training and promotion, and working conditions were introduced by a Community Directive adopted by the Council of Ministers of the Community on 9 February 1976. The European Commission is monitoring closely the way in which the governments are incorporating these principles into their national laws. Here is the situation as it stands in each country at the end of April 1983.

Formal notice, followed by a reasoned opinion, was sent to Germany, since the law enacted in accordance with the Directive does not concern either the civil service or the self-employed. Nor is there a mandatory requirement that job vacancies must be worded in a non-discriminatory fashion. Furthermore, the law does not specify which professional occupations are excluded from the principle of equal treatment. Lastly, the European Commission has found that six months' paid leave after maternity leave, known as "leave to bring up a child", is granted to mothers only.

Belgium was also summoned before the Court of Justice of the European Communities by the Commission, as it had not adopted the implementing measures required for equal treatment as regards access to educational guidance and vocational training.

The case was heard on 22 March 1983 and the judgment of the Court is now awaited.

Two other procedures against Belgium are currently under way. One case concerns educational vocational training, as the Ecole Supérieure de Navigation (Advanced Navigation College) in Antwerp is refusing to admit women to the "machines" section, pursuant to protective legislation. The other case concerns the concept of "head of household" and poses an extremely delicate legal problem : is a State entitled to "backpedal" so to speak between the adoption of a Directive and its implementation ? The case in question concerns Directive 79/7/EEC, which is not yet in force.

Formal notice, followed by a reasoned opinion, was also sent to Denmark. When analysing the Danish law the European Commission felt that equal treatment was restricted to women workers in the same place of work.

In France, a new law has been adopted by the Assemblée Nationale and still has to be passed by the Sénat. In the meantime the European Commission is examining the possibility of formal notice, as the legal texts governing the civil service provide for fifteen bodies of officials in which there would be separate recruitment for men and women.

Greece, after having amended its family law in order to introduce equality between men and women, is preparing a bill on equal treatment. The European Commission is keeping this case file under close review.

Formal notice was sent to Ireland, since the law in force provides for exceptions with regard to occupations in the police, in prisons, in private residences and among close relations.

Italy was summoned before the Court of Justice of the European Communities by the Commission, since equal treatment is not laid down in all working conditions. For instance, in adoption cases, only women qualify for leave. The case was heard on 22 March 1983.

With regard to Luxembourg, the European Commission is currently checking whether the law of 8 December 1981 complies with the Community Directive.

Formal notice was sent to the Netherlands, since the laws on equal treatment (one for private employers, the other for public services) authorize both public and private employers to derogate from the principle of equal treatment pursuant to a general clause, which is inconsistent with Articles 2.2 and 9.2 of the Community Directive.

The United Kingdom was summoned before the Court of Justice of the European Communities by the Commission, since the law implementing the Directive does not provide for the nullity of collective agreements which are at variance with the principle of equal treatment, even though provision for this problem is made in Articles 3, 4 and 5 of the Community Directive. Furthermore, the exceptions mentioned in the United Kingdom's text do not comply with Article 2.2 of the Community text. The case was heard on 22 March 1983.

Another procedure against the United Kingdom is also in progress at present, since the legislation provides for exceptions to the principle of equal treatment which are not covered by the provisions of Directive 76/207/EEC.

The decisions of the Court of Justice of the European Communities are awaited with all the more interest as it was the first time that the European Commission had brought matters before the Court in the field covered by the Directive on equal treatment (76/207/EEC).

University studies on European integration

The European Commission has just published the 1982 Directory of "University studies on European integration N° 12", the data in which has been computerized. This important 466-page bibliography lists 1 800 doctoral theses and post-doctoral research projects completed since 1981 or under way at present. The information in this bibliography was collected together on the basis of a survey carried out among 4 000 members of the teaching staff in over 300 universities in 25 countries - including India and China.

The Directory is an analytical working instrument which enables research workers to have speedy and full access to the studies in their field of inquiry.

A breakdown by topic shows that 41% of the studies listed are in the legal field, 31% are in economics and 16% in political science. The other subjects (geography, sociology, history, education) account for approximately 7% of the studies. The most frequently tackled topics are the Community's external relations (14%), competition (9%), agricultural matters (8%) and monetary and financial matters (8%).

All this information is stored in the EUREKA data bank run by the Centre for European Studies at the Catholic University of Louvain.

EUROPEAN COURT OF JUSTICE

An important case was referred to the Court of Justice of the European Communities by the Labour Court in Hamm (North Rhineland - Westphalia), in connection with the interpretation of the Directive on equal treatment as regards access to employment. However, it is not merely a question of saying whether an employer was right or wrong but also of determining the courts' responsibilities when dealing with such a situation.

Sabine von Colson and Elisabeth Kamman are two social workers whose studies ended with six-months' practical training at the prison in Werl. In the spring of 1982 they were awarded their diplomas. As luck would have it two posts became vacant at the prison where they had done their training. They accordingly submitted their applications, together with another woman and two men.

Asked to give its opinion of the applications by the judicial authorities of the Land, the Social Workers' Committee at the Werl prison drew up a list of its preferences : Sabine von Colson and Elisabeth Kamman came first, followed (in order) by the other woman applicant and the two men.

It is true that the prison's Social Workers' Committee is not an official body and that the authorities are not bound to take its advice. Nevertheless, there was some surprise when the authorities informed the two young women that they would not be appointed to the posts : up till then the authorities had always taken the Committee's advice.

The governor of the prison for his part explicitly stated that he would prefer to take on a man with no experience rather than a woman. The Land's prison authorities expressed somewhat more tempered views : how much easier it would have been to take a decision if women only had applied !

The Hamm Labour Court is quite convinced that it is a question of sex-based discrimination. The questions put by the Labour Court to the Court of Justice go further; in substance :

- does it follow from the Community Directive on equal treatment as regards access to employment that an employer who has discriminated must be forced to take on the applicant who has been the victim of this discrimination ?
- If so, must the employer only take on the applicant against whom he has discriminated if he or she is objectively better than the person chosen ;
 - or must the employer take on the applicant against whom he has discriminated if he or she is equally as competent as the person chosen ;
 - or must the employer take on the applicant against whom he has discriminated precisely because he or she has been the victim of discrimination, even if this person is objectively less able than the person chosen.
- If the question of the competence of the applicant who has been the victim of discrimination is of fundamental importance, is it up to the court consulted to recognize this competence and what should be the criteria ?
- What should be done if two applicants have been the victims of discrimination and there is only one post to fill ?
- And if an employer is not bound to take on the applicant against whom he has discriminated, what penalty can be used under the Community Directive ?

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

March 1983 session

At its March 1983 session, the European Parliament voted on the price levels for the coming agricultural year. It did so by broadly following the recommendations of its rapporteur, Mr Mouchel (France, DEP), which went beyond the proposals from the European Commission and called for an increase which under no circumstances should be less than 7%.

Some MEPs, including the French Communists, would have liked an even higher increase (8.5%), but in the end they agreed to the 7% requested, as did all the French MEPs, almost all the Christian Democrats (apart from certain German and Dutch members who voted against or abstained) and all the Greek and Irish members. In favour of a more rigorous prices policy and better control of agricultural expenditure - and who thus voted against the increase - were all the UK members with one exception, the German, Dutch and Italian Socialists (the Belgians voted against or abstained), the Italian Communists and certain non-attached MEPs.

The resolution adopted by the Parliament related not only to prices but also to "ancillary measures" : co-responsibility (the Parliament rejected the increase for milk producers and its extension to other sectors); - monetary compensatory amounts (the Parliament called for the immediate dismantling of negative compensatory amounts and the progressive dismantling of positive compensatory amounts). The European Parliament also rejected a recommendation by the rapporteur calling for the introduction of a tax on vegetable fats : this measure concerned exports of soya from the United States to the Community.

During the debate, Barabara Castle (UK, Lab.) and Simone Martin (France, Lib.) upheld their diametrically opposed viewpoints : Barbara Castle called purely and simply for a price freeze in the interests of consumers, while Simone Martin supported the farmers, speaking of "settling of scores" between opponents and supporters of the common agricultural system.

Speaking on behalf of the European Commission, Mr Tugendhat, the Budget Commissioner, criticized - and this was not the first time he had done so - the inconsistency of a Parliament which demanded increased budgetary rigour and yet increased agricultural prices over and above the Commission's proposals. Mr Dalsager, the European Commissioner in charge of agricultural policy, explained the policy followed and refuted the accusation that "Reagan proposals" had been put forward.

In the procedure currently under way, the ball is now in the court of the Council of Agriculture Ministers. In his capacity as President-in-Office of the Council, the German Minister for Agriculture commented : "It is now up to us to find a reasonable compromise".

Before tackling agricultural policy the European Parliament voted on the budgetary guidelines for 1984. It was the first time that these guidelines had been presented so early in the year. In her capacity as rapporteur, Christiane Scrivener (France, Lib.) mentioned two priorities for 1984 : combatting unemployment in the Community and hunger in the World.

As for the means to be deployed in this dual fight, Mrs Scrivener stated that it would be necessary firstly to promote productive investment, which should enable professional qualifications to be improved and an adjustment to the new technologies to be made ; and secondly to supply emergency food aid and to promote self-sufficiency in foodstuffs in countries suffering starvation.

MEPs fully supported this statement, as did Mr Tugendhat, who stressed, however, the need to reform the common agricultural policy. In her speech, Carla Barbarella (It., Comm.) emphasized the need to introduce a genuine industrial strategy. Mrs Nikolau (Gr., Soc.) regretted the absence of measures enabling regional differences to be lessened. It should be pointed out here and now that for the time being it is only a question of budgetary "guidelines" : the various parliamentary committees responsible for specific policies will thus have plenty of time to consider the amendments which they intend to table at the appropriate time.

Financial interests

At the recommendation of Hans Nord (Neth., Lib.), the Parliament made an interesting change to its rules of procedure; before taking the floor to speak on a given subject, an MEP will have to state whether he or she has a financial interest in the field.

This practice has formed part of the parliamentary tradition of the United Kingdom for many years now.

During the debate on the budgetary guidelines, George B. Patterson (UK, Cons.) said that he felt that the 1984 budget should reflect the wishes of the voters : were not the next European elections just one year away? On this point, the Parliament heard a report by Jean Seitlinger (France, DEP), who had just toured the European capitals to examine the possibility of adopting a uniform electoral law for these forthcoming elections. Unfortunately, the Council of Ministers had been unable to come to an agreement, something about which the Parliament expressed deep regret in a resolution making a last appeal to the Council of Ministers : if agreement were not reached, millions of voters would be deprived of the opportunity of voting in their own country or in their country of residence. The text passed by the Parliament was also in favour of a proportional representation system in all the Community countries.

As usual, the Parliament also considered foreign policy matters, in particular relations between the Community and Turkey. This issue was also tackled from an economic angle, since Turkey has connections with the Community via a financial protocol. MEPs questioned the Council about this aspect and also about the attitude to be adopted in the event of an application for membership, in view of the human rights record in that country.

Mr Genscher, the German Minister for Foreign Affairs and President-in-Office of the Council of Ministers of the Community, confirmed that the financial protocol was "frozen", until new factors enabled the country's return to democracy to be assessed.

Mr Genscher said that any application for membership would be assessed on the basis of compliance with certain democratic conditions. Speaking on behalf of the European Commission, Mr Haferkamp pointed out that when the Commission had met the Turkish Minister for Economic Affairs in September 1982, it had mentioned the Community's concern that there should be a return to democracy in Turkey.

The report by Vincenzo Bettiza (It., Lib.) on relations between the Community and Yugoslavia was also both political and economic ; it recommended close economic cooperation with the country, some of the reasons being obvious political ones, given Yugoslavia's special position among the non-aligned countries.

Mr Genscher expressed his agreement : the Community had some degree of responsibility towards a country which had refused to align itself with one of the two blocs. Speaking on behalf of the European Commission, Mr Haferkamp confirmed that although the agreement signed with Yugoslavia in April 1980 had not yet been ratified, some of the provisions, notably the financial protocol, were already being applied. Intervening in this debate, Paola Gaiotti de Biase (It., CD) also called for the agreement not to be applied with an accountant's outlook.

The Bureau of the European Parliament, which brings together representatives of the political groups, dealt with an important and highly controversial issue at its March meeting : the advisability of drawing up a report on the situation in Northern Ireland.

Despite protests from British MPs and from Mrs Thatcher herself in the House of Commons, the Bureau decided that the Political Affairs Committee would compile its report. The document will, however, take account of the recommendations contained in a 1981 resolution, which states that the European Commission is not competent to put forward proposals for changes to the Northern Ireland Constitution. The rapporteur will in all probability be the Deputy Chairman of the Political Affairs Committee, the Danish Liberal Niels Jørgen Haagerup.

By way of a retort, the Reverend Ian Paisley (non-attached) tabled a resolution on the rights of Walloons in Belgium.

Portugal

A European Parliament delegation led by Ann Clywd (UK, Lab.) went to Portugal to attend a meeting of the Joint Committee, on which the European Parliament and the Portuguese Parliament sit.

