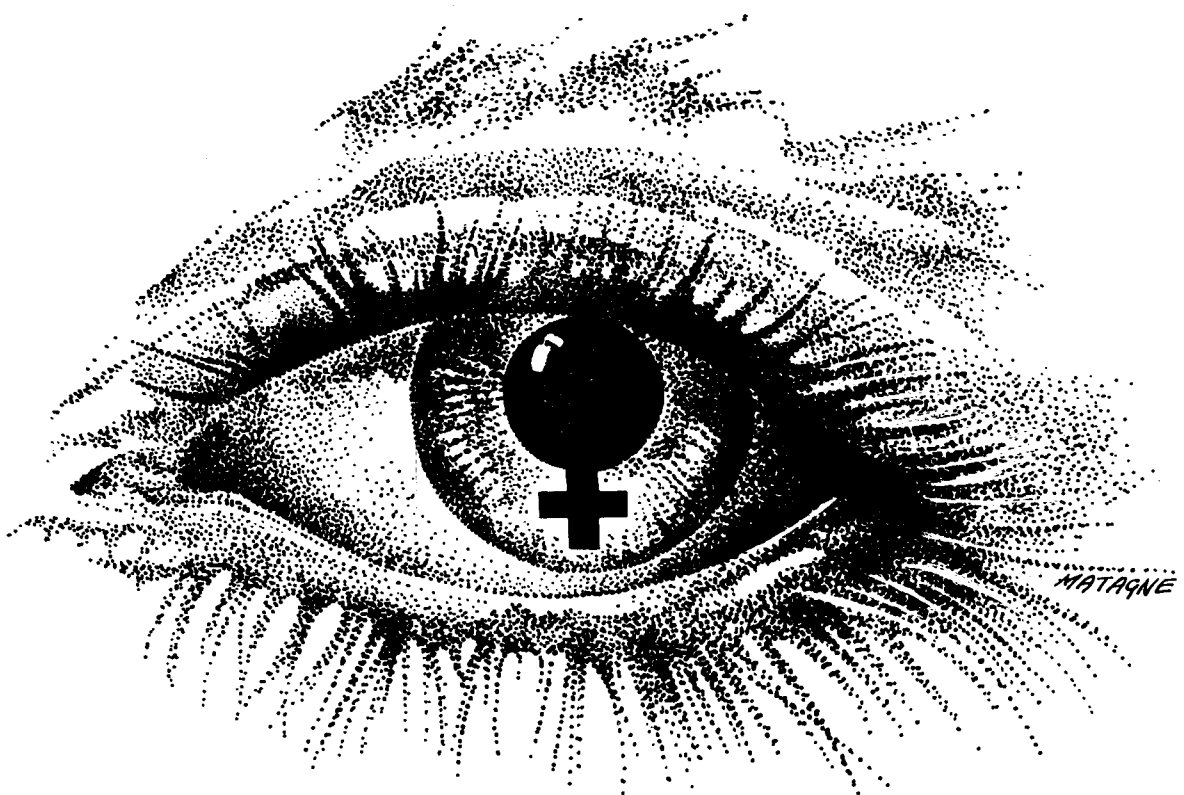


Women of Europe

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IN THIS ISSUE

	page
European Parliament	
The ad hoc committee on women's rights	3
Plenary session of Parliament	4
The Copenhagen Conference	
The official Conference	7
The Forum	12
Facts, Institutions and Laws	15
Women of Greece, welcome!	27
Militant activities	31
The changing European Community	49
Research, meetings and books	55

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E U R O P E A N P A R L I A M E N T

The ad hoc committee on women's rights is pressing on with its work. On returning from their holidays, the committee members found the draft general report prepared by Mrs. Hanja May-Weggen (Dutch Christian Democrat) waiting for them on their desks.

Mrs. May-Weggen's document starts with a "*motion for a resolution*" which the ad hoc committee - after discussion and amendment - will submit to European Parliament for a vote. In short it is a "catalogue" of the steps that should be taken by the European Community to improve the lot of its women citizens. The second part of the document is an explanatory memorandum giving the overall picture of the situation and listing the problems that arise and the measures already adopted in every field within the purview of the Community.

The members of the committee on women's rights are now discussing the draft report in detail; for instance, in response to a suggestion by Mrs. Fullet (French Socialist), this parliamentary committee has decided that one of the issues covered by the general report should be the violence to which women are subjected in their own homes.

Responding to suggestions from Mrs. Roudy, Mrs. Fullet and Mrs. Lizin, the committee has decided to tackle the problems of living of immoral earnings and the traffic in human lives for the purpose of prostitution. In the words of Anne-Marie Lizin (Belgian Socialist), "Europe is a field of action for pimping networks, and it is at this level that the issue must be faced and action taken". An approach to the problem will be made in the general report, which will call for a survey on "the traffic in human beings for the purpose of prostitution in the nine Member States to draw up a policy of prevention and reinstatement and to coordinate the systematic repression of living of immoral earnings."

The committee has met Mr. Vredeling, the member of the European Commission with special responsibility for social affairs, who presented a statement drawn up by the Commission and guidelines for Community action on behalf of women.

Another member of the European Commission with whom the ad hoc committee has been in contact was Mr. Cheysson, who has special responsibility for development policy. "The evolution of women," stressed Claude Cheysson, is linked with the progress made by society; they will be its victims or its main beneficiaries."

During the discussion, it was pointed out that no more than 13% of the training scholarship which the European Community awards to nations in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific go to women. It should be borne in mind that 75% of Third World women are illiterate, thus creating a vicious circle: since women cannot read and write, they have no access to the training they need more than anyone else.

Mr. Cheysson assured the committee that he would keep a very close watch on the efforts being made by his departments to see that women derive greater profit from development aid.

Mrs. Squarcialupi (Italian Communist) submitted a detailed report on sexual mutilation, a particularly delicate subject since "many women do not yet realise that they are subjected to an injustice beyond measure, just as they are unaware that they can ask for justice". Mr. Cheysson, for his part,

emphasized that this is a problem of education and information. He advised against "any European action that might be seen as provocative or an attack on the traditions of the country concerned". A good deal of tact should be deployed to encourage thought about sexual mutilation so that such practices will in the end be rejected by women themselves.

The position of women in agriculture was the subject of a working document drawn up by Anne-Marie Lizin (Belgian Socialist). The proposals it contains will be embodied in the ad hoc committee's general report.

Women in small and medium-sized firms is, together with women and social security, the central theme of the public hearing arranged by the ad hoc committee in Milan, a subject to which Women of Europe will return in its next issue.

Plenary session of Parliament

After the holiday adjournment, European Parliament settled back to work again in Strasbourg in September.

During a sitting featuring many debates of a political