During this meeting, the Committee again expressed its misgivings about the fact that negotiations on Portugal's accession to the Community had been lagging behind. The Committee urged the competent authorities to "resolve the matters still outstanding as soon as possible".

At the end of the meeting, at which it was also possible to hold an exchange of views with both sides of Portuguese industry, Ann Clywd stated that MEPs wished the negotiations to be expedited.

April 1983 session

The April session of the European Parliament was largely given over to issues concerning environmental protection and public health. Matters in the news obviously accounted for this, since the session was held shortly after the publication of alarming information about the disappearance of 41 barrels of dioxin waste from Seveso.

Questions and criticisms were directed at the European Commission and the Council of Ministers from all political horizons. The European Commission was blamed for not having exerted as much pressure as it ought on the governments; while the Council of Ministers was censured for not having adopted texts enabling dangerous and toxic substances to be checked non-stop when being transported. ("The health of swine is monitored more than that of human beings", commented Mr Irmer, a German Liberal); the States were blamed for shirking their responsibilities by passing the buck from one to another; the firms were blamed for systematically abusing "industrial secrecy" ("It is high time the sanctuary of industrial and commercial power was violated a little", commented Mrs Squarcialupi, an Italian Communist). In the view of all the MEPs who spoke, it was absolutely essential to discover as quickly as possible where the barrels of dioxin waste were located at present and to take steps to ensure that there was no recurrence of this sort of accident in the future.

Replying to the MEPs on behalf of the European Commission, Mr Narjes explained that the Commission had no direct control over the storage of dangerous products and that responsibility lay with the governments. Speaking on behalf of the Council of Ministers, the German Secretary of State Mr Hartkopf firstly mentioned the "crisis of confidence" among the general public and announced that the proposal on the subject drawn up by the Commission (which dated from 17 January) would be discussed by the Council of Environment Ministers on 16 June. In a second statement the same speaker talked of a "crime" and said that he considered that harsh penalties should be imposed.

The Parliament adopted a resolution whereby it requested that a meeting of Health Ministers should at last be held to consider the possibility of introducing a genuine Community policy in this field. The last meeting of this kind had been held as long ago as 1978 and agreement had been reached on several important guidelines which should now be extended. The Parliament, which requested that the Commission departments should be suitably expanded to this end, also called, following an amendment tabled by the British Socialist Ann Clywd, for special action on behalf of the disabled. Speaking for the European Commission, Mr Dalsager explained that there had already been several ventures and that others were under way, with particular reference to the integration of the disabled into the working world.

Still in the health field, the Parliament approved, on the basis of the advice of its rapporteur, Mrs Squarcialupi, the European Commission's proposals on the introduction of joint guidelines for the manufacture and placing on the market of medicinal products for animals. This concerned the use of hormones in particular. The Parliament wished the regulations to be reinforced and the European Parliament proved fairly amenable to this suggestion.

Medicinal products also gave rise to a debate introduced by a report from Mr Deleau (France,DEP). The Parliament wished a genuine common market

in these products to be established, in order to avoid distortion of competition. The Parliament called for an overall strategy, ranging from production to distribution to consumption. This strategy should ensure both consumer protection and the development of research.

In the environmental field, the Parliament adopted the recommendations contained in the report by the British Conservative Stanley Johnson, which supported the European Commission's proposals relating to a sort of European environment fund. At the outset such a fund would have limited appropriations to support "clean" technologies and the protection of the natural environment. In the course of the discussion, Mechthild von Alemann (Germ., Lib.) referred in particular to the disappearance of forests, a problem which went beyond borders. Mrs Pantazi (Gr., Soc.) called for more funding. Yvonne Theobald-Paoli (France, Soc.) and Ursula Schleicher (Germ., EPP) also urged that the Commission should swiftly put forward proposals on forests.

A topic of importance from the economic angle was also raised at the April session : that of cooperatives. The Parliament would like cooperatives to be given more aid and to be consulted to a greater extent, as an irreplaceable instrument in the economic life of the Community. Several MEPs emphasized the importance of cooperatives in the agricultural world. However, there were also a large number who stressed the need to preserve the voluntary nature of the cooperative system. The majority of MEPs rejected proposed amendments expressing the desire for the establishment of "European status" and the setting up of a "liaison office" with the European Commission.

Going beyond the Community's borders the Parliament examined a "tricky" case file : that of Community aid for Ethiopia. There had been controversy in the press following rumours that Community aid was being misappropriated and benefiting soldiers. Speaking in reply to the MEPs in often impassioned strains and giving many details, Mr Edgar Pisani, on behalf of the European Commission, said that there had been deliberate attempts to call the Community's aid policy into question and denied that any aid had been misappropriated. "Too large a part of the general public already thinks that any money given to poor countries is money wasted : it is not true and checks are made which can prove it". Further to these statements, the Parliament called for an emergency aid programme for Ethiopia. This aid would go via non-government organizations to developing countries.

The Parliament did not raise - but the question is to be put shortly - the issue of the situation in Nicaragua. It did, however, pass a resolution concerning El Salvador, in which it condemned the assassination of Mariánella Garcia Villas, President of the Human Rights Committee in that country.

There was a lengthy discussion on breastmilk substitutes and the Parliament adopted the resolution drawn up by Luciana Castellina (It., CDI). In short, the Parliament called on the European Commission to draw up a proposal for a Directive forthwith to ensure that the WHO international code on the marketing of breastmilk substitutes was implemented. In addition, the Parliament requested the Commission to submit an annual report to it on the observance of the code by Community undertakings, including those which carried on their activities in the rest of the world.

When presenting her report, Luciana Castellina answered those who considered that a Directive was now unnecessary since the undertakings concerned had in the meantime themselves adopted a voluntary code of practice. The MEP stated that it was a well known fact that the implementation of these voluntary codes was often unsatisfactory. She also pointed out that the discussions on this subject which were taking place at the European Commission concerned a Directive which was not the one which the Parliament wished to see, since it would not cover what the World Health Organization considered to be of prime importance, namely advertising for and information about these products.

The Belgian MEP Raymonde Dury, speaking on behalf of the Socialist Group, denounced the "misappropriation of foodstuffs" constituted in developing countries by the distribution of products which, as was the case with breastmilk substitutes, required conditions which did not exist on the spot (potable water, aseptitized feeding bottles and teats etc). Raymonde Dury estimated that a million infants died in the third world every year as a result of the abandonment of breastfeeding. In addition, the purchasing of substitutes increased the economic and cultural dependence of these countries on foreign countries.

The British representative Christopher Jackson, speaking on behalf of the Conservatives, also expressed the hope that such a Directive would be speedily adopted, in view of the often inconsistent way in which voluntary codes were observed. Renate Charlotte Rabbethge (Germany), speaking on behalf of the EPP, emphasized the task of "training" which was incumbent on the Community in this field, and also the "personal responsibility" and "freedom" of the firms concerned. Henriette Poirier (France), who was speaking on behalf of the Communist Group, wished to highlight the question of the "right to life" of children in the third world. Henriette Poirier also denounced the role of the multinational companies in this field, pointing out that some of them made up to 25% of their profits in developing countries.

Victor Sablé (France), speaking on behalf of the Liberal Group, quoted some appalling figures : infant mortality was ten times higher in the third world than in developed countries and up to thirty times higher for children aged between one and four. He also added that the price of breastmilk substitutes was the equivalent of 23% of the minimum wage in Peru, 35% in India and 63% in Egypt, whereas the figure was only 3% in the United Kingdom.

In reply to questions from, inter alia, Annie Krouwel-Vlam (Neth., Soc.) and Willem Vergeer (Neth., EPP), Commissioner Narjes expounded the European Commission's viewpoint : the Member States of the Community and the Commission shared the objective of the World Health Organization Code, namely supplying children in the third world with safe and adequate food. Although the aim was the same, the problem arising was that of the means to be deployed. Would a Directive be enough to enable the objectives pursued by the WHO to be attained ? In Mr Narjes' view, a voluntary agreement on marketing practices among producers would have more impact than regulations. The Member States of the Community and various competent bodies were examining the matter : their opinions would have to be awaited until May at the latest before opting for one or other solution.

Mr Narjes also put the problem of the application of such a Directive outside the Community's frontiers. It was advisable to leave it up to the countries concerned to decide what course of action should be taken. In conclusion, as Mr Narjes said, the Commission was prepared to envisage a Directive if a voluntary agreement did not lead to the desired improvements.

Parliament's Committee of Inquiry on the situation of women

The European Parliament's Committee of Inquiry on the situation of women continued its work with Mrs Cinciari Rodano (It.,Comm.) in the chair.

At the meeting held in Brussels in February, the Committee of Inquiry summarized the situation with regard to the action to be taken on various resolutions drawn up by different MEPs. A brief glimpse at the list of these motions for resolutions confirms the unflagging attention paid by MEPs to manifold aspects of women's position : increase in forms of indirect discrimination, alimony claims in the event of divorce, wrongful dismissals in periods of recession, social situation of heads of families, pensions of teachers' widows etc.

"Women of Europe" is unable to give a detailed account of all the discussions which take place at the Committee of Inquiry. We can only present the most salient points and the parts which need to be highlighted. It should, however, be emphasized that it emerges all the time that there is a strong desire to contribute, by work in common, to an improvement in women's lot. Although the members of the Committee of Inquiry do not renounce their personal convictions, political differences are blurred by the value and interest of the statements made.

Among the working papers submitted to members of the Committee of Inquiry, the one on "Women in the third world and European aid" drawn up by Anne-Marie Lizin (Belg., Soc.) was the subject of an initial exchange of views.

To carry out her survey, Mrs Lizin sent a questionnaire to the European Commission, the Council of Ministers, the European Investment Bank, the Ministries for Development Cooperation in the Member States, the Ministries for Foreign Trade, non-government organizations, international trade unions and to female ministers in countries which receive aid.

Although a large number (80%) of non-government organizations had responded and the Ministries for Development Cooperation had replied in accurate and even detailed fashion, this was not the case as regards the Ministries for Foreign Trade or the European Investment Bank. It was to be feared that these bodies never or only very rarely considered the social (and a fortiori female) impact of the investments in which they were involved.

There were numerous risks of blunders in aid. Here is an example taken from the report : a water supply scheme could have disastrous unforeseen consequences. The building of a community wash-house, for instance, was greeted with joy, since it lightened the burden of work on the women responsible for collecting water for household purposes. On the other hand, the replacement of the wash-house by supplies of running water to individual houses might seem to relieve the women but might also (in certain areas) result in the women becoming isolated. Work in common in a wash-house provided women with a communication and information network which was essential in a certain form of traditional culture.

Concluding her report, Mrs Lizin noted that action must be taken in parallel by the two partners involved : donors of aid and beneficiaries. What could the European Parliament for its part do ? Various guidelines emerged :

- public assertion of the desire to improve the situation of women in the third world;
- setting up of a special committee within the joint bodies bringing together the Community and the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries;
- introduction of a "female" dimension into the forthcoming negotiations in preparation for Lomé III;
- training of female executive staff and organization of information campaigns;
- preparation of a policy manual so that the evaluations before and after actions took account of the effects on the female population;
- setting up or consolidation of specialist departments which, in the ministries or at the European Commission, had to take account of the female aspect of development aid.

Should there be projects specifically aimed at women or not ? This was a controversial point, since some speakers feared that too specific action might result in the women who were beneficiaries becoming "marginalized". The response doubtless deserved to be moderated, taking scrupulous account of the traditions specific to each group concerned.

Having noted the positive trends which had been emerging over the last year, Mrs Cinciari Rodo expressed the hope that more constant aid would be offered to women's associations in the Third World in order to promote their development and their effectiveness.

As regards the proposal for a Directive on temporary work, the Committee of Inquiry discussed a report drawn up by Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul (Germ., Soc.). Temporary work offered only slight opportunities for real integration into the working world; however, the Committee of inquiry welcomed the Directive submitted to the Parliament, insofar as this text was conducive to the protection of permanent employment and to the social protection of temporary workers.

However, the annex to the Directive would include a list of the cases excluded from the scope of the Directive. This list would be negotiated at the Council of Ministers and would depend on the special cases submitted by the Member States of the Community. The Parliament's Committee of Inquiry was disturbed by this procedure and wished to give its opinion on exceptional cases before negotiations among the ministers started.

A report compiled by Simone Martin (France, Lib.) on "the problems of women in self-employed occupations, notably in agriculture, commerce and crafts" mentioned inequalities in the various fields : legal status, fiscal and financial situation, law of succession, social status, vocational training etc.

For what it was worth, Mrs Martin was enclosing with her work a draft Directive which the European Commission might use as a model concerning "equal treatment for men and women in self-employed occupations". Particular emphasis was placed on the recognition of professional status, the recognition of rights specific to social security, and equal opportunities as regards access to vocational training. Moreover, the work in progress at the European Commission was moving along the same lines, in that a Directive was being prepared on status in general, supplemented by proposals concerning allowances and replacement services.

The Parliament's Committee of Inquiry met again in mid-March with Mrs Cinciari Rodano in the chair and with officials representing the European Commission present.

At the invitation of the European Commission, a big delegation of Spanish women paid an information visit to Brussels. They thus had the opportunity to meet the European Parliament's Committee of Inquiry.

At the end of a long and amicable exchange of views, Mrs Cinciari Rodano reaffirmed the great importance attached by the European Parliament to Spain's forthcoming accession to the European Community. The Chair of the Committee of Inquiry emphasized that Spanish women could henceforth be assured of the solidarity already shared by women in Community countries.

Mr Eisma (Neth., Non-attached) presented the working paper on "Women and health" with a forthcoming meeting of the Health Ministers of the Community countries in mind. By way of an introduction, Mr Eisma listed a number of facts which provided food for thought about the situation of women in society and the problems about which they complained with regard to their physical and mental health.

Even disregarding check-ups during pregnancy or visits to do with contraception, women consulted family doctors twice as much as men. In this connection, Mr Eisma mentioned the concept of the "housewife syndrome": the woman was isolated, her immediate circle consisted of children, her work was never done and was not recognized. The result was irritability, tiredness, distress etc. Mr Eisma said "This is in fact an occupational disease which, owing to the structure of our society, affects women more frequently than men".

A future Community action programme in the health field should relate to various themes including : health education, the establishment of a European health map, an inventory of heavy-duty medical equipment, mutual assistance in the event of a catastrophe or a particularly serious epidemic, development of environmental medicine etc.

The health problems specific to women could be tackled in such a framework. An example was the organization of check-ups among the female population in order to prevent breast cancer and cancer of the cervix. In this connection, Mr Eisma envisaged that women's organizations would be involved in an information campaign recommending annual check-ups enabling malignant tumours to be detected.

It would be remembered that the resolution on "the situation of women in the Community", adopted by the European Parliament in February 1981 after an important debate, included several paragraphs concerning health. In accordance with the logic of this text, several concrete proposals were being formulated in order in sum to enable women's leeway to be made up.

It was decided to continue examining this topic at subsequent meetings.

"The introduction of new technologies and the effects on the employment of women", tackled by Antoinette Spaak (Belg., Non-attached), gave rise to numerous questions.

According to Mrs Spaak, it was all too rare for studies on the social impact of the new technologies to devote specific space to women. Whether it was a question of education or working at home, of the re-organization of work or the position of both sides of industry, the approach was "neutral" and scarcely took account of the problems peculiar to women.

A figure backed up this comment : there were only 20% of women among the people following the informatics course organized for teachers in France. It was thus becoming a matter of urgency to develop the positive action (i.e. aimed specifically at women) in this sector provided for in the Action Programme on the Promotion of Equal Opportunities.

Mrs Spaak too stressed the role of women's organizations in each of the ten Community countries, which, she said, was "essential for the mobilization of women, pressure on trade unions, parliaments and national governments".

In Mrs Spaak's view, boys and girls should receive training in the new technologies as early as the years spent in compulsory education. In this connection, the European Commission officials present when this statement was made were able to specify that proposals for action were to be submitted to the Council of Education Ministers in May. In addition, several studies had been set up : work at home, vocational training of women in the new technologies etc.

A distinguished witness was heard by the Parliament's Committee of Inquiry, namely Professor Minkowski, a specialist in maternity problems and the problems connected with birth, the author of several works on these topics and former Chairman of the "Prenatal" Committee.

Professor Minkowski was asked to give evidence following the report on "maternity, parental leave and the social services", drawn up by Sylvie Leroux (France, Comm.).

Professor Minkowski emphasized the need for ante-natal monitoring, a fundamental factor in an active prevention policy. Additional training of GPs might make visits by pregnant women to their doctors in the early months of pregnancy even more worthwhile.

Professor Minkowski pointed out that a prevention policy was not necessarily expensive. The example of China, inter alia, showed that it was more important to have a lot of simple services (with well-trained staff) rather than very sophisticated equipment which was only available in large cities anyway. The Professor also stressed the extent to which a human approach in hospitals could be conducive to the psychological stability of patients and make them more receptive to the care they were given.

In conclusion, the Professor expressed the hope that national laws on the protection of pregnancy would be harmonized. In order to ensure that the population was replaced every family should have an average of just over two children. Post-natal leave should last for a minimum of six months. The setting up of crèches near mothers' places of work should also be encouraged in order to keep contact between mother and child as close as possible.

EDUCATION AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING OF WOMEN IN EUROPE

Public hearing on the situation of women organized in Luxembourg
by the Committee of Inquiry (25 and 26 April 1983)

Mrs Cinciari Rodano, Chair of the Parliament's Committee of Inquiry, opened the proceedings by drawing attention to the direct link between the unemployment rate among women and their level of vocational training. Women's desire to be involved in the world of work was an irreversible fact and their right to work was now accepted as given, but teaching and training had thus to square with these realities and depart from stereotypes. Mrs Cinciari Rodano mentioned in passing that the Committee of Inquiry's brief was also to check how the Member States of the Community were applying the Directives on equal treatment.

Mr Boden, the Luxembourg Minister for Education, welcomed the presence of the Committee of Inquiry and emphasized the extent to which its work helped to motivate politicians.

The information collected together by Mechthild von Alemann (Germ., Lib.) and Nicolas Estgen (Neth., EPP) then gave rise to an extensive exchange of views among the MEPs and the experts. Many questions followed, such as, for instance, how should girls be directed towards scientific studies to a greater extent? In primary education 70% of the teachers were women: how did they influence their pupils? What account should be taken of assertions that girls had more of a bent for the analytical approach and boys for a synthetic one? How best should parents be involved in efforts to combat discrimination?

Further questions arose in connection with vocational training. Mrs Evelyne Sullerot caused some surprise by mentioning women's failures in certain manual trades: after four years in the trade many women gave up as a result of extreme tiredness. Other examples quoted proved to be positive, but in Mrs Sullerot's view there was an urgent need to make an overall assessment of the very many pilot projects which had been supported by the European Social Fund over the years.

The work, research and experiments under way in each of the countries were presented and comments made. It emerged that girls were continuing their studies to a greater extent than their mothers had done. In Germany, for instance, girls accounted for over half the pupils in the second stage of secondary education. In France, the new law on equal treatment at work should help to make up the leeway specific to women. In Greece, far-reaching changes were in progress but they were being curbed by the lack of amenities (crèches, day nurseries etc). In Ireland, engineering courses were being organized specifically for women and an information campaign on non-traditional trades was being carried out in factories.

It was difficult at this stage to suggest tangible measures applicable to all the countries in the Community. The experts re-iterated the all-important nature of vocational training for girls and they urged that there should be better preparation for working life. With this in mind, general studies should be shorter and a more diversified and more specialized bent should be encouraged. Lastly the training of teachers and instructors remained an essential factor in an anti-discrimination policy.

EMPLOYMENT : EXTRAORDINARY SESSION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

An extraordinary session of the European Parliament to debate employment was held in Brussels on 27 and 28 April 1983.

"Twelve million jobless : to quote this figure is so to speak tantamount to recording the failure of the European Community" : this was a turn of phrase which was often used by MEPs and political commentators in the course of the proceedings. On the speaker's platform and in private conversations, everyone was compiling a list of the "missed opportunities" in recent years: monetary union bogged down, political union at a standstill, research in smithereens, technology lagging behind etc.

Rarely has a debate so distinctly polarized politically speaking been seen at the European Parliament, and in such sharp words too. For if everyone was in agreement in recognizing that "the Community is not what it should be", that was as far as the unanimity went. The debate at the "employment" session was marked by a sharp clash between the left and the right on the analysis of the causes and on the measures to be taken.

The report on the employment situation drawn up by Mr Papaefstratiou (EPP) had already been challenged at the committee stage, as the Socialist and Communist Groups felt that it did not accurately reflect their viewpoints. In his speech, Mr Papefstratiou argued in favour of a "European employment pact", whereby the Member States of the Community would undertake to embark upon concerted action projects in various fields. In addition, several proposals were put forward : boosting consumption at European level, creating a European micro-electronics market, aid for job creation in small and medium-sized businesses, in craft trades and in cooperatives, re-organization of working hours etc.

The Parliament's Committee of Inquiry on the situation of women in Europe had prepared a contribution which stressed from the outset that "the number of women in general and young women in particular affected by unemployment is proportionally much higher than the number of men". The Committee of Inquiry noted that it would be illusory to try to attenuate the problems by having recourse to the method typical of previous economic crises, whereby women were excluded from the labour market.

Expressing the views of her colleagues on the Committee of Inquiry, Mrs Gaiotti de Biase (It., CD) demanded a special defence policy for female employment, the promotion of vocational training, action to support the employment of women in the small and medium-sized businesses, commerce, crafts and cooperatives sectors and in the agricultural sector. The Committee of Inquiry also called for consolidation of the services to people - namely the social, cultural and leisure infrastructures - removal of the direct or indirect forms of discrimination with regard to unemployment benefits, harmonization of the provisions regarding maternity leave and a Community Directive on parental leave.

Youth employment, presented by Mrs Salisch (Germ., Soc.), was to a large extent based on the public hearing of young unemployed people organized by the European Parliament in November 1982.

Starting in her introduction, Mrs Salisch expressed scruples rarely heard in this sort of debate : she said that youth employment demanded coordinated measures forming part of an overall scheme in order to prevent other categories of workers from being ousted. Various journalists noted that in these days of "everyone for himself", it was comforting to hear such a sentiment expressed.

In substance, Mrs Salisch's report was a whole range of proposals, thoughts and questions, since there was no point in being peremptory on a theme like unemployment. With regard to micro-electronics, the report stated that there was a need for awareness of the negative effects of its use on young people with no qualifications, but awareness too of the worthwhile employment prospects for skilled young people. Mrs Salisch was in favour of shorter working hours and referred to Mr Ceravolo's report for further details. With regard to apprenticeships, more imagination was required (creation of a European vocational training passport, co-operation among several firms, removal of the dust from the regulations in training centres etc).

In addition, Mrs Salisch strongly urged that young people should be duly informed about the operation of the economic network as a whole, since this was a basic prerequisite for the success of another of her proposals : support for young self-employed people and for the cooperatives set up by young people.

At the entrance to the Palais des Congrès where the MEPs were meeting, the Youth Forum was distributing keys, explaining : "We are asking you to help us to open the door to our future".

JOC (Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne - Young Christian Workers' Association) also stressed the future, with the slogan "Give us a future" on teeshirts and badges.

Mr Leonardi (It., Comm.) expressed concern about the competitiveness of Community industry : the differences between the countries were not conducive to Community action, just the opposite. Why was the Community's competitiveness flagging ? One of the reasons and the main one was the fact that the Community had proved incapable of adjusting to the speedy and profound changes in the international context. Investment had been inadequate and misdirected. Of course there was nothing on which the Community could accurately model itself. It was more a question of "providing an incentive for citizens of the Community to produce a development model which reflects and enhances the traditions and features of our countries". In conclusion, Mr Leonardi emphasized that the Member States of the Community "have huge resources within themselves if they decide to adjust together to a world which is constantly being transformed, not forgetting that they themselves have contributed to this transformation".

Shorter working hours, introduced by Mr Ceravolo (It., Comm.) on behalf of the Committee on Social Affairs, was considered to be a measure not only historically destined to improve living and working conditions, but also to be an employment policy instrument. The text of the resolution submitted to the European Parliament "recognizes the need to have recourse in the near future and with determination to the reduction and re-organization of working hours".

The concerns expressed by the Committee of Inquiry on the situation of women were taken into account, since reference was made to "the general development in the roles of men and women". Couples should be enabled

to "divide out more fairly the work involved in domestic chores, childcare and employment".

Mindful of the activity of the MEPs, the Association des Femmes au foyer and the Thuiswerkende Ouders Gezins Samenleving (Belgian French and Dutch-speaking Housewives' Associations respectively) were present in the square in front of the Palais des Congrès. Children gave bouquets of flowers to three women MEPs whose speeches were considered particularly favourable to the lot of the sixty million housewives in the Community. The MEPs concerned were Mrs Cassanmagnago Cerretti, Mrs Phlix and Mrs Roberts.

It emerged from the debates that MEPs were divided about priorities. Should the first step be to ensure that firms were competitive or should it be to increase public investment which created jobs? Both sides of industry had made their views known before the session even opened: UNICE (Union of Industries of the European Communities) wished to ensure that firms became more productive, whereas the ETUC (European Trade Union Congress) was demanding that jobs be created in order to boost demand.

In the end, the issue of shorter working hours was caught between these two tendencies. When it came to the vote, there was a majority in favour of "initiatives to shorten working hours, coupled with a suitable incomes policy, on condition that it is neutral from the costs viewpoint and enables productivity to be maintained". Christian Socialists, Liberals and Conservatives strongly recommended, to be consistent, an increase in temporary and part-time jobs which would be better suited to the demand from firms.

In the course of the amendments, "a substantial reduction in working hours" (even though it was proposed by the European Commission) ceased to be considered "a means of improving the employment situation". A good many MEPs expressed the concerns of the employers, who felt that "the re-organization of working hours is to be seen first of all in terms of cost, profitability and competition".

How, in this difficult context, would women be able to make themselves heard? Without in any way betraying their own political convictions, the women MEPs were able to stand firm and defend women. It would be futile and tedious to list the women speakers here: it should simply be stated that all the tendencies were intermingled when the women speakers who are members of the Committee of Inquiry in Europe gave a press conference right on the first day of the session.

Such unanimity bore fruit. In the final resolution, it was explicitly recorded that Europe may not, under any circumstances, attempt to resolve its unemployment problems by excluding women from the labour market.

FACTS, INSTITUTIONS AND LAWS

GERMANY

The Bundestag

Following the general election at the beginning of March, there are now 51 women among the 520 elected members, i.e. 9.8%. There were 49 women, i.e. 8.3%, in the previous parliament.

And this very slight progress is a result of the arrival on the parliamentary scene of the Grünen (the Greens), 10 of whose 27 members are women, including Petra Kelly, their President.

Among the Liberals, there are only 3 women out of the 35 members, compared with 8 in the last parliament.

Among the Socialists, despite the loss of a large number of seats, the number of women members has remained stable, going up from 20 to 21 out of a total of 202.

Federal Government

In the new Federal Government headed by Chancellor Helmut Kohl, Mrs Dorothee Wilms has been appointed Minister responsible for Education and Science. This department was already Mrs Wilms' responsibility under the previous government.

Political parties

Irmgard Adam-Schwaetzer has been appointed General Secretary of the FDP (Liberal party). This is the first time that a woman has reached such a post in German political life.

Herta Däubler-Gmelin and Anke Fuchs have become members of the executive bureau of the SDP (Social Democrat party) in the Bundestag.

Among the Grünen (Ecology party) two women are on the executive bureau of the group in the Bundestag : Petra Kelly and Marieluise Beck-Oberndorf.

Divorced widows

Divorced women whose ex-husbands were their only support can, after the latter's death, obtain a social security pension if they have not remarried and if they are too old to start working again.

Useful address : Bundesversicherungsanstalt für Angestellte
Pressestelle
1000 Berlin

Women and employment : some figures

The Institut für Arbeitsmark- und Berufsforschung (Institute for Research into Employment and the Labour Market) recently published some figures concerning the employment of women which enable comparisons of the last twenty years to be made.

	<u>1960</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1980</u>
working female population in relation to total female population	37%	36%	38%
unemployment rate in relation to the total female working population	1.3%	0.7%	5.2%
unemployment rate among men	1.3%	0.8%	3.2%
proportion of women with no vocational training		47%	40%
proportion of men with no vocational training		23%	23%
proportion of women according to occupational status :			
self-employed	23%	21%	20%
helper in a family firm	82%	84%	90%
civil servants	10%	12%	16%
office workers	49%	49%	51%
manual workers	29%	28%	29%

The research institute, quoted by "Mitteilungen für Frauen" (Information for women), the review of the IG Metall trade union, finds that the gap between men's and women's pay is still big.

	<u>1970</u>	<u>1980</u>
	(in DM)	
Average gross hourly earnings of female manual workers	4.49	10.15
Average gross hourly earnings of male manual workers	6.49	14.16
Average gross female monthly earnings (Cat.1)	867	1 842
Average gross male monthly earnings (Cat.1)	1 348	2 539
Average gross monthly earnings of female manual workers	245	377
Average gross monthly earnings of male manual workers	632	1 052
Average gross monthly earnings of female office workers	468	688
Average gross monthly earnings of male office workers	945	1 459

Source and useful address : Mitteilungen für Frauen
 IG Metall
 Wilhelm-Leuschner-Str. 79-85
6000 Frankfurt

Cleaning women

A German firm which specializes in cleaning offices and industrial premises had contemplated lowering the monthly wages of the women from DM 390 to DM 330. The argument put forward was that the introduction of new machines had made the women's work easier and that it had therefore become less valuable.

The women lodged a strenuous protest, pointing out that it was their responsibility to clean and maintain the new equipment. In addition, they emphasized to the labour court that the company's intention was probably not without an ulterior motive : over and above DM 390 employers are bound to make social security contributions and have to pay their employees in the event of a short illness.

The Labour Court did not authorize the pay reduction.

Mülheim - A further point

Eleonore Güllenstern, whom we said (see Women of Europe N° 28) was the only woman to be in charge of a big city in Germany, has asked us to be so kind as to inform our readers of the following further point : she is "a member of the SPD (Socialist party) and can see no reason to conceal the fact". A member of the ASF (Association of Socialist Women) for over ten years, she is President of the ASF in Mülheim a.d. Ruhr.

Useful address : Eleonore Güllenstern
Rathaus
Ruhrstrasse
4330 Mülheim a.d. Ruhr

BELGIUM

Part-time work

Mr Hansenne, Minister for Labour and Employment, has started off an information campaign on part-time work. Several regulations have been introduced in order to make part-time work more attractive. This means that it is now possible for a full-time unemployed person to draw pay for a part-time job together with part of his or her unemployment benefit. A similar solution has been found for workers who leave a full-time job for a part-time one : they remain covered by social security. In addition, part-time workers who are forced into unemployment will get benefits calculated on the basis of their full working lives.

However, the information campaign has aroused some critical comments. The Groupement belge de la Porte ouverte (Belgian Open Door Group), for instance, has expressed its indignation at the illustration on the advertising posters : a young woman playing with her child, entitled : Monday, 15.12 : "This picture is an appeal to women to give up a part of their jobs, to give up any promotion in particular and to devote their "free time" to their families (and not, for instance, to a political career ...)".

Useful address : Ministère de l'Emploi et du Travail
53 rue Belliard
1040 Brussels

Unemployment and cohabitation

According to the ONEM (National Employment Office), the concept of "cohabitation" will henceforth have an effect on the amount of unemployment benefits. Any unemployed man (or woman) cohabiting with a female (or male) partner who receives a substitute salary or wage will now only receive 40% of the normal benefit for the first year of unemployment. This benefit will subsequently be reduced to a flat rate, which will vary depending on individual cases.

Women who are not head of families form the main body of this category of jobless receiving reduced benefits. Furthermore, since March 1982, an additional 6% deduction has been made from the reduced benefit of the cohabitant or woman who is not a head of family.

A new problem is arising for the authorities with cases of divorced, unemployed women with one or more dependent children who have chosen to live with a man without marrying him. In the authorities' eyes, are they cohabiting to a lesser extent because they are "head of family" or are they less heads of families because they are cohabiting ?

Useful address : ONEM
7 Boulevard de l'Empereur
1000 Brussels

A sexist law

Mrs Nadine Plateau, a teacher, has lost her case against the Belgian State, which she reproached with deducting 6.5% from her monthly salary without permission, to finance the Caisse des Veuves et des Orphelins (Widows' and Orphans' Pension Fund). In the event of her death, her husband would not receive anything from this contribution.

"The law is sexist, but it is the law", replied in substance the Brussels Civil Court, where the case was heard. The running of the Caisse des Veuves et des Orphelins, which was set up in 1844, was updated in 1876. Even at that time men were explicitly excluded from qualifying for benefit from the contributions paid by their wives who were civil servants. This provision could have been amended again by the legislators in 1935. This was not done and it is not up to the Court to give orders to the authorities or even to check whether the law complies with the Constitution (All Belgians are equal in the eyes of the law).

It should be noted that Parliament has passed a law enabling the husbands of women parliamentarians to draw this survivor's pension in the event of their wife's death.

Surnames

A bill has been tabled in the Chambre by Deputy Edouard Klein (Liberal) and has been countersigned by parliamentarians from six different parties. The object is to enable women no longer to have to give up their surnames on marriage.

Under the bill, women would keep their own name if they so desired or else they could associate it with that of their husband, in an order to be agreed. The first of these two names only would be given to children born of the couple.

Women : four portraits

According to a survey carried out on behalf of the Benton and Bowles firm (advertising), occupation only has a slight influence on women's outlook and behaviour when making purchases. From a file of almost a thousand pages (for customers of the firm only), we have taken a few pictures which are inevitably caricatures :

First portrait : 29% of "submissive women". They all put up with life without denigrating it, go cycling, have a dog and are passive.

Second portrait : 22% of "traditional women". In general, the "traditional" woman is somewhat "starchy", only buys top quality brands, uses butter in cooking, wears conventional clothes, likes rain and uses hair lacquer.

Third portrait : 19% of "modern women". Fairly young, the modern woman likes to be out and about whether she works or not. She causes a stir and goes shopping. She wears jeans and smokes king size cigarettes.

Fourth portrait : 30% of "assertive women". Young or not so young, this sort of woman likes to be combative and likes to talk about education and politics. She entertains, drinks, eats frozen foods (after cooking them) and drives a car.

Useful address : Benton and Bowles
23 rue du Commerce
1040 Brussels

DENMARK

The Government

Contrary to what was stated in "Women of Europe" N° 27, there are not two but actually four women in the government formed by Mr Poul Schlüter.

They are Grethe Fenger Møller (Conservative), Minister for Labour;
Mimi Stilling Jakobsen (Centre Democrat), Minister for Cultural Affairs;

and Britta Schall Holberg (Liberal), Minister for the Interior;
and Elsebeth Kock-Petersen (Liberal), Minister for Religious Affairs.

Legal protection of victims

There have been several occasions in Denmark in recent years when the judicial authorities have abandoned a prosecution in rape cases.

Often the reason is that the explanations of the man and the woman differ and there are no witnesses to say what really happened.

Although this line of argument is valid legally speaking, the conclusion must be that the legislation in question should be revised. This is why the Danske Kvinders Nationalråd (National Council of Danish Women), the Ligestillingsrådet (Equal Opportunities Council) and the Dansk Kvindesamfund (Danish Women's Association) have raised the issue with the Minister

for Justice, requesting him to take the initiative of examining the treatment meted out by the judicial authorities in rape cases.

The Minister has decided to set up a Committee which will study the way in which the police and lawyers deal with rape cases, to ensure that women are treated in a just and humane fashion, in accordance with the concept of the equality of the sexes. The Minister feels that such a committee could also tackle other cases of serious assault.

Women's organizations and the Ligestillingsrådet have proposed that the committee should highlight the following points :

1. Training of police officers and advice to be given to them;
2. The practice of police interrogations;
3. The assistance of women by a lawyer;
4. The treatment of complaints by the courts;
5. The requirements as to proof;
6. The psychiatric and social aid with which professionals can provide the women;
7. The preparation of the application for compensation - financial compensation.

On the committee are representatives of women's organizations, of the Ligestillingsrådet, of the police, of the magistrates and of "Joansøstre" (Joan's sisters : these are women who specifically help women who have been rape victims, in close cooperation with the Battered Women's Centre "Grevinde Danner Stiftelsen").

Useful address : Danske Kvinders Nationalråd
Niels Hemmingsensgade 10
1153 Copenhagen K

Women in the public services

Despite the 1976 law on equal pay, there are still big differences between men's and women's incomes, even in the public services. This was a point which Helle Degn, Chair of Ligestillingsrådet (Equal Opportunities Council) was anxious to stress.

By way of an example, 95% of the women employed by the communal (local) authorities are at the bottom of the salaries scale. The State does not set a good example either, since 85% of the women are at the bottom of the scale and only 15% have access to high salaries and to posts of responsibility. Thus, at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, out of 36 high-level posts, only four are held by women, but among the 300 office workers, only seven are men.

The Ligestillingsrådet concludes that the statutory provisions are not sufficient to bring about a change in the situation. New initiatives should be planned, as regards both labour market policy and family policy.

Useful address : Ligestillingsrådet
Frederiksgade 19-21
1265 Copenhagen K

Getting acquainted

Det Danske Selskab (Danish Information Institute) is organizing a seminar in English entitled "Women in Denmark" from 28 August to 2 September. Led by Eva Rude and Grethe Holmen, this trip will provide a rare opportunity to see Denmark in a new light. Please write without delay to : Det Danske Selskab Kultorget 2, 1175 Copenhagen K.

FRANCE

The Government

On the occasion of the government reshuffle at the end of March 1983, Huguette Bouchardeau was given responsibility for the environment in the team led by Pierre Mauroy.

A holder of the "agrégation" (competitive examination conducted by the State for admission to posts in secondary and higher education) in philosophy and of a doctorate in educational science, Huguette Bouchardeau has been a member of the PSU (Parti socialiste unifié - Unified Socialist Party) since it was set up in 1960. She had been the National Secretary since 1979, after having become a member of the party's national Bureau in charge of the "women's affairs" sector in 1974.

Huguette Bouchardeau's exact title is Secretary of State for the Environment and the Quality of Life. As some of the posts are now held by different women, we would mention that her colleagues in the government are : Edith Cresson (Minister for Foreign Trade and Tourism), Edwige Avice (Junior Minister responsible for Leisure, Youth and Sport), Yvette Roudy (Junior Minister responsible for Women's Rights), Catherine Lalumière (Secretary of State responsible for Consumer Affairs) and Georgina Dufoix (Secretary of State responsible for Family Affairs, Population and Immigrant Workers).

Municipal elections

Following the municipal elections in March 1983, the number of women involved in the management of their commune has risen from 38 859 (in 1977) to 70 854. Which political party would have dreamed of getting 33 000 extra people elected and thus making a 66% breakthrough ?

Out of a total of 501 591 seats to be filled, the representation rate for women on municipal councils averages 14.08%. However, it is interesting to distinguish between communes with a population of less than 3 500 and those with more than 3 500. In the former, women accounted for 6.8% of those elected in 1977 and 12.87% in 1983. In the latter, women were already well represented (15.5% in 1977) and the figure has gone up again (21.6% in 1983).

As a result of the "Women elected" operation organized by the Ministry for Women's Rights, the distribution according to the sex of those elected was known on the very evening the votes were counted. Mrs Yvette Roudy, Minister for Women's Rights, stressed that "All the political parties have finally taken account of women's increasingly strong desire to be involved in public life and in the management of their commune".

It will be remembered that an electoral law passed by the French parliament in July 1982 provided for a quota of at least 25% of candidates of the same sex on municipal election lists in communes with a population of over 3 500. The Conseil constitutionnel (Constitutional Council) did not accept the principle of this quota. Yet if the results in communes with a population of over 3 500 are considered, it can be seen immediately that women have gone further than the law, since the number of women elected totalled almost 22%.

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

The situation of divorced women

The collection of maintenance has always been a problem. According to the most reliable estimates, 56% of maintenance is not paid or is paid irregularly - 25% is not paid at all.

Georgina Dufoix, Secretary of State for Family Affairs, has submitted a communication on family policy, one of the measures, drawn up by the Ministry for Women's Rights, being provision for the payment to single parents (most often women) of a guaranteed additional allowance of FF 426 per child per month.

"This is a temporary emergency measure", explained Mrs Yvette Roudy, Minister for Women's Rights. Agreement has been reached with the Minister for Justice whereby a bill on victims will include the offence of "organized insolvency" which will enable proceedings to be taken against perpetrators and accessories. The judge will be able to take measures of conservation (mortgages, sequestration of assets etc) and the court will be able to compensate the victims.

"It is forgotten that judges can pass substitute sentences on non-payers such as the withdrawal of driving licences etc" said Mrs Roudy. Pilot experiments on the collection of maintenance are to be organized in three towns in France and the conclusions will be drawn at the beginning of 1984.

An anti-sexist law

The Council of Ministers has examined an anti-sexist bill tabled by Mrs Yvette Roudy, Minister for Women's Rights. The bill's intention is to supplement the penal code in order to penalize, exactly as happens in cases of racialism, any sex-based discriminatory behaviour (incitement to discrimination, hatred, violence, defamatory acts or utterances) and also action which tends to make it more difficult to pursue an economic activity owing to one's sex. The press and advertising will be affected, since an amendment to the law of 29 July 1881 on the freedom of the press is planned.

Under the bill, associations will be legally entitled to sue for civil injury, provided that they have been active in this field for at least five years.

The bill has already received support from some quarters and has been challenged by others. Thus the magazine "Paris-Match" referred to "the Rome of the Counter-Reformation where vine leaves were added to Michelangelo's frescos. Later on Baudelaire was censured for lack of respect for women. Even later on and elsewhere, the wearing of the chador was re-introduced".

On the other side, a "Collective in support of the anti-sexist law" has been formed, to ensure that the law is not buried as a result of the political expediencies of the moment. Some of the associations which are members of the Collective are the Ligue du droit des femmes (Women's Rights League), SOS-Femmes alternatives (SOS-Alternative Women), the Centre Audiovisuel Simone de Beauvoir (Simone de Beauvoir Audiovisual Centre), SOS-Femmes alternatives (SOS-Alternative Women), Planning Familial (Family Planning Centre) etc.

Useful address : Ministère des droits de la Femme
53 avenue d'Iéna
75016 Paris

GREECE

Equal Rights Council

On the occasion of International Women's Day, the Prime Minister, Mr Papan-dreou, announced the appointment of the members of the Equal Rights for Women Council. Set up in September 1982, the Council will be chaired by Mrs Antoniou-Laiou. For over a year this young legal expert had been a special adviser to the Prime Minister on women's affairs.

The announcement of these appointments was greeted with some degree of scepticism, insofar as the qualifications and status of the members of the Council do not seem capable of remedying the failings of which the Council was accused when it was set up.

Many women's organizations protested about the membership of the Council, expressing their surprise and disappointment at the absence of leading figures from Greek women's associations.

United Nations Convention

The United Nations Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, which was signed by Greece a year ago now, was adopted by the Greek parliament on 3 March 1983.

Equal treatment in the civil service

The Administrative Supreme Court recently delivered an important judgment for wage equality in the civil service (Reference : N° 520/1983).

According to the regulations applied up till then, a dependents' allowance (calculated as a percentage of salary and paid by the employer) was only paid to men and to married women, on condition that their husband was not employed by the same public authority or the State.

The proceedings for the annulment of these regulations were brought by 78 women employees and were based on both Article 22 (1)(b) of the Greek Constitution and on Article 119 of the Treaty of Rome.

The judge who acted as Rapporteur proposed that that regulations be annulled in accordance with the plaintiffs' line of argument. However, the Court's decision is based solely on the article of the Constitution which lays down the principle of "Equal pay for equal work".

If you change your address, please be sure to return the label on the magazine's wrapper to us, as it contains the reference without which we cannot note your change of address.

IN ALL CORRESPONDENCE, SUBSCRIPTION REQUESTS AND WHEN SENDING US INFORMATION, PLEASE PRINT YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS CLEARLY.

IRELAND

Abortion and the Constitution

The ban on abortion, which is already in Irish law, might soon appear in the Constitution. This is the course on which the Irish Parliament has embarked, by 87 votes to 64, despite opposition from the government led by Dr Garret FitzGerald.

The text, adopted at the initiative of Fianna Fail (nationalist opposition), has still to be submitted to the Senate and will subsequently be the subject of a referendum.

"Illegitimate" children

Under Irish law, "illegitimate" children have fewer rights than children born in wedlock. This provision is a deliberate one to protect the institution of marriage. However, in a recent report, the Law Reform Commission proposed that the concept of "illegitimacy" should be abolished. This document says that it is unjust to deny rights to innocent people in order to protect the institution of marriage.

Mrs Nuala Fennell, Minister of State for Women's Affairs, is paying particular attention to this issue : she recently organized a public conference on this theme in order to ascertain the opinions of the various parties concerned.

The Law Reform Commission also proposed that fathers' rights should be guaranteed outside marriage, but this suggestion raised a storm of protests from women's organizations.

Useful address : The Law Reform Commission
River House
Chancery Street
Dublin 7

Crèches and day nurseries

A government working party on the care of the children of working parents recently put forward various constructive proposals which are to be found in the "Report on Child Care Facilities for Working Parents", which is on sale, price £ IR 6.65, from the Government Publications Sales Office.

Setting up of a National Child Care Authority, compulsory registration of prospective child minders, establishment of a code of practice, tax reductions for parents who have their children minded in order to go out to work etc. Only 8% of the people who look after children are properly trained. Approximately 20% are young people with no practical experience of child care.

Useful address : The Government Publications Sales Office
Molesworth Street
Dublin 2

Equality in employment

The 1977 Employment Equality Act accepted several exceptions to the rule for reasons of "privacy and decency" : this referred in fact to employment in institutions dealing with one or other of the sexes only. At the European Commission's request, an amendment to the law abolished these exceptions.

On the basis of this amendment, the Employment Equality Agency was able to ensure that a job advertisement published by the managers of an institution dealing solely with homeless men was open to women applicants as well as to men.

Useful address : Employment Equality Agency
36 Upper Mount Street
Dublin 2

The army

The army announced in the press that it was seeking to recruit one hundred unmarried male apprentices (mechanics, carpenters, electricians etc) aged between 16 and 18. The Employment Equality Agency intervened and requested that these apprenticeships should be open to girls too.

The Employment Equality Agency notes that it is true that the Irish law on equality excludes the army from its ambit, but this does not protect the government from proceedings which might be taken on the basis of the European Community Directive in the field.

ITALY

Divorce : some figures

Divorce has been legal in Italy for almost ten years now. ISTAT (National Statistics Institute) has published some interesting figures on this subject.

As early as 1971 over 17 000 divorce decrees were pronounced. In 1972, disputes of long standing were legalized and there were as many as 32 600 decrees. However, starting in 1973, the numbers began to fall : there were about 16 000 decrees and then about 11 000 a year until 1976.

Over half of the divorces were pronounced in Northern Italy, where mutual consent constituted the main grounds. In Southern Italy, on the other hand, and on the islands, de facto separation is the most common reason. Similarly, it is in these areas that legal proceedings are often taken in divorce cases, because of dispute.

Divorce proceedings are started by women in proportions varying between 40% in the North, 35% in the Centre and 33% in the South of Italy. It should also be pointed out that the majority of women get divorced between the ages of 30 and 39, whereas the average age for men ranges between 30 and 49.

Women and the railways

Some 11 660 women were employed by the Azienda FS (Italian National Railways) in 1981. Since as early as 1968 FS has formally had an open door policy for women, to ensure that they are not only present in the offices but that they carry out every type of duty.

According to figures published recently, there were 389 women stationmasters in 1981. Among the "train crews", although women mechanics are rare (27), women drivers are very common : 599 of them are at the controls. FS has no worries about women's authority : 1 813 carry out supervisory tasks and 64 are assigned to inspection duties on trains. Similarly, it would seem that women are well on the way to acceding to the highest ranking posts : although there were only 9 women among the managerial staff and the body of inspectors in 1973, there were already 110 in 1981.

Italia Agency

Mrs Gianna Naccarelli has been appointed Director of the "Agenzia giornalistica Italia" (Italia press agency) in succession to Antonio Spinosa.

Part-time work

An outline agreement concerning 800 000 workers and relating to working hours and part-time work has been signed in the commerce sector. This agreement concerns young people and women in particular.

The first national agreement on this subject in this sector, the system adopted is particularly flexible. For instance, it is laid down that part-time work is voluntary and revertible (the worker can return to full-time work) and that pay is proportionate to the hours actually worked.

Weekly working hours may not be less than 12 or more than 25. There is also provision for so-called "vertical" part-time work which relates to a monthly or seasonal period. In the former case the minimum is 48 hours and the maximum 120 and in the latter the minimum is 400 hours and the maximum 1 300. However, in both these cases weekly hours actually worked may not be less than 12.

Equality in war

The Audit Office has officially brought up an exception for unconstitutionality in a 1978 law on pensions for war damage. The case has been referred to the Constitutional Court.

According to the Audit Office, it is irregular that the 1978 law does not grant compensation to people who have suffered invalidity which has reduced their working capacity. The Audit Office suggests that cases of women raped by soldiers from the allied armies during the last war should be taken into consideration. The Audit Office says that it is unjust to draw a distinction between sexual assault in peace time and war time. This information is from "Fascicolo" (Instalment), the review of Italian women legal experts.

Useful address : Fascicolo
via Merlo, 3
20122 Milano

LUXEMBOURG

Part-time work

At a recent plenary meeting, the Chambre des employés privés (Chamber of Private Sector Employees) rejected the government's plans to regulate part-time work. According to this occupational Chamber, the plan would result in large-scale deterioration in the working conditions of those who intend to take advantage of the opportunity offered.

In the service regulations for private sector employees, it is laid down that any working time in excess of the number of hours stipulated in the contract of employment has to be paid at overtime rates. But the government plan provides that overtime worked by half-time employees must be paid on the basis of the normal hourly wage. Furthermore, it will be possible for employers to change the working hours fixed by agreement between the employee and the employer, within ten days.

The Chambre des employés privés is therefore requesting the government to prepare a new plan which removes any discrimination between part-time and full-time employees.

Useful address : Chambre des employés privés
13 rue de Bragance
Luxembourg

Duties in the event of divorce

In Luxembourg, the divorce law reform which came into effect at the end of 1978 has conferred a number of rights on wives without, however, exempting them from possible duties, such as, for instance, the payment of maintenance. For the record, the principal merit of the new law is that it dissociates the question of the granting of maintenance from the establishment of misconduct in the dissolution of the household, which is a big step forward for the economic security of women after divorce.

Now, for the first time in the history of the Luxembourg legal system, a woman has been given a three-month suspended sentence for refusing to pay maintenance to her ex-husband and the children living with him.

Useful address : Ministère de la Justice
16 Boulevard Royal
Luxembourg

Increase in divorces

The number of divorces in Luxembourg has increased considerably. In the district Court of the City of Luxembourg alone, 206 divorces were pronounced in 1975, 330 in 1976, 378 in 1977, 486 in 1978, 385 in 1979, 521 in 1980 and 542 in 1982.

The "mutual consent" procedure has contributed to this increase : 33 cases in 1975, 147 in 1977 and 269 in 1982. The more commonly followed "for a specific cause" procedure (including de facto separation for at least three years) has fallen proportionally : 173 cases out of 206 divorces in 1975 and 276 cases out of 545 divorces in 1982.

NETHERLANDS

The gender of occupations

The Emancipatieraad (Emancipation Council) has refused to deliver an opinion on the names of occupations, further to a request submitted to it by Mrs Annelien Kappeyne van de Copello, Secretary of State with responsibility for Emancipation.

According to Mrs Kappeyne van de Copello, words like "timmerman" (carpenter) and "vroedvrouw" (midwife) are barriers to completely equal treatment as regards access to all occupations.

According to the Emancipatieraad, other opinions on taxation, social security, employment etc are more urgent in nature and deserve to be given priority in its work.

Useful address : Emancipatieraad
Lutherse Burgwal 10
2512 CB The Hague

A woman for Amsterdam

In accordance with the system in force in the Netherlands, the "burgemeester" (mayor) of a big city is not elected by local councillors but is appointed by the Minister for the Interior. The person appointed is generally a prominent political personality whose colour is not unimportant but who thus has some degree of independence vis-à-vis the municipal council.

The Amsterdam municipal council has explicitly requested that in choosing the successor to Mr Wim Polak, who is to retire in June, priority should be given to a woman, if she is equally as able as a male candidate.

Two women have already put themselves forward as candidates for this exceptionally burdensome office. Both are members of the Partij van de Arbeid (Labour Party) : they are Ien Dales, who used to be Secretary of State for Social Affairs, and Annemarie Grewel, who is, inter alia, Vice-President of the Emancipatieraad (Emancipation Council).

Insecurity

A poll on feelings of insecurity has been carried out by NIPO (Netherlands Public Opinion Institute). Women more than men feel insecure at times, in proportions varying between 30% in communes with a population of less than 20 000 to 68% in cities with a population of over 400 000. The proportion among men varies between 16% and 38%.

Women feel insecure in a dark street (38%), in a park (21%), in a car on a road (14%), on a motorway car park (11%), on public transport (10%), at home (10%) etc.

Useful address : Nederlands Instituut voor de Publieke Opinie
Westerdokhuis
Barentszplein 7
1013 NJ Amsterdam

UNITED KINGDOM

Equal pay : a disputed law

The Equal Opportunities Commission has reacted very sharply to the government's proposed change to the law on equal pay. It will be remembered that the European Commission summoned the United Kingdom before the Court of Justice of the European Communities, considering that the 1970 Equal Pay Act, amended by the 1975 Sex Discrimination Act, does not comply with the Community Directive on equal pay (See Women of Europe N° 27). As the Court decided against the United Kingdom, a new text has been drawn up by the British government.

The Equal Opportunities Commission lists six reasons for disquiet. First of all the government is proposing that a period of twelve months should elapse between the adoption of the new text and its implementation. Yet in principle, since July 1982, when the Court of Justice delivered its judgment, British women have "technically" been entitled to demand "equal pay for work of equal value". Because of this twelve-month time lag, the government is so to speak denying women workers a right which is already theirs.

The second reason for disquiet relates to cases where a "job evaluation process" applies. Under the legislation in force at present, a woman can demand pay which is equal to a man's if she does the same work or if her work has been evaluated as being "equivalent" by means of a job evaluation. However, many of these evaluations include hidden discriminatory factors which deny women the right to equal pay. Under the government's new proposal, women are not entitled to call the evaluation methods or the conclusions into question, unless the evaluation is "obviously" discriminatory.

The third reason for the EOC's reaction is that under the government's proposal, it will be up to plaintiffs to prove that there has been a breach of the law. It seems to the EOC that a basic condition to ensure that more women win their cases in legal proceedings is that the burden of proof should lie with employers.

Fourthly, the EOC feels that the government's proposals are not clear as regards the way in which "equal value" may be determined.

The fifth point is that the complaints procedure proposed by the government is too complicated.

The sixth point is that the government's proposals are not explicitly binding enough on collective agreements already signed between employers and the trade unions. Neither the Central Arbitration Committee nor the courts would be able to amend the agreements in order to make them comply with the Community Directive to a greater extent.

Mr Norman Tebbit, Secretary of State for Employment, has confirmed that in his opinion the government's text complies with Community legislation.

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

Families without a father or mother

Mrs Deborah Derrick, the Information Officer of the One Parent Families asociation, has politely but firmly challenged the information published in "Women of Europe" N° 27 which stated that there were 3.1% one-parent families in Great Britain.

According to the information which she has kindly sent us, the number of one-parent families rose from 570 000 in 1971 to 975 000 in 1981, which means that the rate is actually 13.7%.

The highest proportion of one-parent families occurs in the inner London boroughs. In Lambeth, for instance, 33.2% of all families with children were one-parent families in 1981. Lambeth was followed by Hackney: 32% ; Hammersmith : 31.1%; City of London : 30.7%; Camden : 30%; Southwark : 29.7%; Westminster : 29%; Islington : 28.9%; Kensington and Chelsea : 27.3% etc.

Useful address : One Parent Families
255 Kentish Town Road
London NW5 2LX

Recession and discrimination

"The economic recession, with an unemployment rate of over 19% of the working population, is certainly conducive to the discrimination which is affecting women in Northern Ireland", stated Mrs Muriel Wilson, Chair of the Northern Ireland Equal Opportunities Commission.

In its sixth annual report, the NI-EOC states that it received 221 individual complaints about equal pay and sexual discrimination. Of this total, 34 cases were given direct backing by the EOC in legal proceedings. In several cases on the other hand, the Commission was able to find a solution without having to go to court.

During the past year, the Commission made a special effort to provide help for women, who only filled 140 (i.e. 4%) of the 3 300 places available in the government run vocational training centres.

In the legal field, one of the Northern Ireland EOC's particularly interesting ventures concerns firms employing five people or less, which are supposedly excluded from the scope of the law on sexual discrimination. The case has been referred to the Court of Justice of the European Communities.

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

The employment of women and technology

The new technologies are causing more women than men to lose their jobs. These are the conclusions reached by Ursula Huws, after a survey carried out among 40 companies on behalf of the Leeds TUCRIC (Trade Union and Community Resources and Information Centre), with financial assistance from the Equal Opportunities Commission.

In 60% of the factories observed there were more men than women at work, but in only 17% of cases were men's jobs worse affected by automation than women's jobs.

Office work, cleaning, sales, textiles, the food industry : jobs in all these fields are being adversely affected by the new technologies. However, while certain jobs are disappearing, the new posts created by the new technologies relate mainly to the scientific and technical fields, in which women are less well qualified than men.

The introduction of the new technologies is underlining and increasing the extent to which women are lagging behind. They are paying for their out-of-date schooling and their inadequate vocational training and the segregation at work is becoming even more marked.

Useful address : Ursula Huws
c/o Equal Opportunities Commission
Overseas House
Quay Street
Manchester M3 3HN

Mediterranean

In six years over 6 000 million ECUs (European units of account) are to be invested to foster the economic development of the Mediterranean areas of the Community, as the European Commission has approved the main points in what are known as "the integrated Mediterranean programmes".

The main feature of these programmes is the fact that they are applied in a consistent and integrated fashion to various sectors, ranging from agriculture to small and medium-sized businesses, from craft trades to infrastructures, from tourism to afforestation and from fishing to the production of renewable forms of energy.

The purpose of the programme is to enable the southern regions of the Community to catch up, in development terms, in the vast and complex framework of the real Mediterranean situation. Up to now these regions have reaped fewer benefits than the others from the process of integration and from Community policies and yet they are being particularly acutely affected by the current economic crisis.

Community aid will be adjusted on the basis of parameters such as unemployment, per capita income, the rate of employment in agriculture etc. The most intensive efforts will therefore be made in Greece, the Mezzogiorno (Central and Southern Italy), and the depressed areas of Corsica, Provence and Languedoc-Roussillon.

The beneficiary States will be expected to contribute to the Community investment in the various sectors depending on the respective levels of prosperity. By way of an example, the Community's share in the infrastructures and employment sectors will be 75% in Greece, 65% in Italy and 50% in France.

Useful address : Commission of the European Communities
Directorate-General for Regional Policy
200 rue de la Loi
1049 Brussels

8 MARCH : AGAINST UNEMPLOYMENT, FOR PEACE

As was the case in 1981 and 1982, unemployment and peace are still women's main concerns this year. In all the countries of the Community, these two themes were highlighted during the events organized on the occasion of International Women's Day.

In Belgium, the two branches of the Conseil national des femmes belges (National Council of Belgian Women) organized a demonstration in collaboration with the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom movement. Led by the actress Julie Christie, a delegation of 120 American women arrived in Brussels on board a "peace plane" and were very soon joined by Dutch, French, Swedish, Greek, British, Spanish etc women. The demonstrators called for an end to the arms race and the deployment of effective means to combat poverty in the third world. An appeal was made to mothers to get them to send photos of their children to Mrs Reagan and Mrs Andropov, to help them to convince the Statesmen of the urgent need for disarmament.

Around the case of the women made redundant by Beckaert-Cockerill, a "Women against the recession" demonstration was organized by the two most powerful groups of affiliated trade unions in the country, with the support of women's organizations and of the political parties in the North and South of the country.

At the European Commission, a trade union delegation burst into the offices of the Commissioner responsible for staff affairs. Together with a bouquet of daffodils, Mr Burke received the list of recommendations from the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Men and Women which have not been implemented up to now.

In Denmark, a group of women from the "Walkyrie" movement attacked fashion shops and perfumeries, as a sign of protest against the use made of "women as mere objects".

In France, "equal opportunities" were the keynote of the proceedings on 8 March. In the words of Mrs Roudy, Minister for Women's Rights, it is a question of a "cultural revolution". The main themes adopted for various discussion meetings organized at the Pompidou Centre, at the Forum des Halles and in some Parisian theatres were obstacles in working life, social discrimination and the difficulty of compelling recognition in the cultural sphere. An exhibition of photographs was shown at the Pompidou Centre by Janine Niepce, the theme being "Women and non-traditional jobs". A stamp bearing the effigy of Danielle Casanova, a well-known communist activist and member of the Resistance movement, was put on sale. The stamp was the first in a series devoted to women. Opening the exhibition staged on this occasion, the Prime Minister, Mr Mauroy, said : "Government decrees are not enough : women themselves have to take over, every day, wherever they happen to be".

In other regions in France, Women's Rights Delegates took numerous initiatives which were backed up by an intensive bill-posting campaign : 2 000 notices in 550 railway stations, 550 000 programmes in trains, 20 000 in planes, 2 000 streamers on the underground and on buses.

The Women's Liberation Movement staged an exhibition made up of documents taken from its archives and entitled "1968-1983 ... 15 years of combat, our history". The WLM was also behind a debate on misogyny.

In Ireland, at the instigation of the International Women's Day Committee, a meeting was held in Dublin which was attended by women peace demonstrators

from the Greenham Common military base near London. Women artists, poets, singers etc appeared at the evening event which followed.

In Merrion Square, headquarters of the Council for the Status of Women, reception was organized which was attended by Mairin de Burca, Nell McCafferty, Mary Earls, Mary Maher and Nuala Fennell (now the Minister with responsibility for women's affairs). All these leading figures in the women's movement in Ireland are described in the book "Sisters" by June Levine, the sale of the ten thousandth copy of which was also being celebrated.

In Greece, there were special broadcasts on radio and television on 8 March. In interviews and statements, government spokesmen confirmed their interest in women's issues. Women's organizations for their part expressed satisfaction at being able to delete the revision of the Civil Code from the list of urgent objectives.

The Omospondia Gynekon Elladas (Federation of Greek Women) centred its events on the theme "There will be no equality if we do not have peace". Demonstrations in favour of disarmament were organized near military bases. The Syndesmos gia ta Dikeomata tis Gynekas (Women's Rights League) and the Kinisi Dimocratikon Gynekon (Democratic Women's Movement) highlighted the problem of unemployment among women. Lastly, the Enossi Gynekon Elladas (Union of Greek Women) took advantage of 8 March to explain to its members and to the general public the implications of the reform of the Civil Code, at a meeting which it held and called "Family yesterday and today".

In Italy, 8 March was celebrated in all the big cities by initiatives aimed at emphasizing not so much what women are but the role which they can play in the qualitative re-organization of society. Imagination, a zest for living, tolerance and creativity were contrasted with sexual violence, war and racialism.

In Milan, under the watchword "taking decisions about our lives, planning for our liberation", thousands of women (but also men) students marched in the streets chanting slogans about the law against sexual assault, about employment and about the lack of social services.

In Rome, a march was held which brought together some 30 000 women. The women's organizations, the "women's" sections of the trade unions, the political parties and independent groups took part in this International Women's Day, at which all the topics in the news were raised. Postcards were distributed in the streets, to be sent to the Chamber of Deputies to protest at the way in which the law on sexual assault had been debated. The Consulta femminile (Women's Advisory Committee) of the Province of Rome had chosen to make a special effort to enhance women's place in sport.

In Gioia Tauro (Calabria), the FIDAPA (Italian Federation of Self-Employed Women) took advantage of 8 March to consider how to make the best possible use of the European Community's action to promote equality.

In Potenza, the ANDE (National Association of Women Electors) organized a discussion meeting on the theme "A policy for women in politics". Several other associations were represented at this discussion, which centred on women voicing political opinions at both national and local levels.

The CIF (Italian Women's Centre) for its part chose to reflect upon the theme "Women in favour of a new kind of solidarity".

M I L I T A N T A C T I V I T I E S

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Death of an activist

Marianella Garcia, President of the Human Rights Committee in El Salvador, has been assassinated. She was aged 34.

She did not fall armed : her fight was different. On the contrary, Marianella Garcia fought for life, passionately, on the roads and in the countryside in her country. Against arms and brute force she had chosen her side : without faltering, she remained on the side of the victims. Right up to the end.

University women

The University Women of Europe association, chaired by Dr Jans Gremmee (Netherlands), will soon have eleven members, with the forthcoming affiliation of the Swiss Federation of University Women.

At the instigation of Mrs Elsie Gilliland (Great Britain), a comparative study has been undertaken, to examine, country by country, the discriminatory effects of taxation and social security. Research will be widened to include the legislation on inheritance.

We would also draw attention to the fact that the 21st Conference of the International Federation of University Women is to be held in Groningen (Netherlands) in August 1983.

Useful address : Mrs E.B. Merry
Cloverdale, Canterbury Road,
Wingham, Canterbury
Kent CT3 1NL

Women and graphic art techniques

Issue N° 21 of the bulletin "The Tribune", published by the International Women's Tribune Center Inc., gives a veritable course in graphic arts for beginners, intended for feminist activists. How to write in lettering for posters, what equipment to use, how to draw people, very simplified faces, several examples of illustrations in different formats on different themes, and even an example taken from "Women of Europe" ! Anne S. Walker has successfully produced a nice mix of clarity, imagination and effectiveness.

Useful address : International Women's Tribune Center
305 East 46th Street, 6th Floor
New York, N.Y. 10017

Women farmers

"Women farmers must secure legal recognition for the work on farms which they carry out every day" : this was the main point in the message conveyed to Mr Poul Dalsager, the Member of the European Commission responsible for Agriculture, at a meeting with the representatives of the Women's Committee of COPA (Committee of Agricultural Organizations in the EEC).

It is known that a Directive is being drawn up at the European Commission in connection with the status of certain self-employed women. In addition to women farmers, this Directive concerns the wives of doctors, architects, plumbers etc, i.e. women who play an active part in their husband's business without having their own occupational status.

Mr Dalsager informed the COPA women representatives that he would support his colleague, Mr Richard, who is responsible for Social Affairs, when the proposal is put forward for discussion at the European Commission.

Replacement services for women farmers, vocational training and access to trade organizations and cooperatives were the other themes broached at the meeting. Mrs Boerave-Derijcke, a Belgian parliamentarian and Chair of the COPA Women's Committee, stressed that replacement services were of particular importance to women farmers, to enable them to be fully involved in social, occupational or cultural activities.

Useful address : Commission féminine du COPA
23-25 rue de la Science, Boîte 3
1040 Brussels

Women in key positions

The Members of the European Commission for the period 1985-88 are to be appointed during 1984. Mindful of this deadline, the "Women and Men" association has already drawn up a non-restrictive list of women who might hold a Commissioner's post in the next team. More than twenty-five names are mentioned in all, with a brief reminder of the appointments already held in the recent past. Twenty-five names ? Enough to form a European Commission consisting solely of women ...

The European Commission is not the only institution to which "Women and Men" is giving its attention : a comparable list has been compiled for the seats at the International Court of Justice in The Hague, where nine-year terms of office will fall vacant in 1985, 1988 and 1991.

In support of its action, "Women and Men" has published postcards showing banknotes and coins the main figures on which are women. These cards are being sold for the equivalent of US\$ 2 for ten or US\$ 15 for a hundred.

Useful address : Women and Men
R. Lloyd
10 Piazza Albania
00153 Rome

BELGIUM

Changing books

The "Changeons les livres" (Let's change books) association has embarked this year on an analysis of the books used in secondary education in order to oust the stereotypes found in them.

At the same time, the association has started compiling an inventory of woman illustrators (and those women who deserve to be illustrators) to provide small and adolescent girls with worthwhile examples and models.

Please note that the "Changeons les livres" association is now at a new address.

Useful address : Changeons les livres
16 rue de Chambéry
1040 Brussels

Battered women

A new shelter for battered women opened in Liège recently.

Telephone : 041/23.42.85

Women heads of firms

The Association belge des Femmes chefs d'entreprises (Belgian Association of Women Heads of Firms) persuaded Mrs D'Hondt, Secretary of State for Posts and Telecommunications, to agree to a stamp being issued on the theme "women heads of firms" (value : Bfrs 17). This stamp was issued to the public in mid-April in a set of three stamps, the other two being dedicated respectively to "housewives" (value : Bfrs 7) and "working women" (value : Bfrs 10).

Furthermore, the Belgian association is preparing to host in Brussels at the beginning of June the 31st Congress of Women Heads of Worldwide Firms. The central theme of this encounter is "Communication, an essential factor in economic and social development".

Useful address : Association belge des Femmes chefs d'entreprises
133 avenue de Fré, Boîte 3
1180 Brussels

Abortion

The Women's Committee of the Rassemblement Wallon (Wallon federalist party) has unanimously adopted a position on abortion which has also been unanimously adopted by the governing body of the party. This text is "resolutely opposed to abortion", the causes of which need to be "eradicated". However, the text also calls for a "halt to the legal proceedings in progress so that study of this issue can be resumed with equanimity".

The RW's attitude is interesting, insofar as it has been unanimously adopted by bodies on which there are out-and-out secularists and practising Catholics.

Useful address : Emilie Courtois
Présidente de la Commission féminine fédérale du R.W.
26 Chemin du Meunier
1330 Rixensart

Nationale Vrouwenraad

Work within the Nationale Vrouwenraad (National Council of Women - Dutch-speaking branch) is divided out among eight committees. Contacts and exchanges of experiences with other organizations in the Community are welcome and are encouraged by the President, Lily Boeykens. Here is a list of the committees, together with the names of those in charge :

Family Affairs and Health (Alice Cops); Consumer Affairs (Maureen Wittouck); Environment (Violette Van Steelandt); Legal Affairs (Jo Walgrave); Political Affairs (Lydia De Pauw); Education (Huguette De Bleecker); Development Cooperation (Cecilia Andersen); Labour Affairs (Georgette Dewit).

Useful address : Nationale Vrouwenraad van België
Nederlandstalige Afdeling
Middaglijnstraat 8
1030 Brussels

University women

The Fédération belge des Femmes diplômées des universités (Belgian Federation of Women University Graduates) is offering fellowships for post-graduate research work. In addition to fellowships amounting to Bfrs 15 000 for short trips abroad, the Federation awards, on an alternate basis, a "Claire Préaux Fellowship" (odd years) amounting to Bfrs 50 000 and an "Yvonne Occhino-Kernkamp Fellowship" (even years) worth the same amount, for personal research and scientific work.

Useful address : Fédération belge des Femmes diplômées des universités
18 rue de la Sablonnière
1000 Brussels

DENMARK

Women, research and development

The Women's Research Centre in Social Science, which was set up in the summer of 1980, is continuing, with remarkable perseverance, to publish, in English, important contributions to the seminars which it organizes.

The Centre's latest publication is devoted to the theoretical and methodological problems of research on women in developing countries. In her short introduction, Myra Lewinter notes that there is "an invisible woman" there. If a man keeps cows, he is a stock breeder. If a woman rears goats, she is ignored by economists and does not appear in the national accounts. How can research give this "invisible woman" her substance back ? Another important issue tackled in this recent publication is the relations between researchers and the people who are the subject of the research. The relationships are complex, ranging from compassion to indifference, via solidarity, and are not without ambiguity.

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

FRANCE

Women get away from it all

It is already two years, but scarcely seems so since the association called "Les femmes s'évadent" (Women get away from it all) was set up, on the basis of a simple idea : organizing stays, trips or courses specifically for women, who may or may not be accompanied by their children. For some women, this provides an opportunity for them not to be alone; for others there is the pleasure of going away with other mothers and other children. For others still it is an opportunity at last to live for oneself, to be independent without being solitary.

Here are two recent examples : five days in Florence in mid-May for FF 1 270; ten days in Ramatuelle (Côte d'Azur) at Easter for FF 1 150, excluding travel but inclusive of full board.

Useful address : Les Femmes s'évadent
16 rue Grégoire de Tours
75006 Paris

"Des femmes en mouvement"

Faced with financial difficulties, the weekly newspaper "Des femmes en mouvement" (Women on the move) has stopped publication indefinitely. Published for the first time in 1979, the newspaper was the successor to the monthly "Des femmes" (About women). The only weekly newspaper devised and produced by a team of women only, "Des femmes en mouvement" owed a great deal to the strong personality of its founder, Antoinette Fouque.

Printed on glossy paper, crammed with cultural information and with news from abroad, "Des femmes en mouvement" has undoubtedly left a gap in the feminist press in France.

Water for Kabala

An appeal to all the "Women of Europe" is being made by the Women's Committee of the French Organization of the European Movement, to help the women in the village of Kabala (Mali).

In 1981, faced with rural depopulation as a result of men and young people leaving, the women of Kabala set up a multi-operational Cooperative to take the village's development in hand. Concrete achievements soon emerged but the crucial problem of the lack of water is preventing the efforts made from being fully effective.

At the same period, the Angers women's section of the European Movement was devoting itself to the study of relations between Europe and the Third World. Thus it was that the idea arose of active solidarity between two groups of women, one group in Africa and the other in Europe.

A co-financing dossier has been submitted to the European Commission but FF 300 000 need to be collected to enable the project to be completed. The sum of FF 90 000 has already been collected thanks to support from other women in the European Movement, inter alia. To enable the water pump to become a reality, cheques should be made payable to "Opération Kabala - C.F. du C.E.A".

Useful address : Danièle Senet
"Les Durelleries"
Bouchemaine 49000 Angers

Voluntary workers

For associations to thrive and prosper, there is always the work of volunteers : there are almost 100 000 in the Red Cross, between 600 000 and 800 000 in the world of sport, not to mention youth organizations, parties, trade unions etc. Léa Marcou, in an article published in "Le Monde-Dimanche", reports that the distribution of roles and tasks still bears the strong stamp of sexist stereotypes, despite changes.

Thus, women still form the majority in denominational associations and in social work, while sport remains a male stronghold. The defence of consumers and cultural activities are mixed, but the defence of nature is apparently a purely masculine concern.

Already the author of a survey carried out in 1975 (S'occuper des autres - Caring for others - Published by Fayard), Léa Marcou emphasized that associations create jobs, since they have 600 000 to 650 000 employees.

Young farmers

The C.N.J.A. (Centre national des jeunes agriculteurs - Young Farmers National Centre) devoted a special dossier to women farmers which was published in issue N° 360-83 of the journal "Jeunes agriculteurs". Presenting this document, Régine Gressier states that it is both "a source of information about the rights of women farmers and comprehensive evidence about their working life".

Entitled "I have chosen agriculture", this ample dossier is exceptionally rich in practical information and little known figures. It hinges on four main themes : training, work on the farm, knowledge of rights and entering the rural world. All this is supplemented by a practical "memo" and a bibliography.

Here are some of the little known figures : in State agricultural education, at the lowest level (Certificat d'aptitude professionnelle - vocational training certificate), there are 569 girls out of a total of 3 590 pupils, i.e. 16%. In private agricultural education, which is State-approved, the figure at the same level is 15 049 girls out of 29 172 pupils, i.e. 50%.

There has been an interesting experiment : child-minding centres organized by the C.N.J.A. in collaboration with the Union des Gardes temporaires d'enfants (Union of Temporary Child-Minders). For instance, there are converted caravans which would enable women to benefit from a nursery in their village once a week.

There are testimonies from women farmers who are actively involved in co-operatives, trade unions, municipalities etc. There is one particularly striking account : that of Jeanine Borredon, Director of the Regional Office of the Lot Crédit Agricole (Lot Agricultural Credit Bank). Jeanine Borredon has been involved in associative life for twenty years now and this experience has been invaluable. She is now on the bank's discount committee which examines applications for credit from farmers every week. "In a difficult case I always try to raise the human aspects, to seek to ascertain whether the farmer's wife has been consulted, since in most case she is the one who keeps the accounts, when they exist".

Useful address : Jeunes Agriculteurs
14 rue de la Boétie
75382 Paris CEDEX 08

GERMANY

Children in hospital

A first figure : only 3% of children in hospital are visited daily by one of their parents. A second figure : three hundred women responded to the appeal from the head of a pediatric clinic in Cologne requesting non-medical voluntary help.

The Kinderschutzbund (Association for the Protection of Children) now wants to step up voluntary help for sick children throughout Germany : holding a child's hand, drying tears, playing with, reassuring, encouraging children. This type of action has a positive effect on the psychological equilibrium of the children and facilitates the therapeutic work proper. In addition, experience has shown that there is no real competition as regards the child's feelings for his own parents and for the voluntary worker.

Useful address : Kinderschutzbund e.V.
Laporte-Str. 21 A
3000 Hannover

Vocational training for housewives

The Deutscher Hausfrauenbund (Housewives' Association) recently decided to set up the "DHB-Bildungswerk" (DHB Training School). This decision was taken in order to meet increasing demands for further training from members of the association.

It would in fact be a sort of "management school" where members of the association would become even better acquainted with the economic, political, social and practical problems affecting the lives of housewives.

Furthermore, Anneliese Schimke, who chairs the association, says that she is concerned about the increasingly difficult financial position of families, whose budgets are shrinking. This is why DHB has launched an information campaign and organized seminars to teach housewives to manage more limited resources. The slogan of the campaign is "Do-It-Yourself".

Useful address : Deutscher Hausfrauenbund e.V.
Adenauerallee 193
5300 Bonn 1

The gold rush

There are schemes everywhere, there is the same problem everywhere : where can money be found ? In Berlin, five women have launched a scheme to find money which is then distributed to projects launched by women in all fields: health, culture, legal advice etc.

Useful address : Goldrausch
Gneisenau-Str. 2
1000 Berlin 61

Women and wood

During the winter of 1983-84, an unprecedented exhibition is to be staged in Berlin, which aspires to present works produced by women using this noble material, wood : joinery, domestic architecture, sculpture etc.

Dorothea Schemme, who is behind this project, is already saying that the exhibition will be supplemented by papers, discussions and films on the place of women in wood crafts.

Women from the other countries in the Community are cordially invited to take part in this exhibition. If you wish to take part, you are urgently requested to send a photo of the work to be exhibited, indicating the dimensions. There is no need for undue modesty : it is not a question of exhibiting absolutely perfect works but of opening up reflection and exchanging experiences in a field which has hardly been explored up to now.

Useful address : Dorothea Schemme
Koburgerstr. 4
1000 Berlin 62

A poll

The W.O.M.A.N. association (Welt-Organisation der Mutter Aller Nationen-World Organization of Mothers of All Nations) has carried out a poll, with the help of its members, on Europe as it is perceived. Analysis of the 24 485 replies highlighted the fact that a majority of nine women out of ten are in favour of the European Community. Eight out of ten women consider that the Community has made peace in Europe more of a certainty. Some 92% of women want closer cooperation between the countries of the Community and 8% consider that what has already been achieved is adequate. Nine out of ten women want political cooperation, but only 15% anticipate that this cooperation will be brought about by the end of the century.

With regard to European elections, 53% of the women who responded voted in 1979. Of this figure, nine out of ten would vote again in such elections today. As for the women who were not entitled to vote in 1979, 60% said that they were determined to vote this time round.

Useful address : W.O.M.A.N. - Deutschlandzentrale e.V.
Herbart-Str. 104
2940 Wilhelmshaven

Experiences and a book

Discrimination does exist : we have all encountered it. Sometimes we have managed to react, at other times we have put up with it without flinching. Sometimes even discrimination has crept in so surreptitiously that we have hardly noticed it and then suddenly it has been too late.

Anni Hausladen and Barbara Bläsius are appealing for everyone's evidence, everyone's recollections, in order in the end to **set up** an "Ideas Exchange" in the form of a book. All accounts, ideas and comments would be most welcome.

Useful address : Projektgruppe "Ideenbörse"
Barbara Blasius
Suitbertus-Str. 161
4000 Düsseldorf 1

GREECE

Protection of divorced women

The Synergazomena Gyneikia Somatia (Common Front of Women's Associations) has sent a memorandum to the Minister for Justice and to the Minister for Social Affairs. In this document, the women's associations which are signatories to the memorandum draw attention to the lack of protection for women who, without having committed any misdemeanour and against their wishes, find themselves divorced after four years of separation. This provision is laid down in the recently revised Civil Code.

The Synergazomena Gyneikia Somatia proposes that under certain circumstances, divorced women should qualify for a percentage of their ex-partner's pension or that they should be entitled to another form of compensation. What might be called an "allowance" should then be calculated on the basis of clearly established factors, such as the length of the marriage and the age of the divorced woman.

Proposals along the same lines have been tabled in the Greek parliament by parliamentarians.

Housewives

In a letter sent to the Prime Minister, the Panellinia Enossi Nikokyron (Pan-Hellenic Housewives Union) expresses concern about the rise in the cost of living and shows, with supporting statistics and concrete examples, that the housewife's shopping basket is "shrinking".

The Panellinia Enossi Nikokyron is calling on the government to increase price controls and to ensure that there is better protection of purchasing power.

Useful address : Panellinia Enossi Nikokyron
11 Kaniggos-Str.
Athens T. 141

IRELAND

For rural women

The first sexual information centre for women in a rural area has been opened at Ennis in County Clare. The Clare Women's Centre provides women with an information and counselling service on family planning, cancer detection, pregnancy testing etc.

Useful address : Clare Women's Centre
31 Abbey Street
Ennis
Co. Clare

Women's Talent Bank

The presence of women is only scanty on administrative boards and committees answerable to the public authorities. Could it be that there is a shortage of skilled women in Ireland ? Dr Hazel Boland, the then President of the Council for the Status of Women, answered very firmly : "There are enough qualified women available to ensure that women are represented far more substantially than is the case at present". And the Council for the Status of Women proves it, by publishing the names of eighty women who make up the National Women's Talent Bank.

The Talent Bank has been organized and updated with the assistance of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, the Women's Political Association and three independent women acting as advisers.

Ranging from taxation to dietetics, from the world of business to the health field, from tourism to sport, the list of skills unused up to now is long. "The government must set an example. The contribution made by women cannot be underestimated", concludes Hazel Boland. Names, addresses, university degrees, professional experience and voluntary activities : the public authorities are now fully informed.

Useful address : Council for the Status of Women
54 Merrion Square
Dublin 2

Women at home

A big venture aimed specifically at housewives was organized by the Council for the Status of Women at the end of 1981. Three factors justified this campaign : firstly, two of the biggest organizations of which the Council is made up recruit their members for the most part among housewives; secondly, at the National Women's Forum organized in 1980 after the Copenhagen Conference there were particularly large numbers of housewives in the audience, without them having their own committee or working party; thirdly, two successive Taoiseach (Prime Ministers) - Mr Haughey and Dr FitzGerald - supported the plans for direct contact with housewives. As a result of a contribution from the public authorities, a contract in due and proper form was signed with Bernadette Barry, a professional researcher.

At eight meetings organized specially for housewives who are not members of voluntary organizations, Bernadette Barry managed to collect together some extremely valuable information. For it was chiefly a question of listening to housewives, of encouraging them to express themselves and not "preaching" to them.

In a booklet entitled "Women at Home", Bernadette Barry sets out the outcome of these "Get-Togethers". Over and above even the content of these statements, Bernadette Barry stresses how important it was for the women to speak out, to do so in public, with the certainty of being listened to attentively.

With regard to the various themes tackled, it is impossible to give details here. However, by way of an example, here are a few salient points :

Concerning the status of women : - men and women ought to be able to choose between going out to work and staying at home; - the family's income ought to be shared between husband and wife; - women themselves ought to organize the change; - the Council for the Status of Women ought to be firmer in bringing pressure to bear on the government.

Concerning housing : - the cost of housing ought to be less prohibitive; - local authority housing ought to be completed more quickly; - housing for single parents ought to be arranged in coordination with the local public authorities; - women ought to be involved in housing planning and town planning, to ensure that amenities are made available and that families' requirements are met.

This short list is enough to show that reproaching housewives with not taking an interest in politics should be moderated at the very least.

Useful address : Council for the Status of Women
54 Merrion Square
Dublin 2

ITALY

Women and the cinema

At its annual general meeting, the Consiglio Nazionale Donne Italiane (National Council of Italian Women) organized an interesting round table conference on the theme : "Women and the cinema : a relationship which is developing?"

Ghetto or freedom ? There is no doubt whatsoever that women have complex relations with the "seventh art" which are marked by cultural and social sluggishness. Among the speeches which attracted attention was the one made by Esther De Miro, a film historian, who drew attention to women's outstanding place in the experimental cinema. It is as if women's creativity is stifled in the traditional film industry, whereas it can express itself more freely in experimental cinema.

As a counterbalance to this, the producer Liliana Cavani stressed that it is possible to leave the ghetto and that it is out of date to "discuss the sex of the cinema". Man or woman, it is personal qualities, willpower and the recognition of one's own identity which make a good producer.

Useful address : C.N.D.I.
Via Fabio Massimo, 88
Rome

Women in craft trades

Organized and sponsored by the Consulta Femminile (Women's Advisory Committee) of the Province of Rome, the second exhibition of women's crafts provided an opportunity to highlight the place of women in this sector of the economy.

Of the 61 500 people employed in the crafts industry in the province, 18% are women. These ten thousand craftswomen constitute a big labour force but are also a cultural asset for the community as a whole.

Useful address : Consulta Femminile provinciale di Roma
via S. Eufemia, 19
Rome

A correction

With reference to the Chiesa Valdese (see Women of Europe N° 27), Pastor Giorgio Tourn points out that the woman pastor, Giuliana Gandolfo did not preside over its Synod but that she gave the opening sermon of the proceedings. Furthermore, the Chiesa Valdese has nothing to do with Val d'Aoste, since it is located further to the south, in the valleys of Pellice and Chisone. Lastly, although the Valdese evangelical movement does date back to 1170, it was only at the beginning of the XVIth century that the Church as such was founded.

Useful address : Società di Studi Valdesi
Via Roberto D'Azeglio, 2
10066 Torre Pellice (To)

Accounts and results of associations

At the instigation of the Lyoness Club, a round table conference was organized in Rome on the theme : "Women's associations : accounts and results". Among the prominent people invited to speak on this occasion Senator Rosa Jervolino Russo, on behalf of the CIF (Women's Information Centre), drew a distinction between the form and the substance of the acceptance of women in society. According to this speaker, these would be the current and future stages in the action of women's associations, after having already secured legal recognition and the involvement of women in the life of society.

Tullia Caretoni Romagnoli, MEP, speaking on behalf of the UDI (Union of Italian Women), spoke of her experience over thirty-five years of political activity. This speaker emphasized the importance for women of remaining united, since their joint action was far from over. Our era, she stated, is being marked by the action taken by women and by their influence on the development of society.

Beatrice Rangoni Machiavelli, a member of the Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities, speaking on behalf of the ANDE (National Association of Women Electors), highlighted the decisive contribution made by women's associations to improving the position of women throughout Europe. The speaker pointed to the influence brought to bear by women's organizations in the drawing up of the Community Action Programme on Equal Opportunities.

Useful address : Lyoness Club
Corso Trieste 123
Rome

Change the city

Architects, town planners, engineers and surveyors, professors and local officials were all urged to "Change the city" at a meeting arranged by the Women's Affairs Section of the P.S.I. (Italian Socialist Party).

In the course of two working days, with Elena Marinucci in the chair, socialist women designed a new town, which tallied with their beliefs. A town in which the desire to be a woman in a men's society could be expressed, as could "the desire to change life to produce a society where everyone is equal".

Useful address : Sezione "Questione Femminile"
P.S.I.
Via del Corso 476
Rome

"Women of Europe" is published every two months except during the summer, in the seven official languages of the European Communities

as are

"Supplements to Women of Europe", the latest titles published being :

- N° 7 Women at Work in the European Community - 50 questions
- 50 answers
- N° 8 Women in Spain
- N° 9 The Community's Action Programme on the Promotion of
Equal Opportunities for Women
- N° 10 Women in Statistics
- N° 11 Women in Portugal

LUXEMBOURG

Women trade unionists

The women's section of the OGB-L (Independent Confederation of Luxembourg Trade Unions) has prepared a memorandum on the greater involvement of women in the working world.

In this document, women trade unionists point out that women are more badly affected by unemployment than men and denounce the dual burden of job and home, the lack of collective amenities, the lack of vocational training and the low wages policy which ensues, not forgetting employers' fears that women may give up their jobs after having a child and the difficulty which women experience in going back to their jobs after a break.

The women trade unionists in the OGB-L are demanding access to all occupations for women, the same chances of recruitment and promotion, and equal pay for equal work. They also feel that the social security schemes for women are incomplete and should be reformed on the basis of the same principle which governs civil law, namely the equality of the partners. The women trade unionists are calling in particular for the recognition of six years of service for each child when pensions are calculated.

In addition, the women of the OGB-L are requesting the possibility of the mother or the father spending a year at home after the birth of a child, with the guarantee that they will not lose their job and with State compensation. They are also calling for the introduction of a maternity allowance for women who work, the setting up of adequate numbers of crèches and lastly special leave for the mother or the father should the child be ill.

Useful address : OGB-L
60 Bld John Kennedy
B.P. 149
Esch-sur-Alzette

Fewer abortions

For the first time in its eighteen years of existence the "Planning familial" (Family Planning Centre) has recorded a fall in requests for abortions. Down from 6% to 3%, this figure is seen by the people in charge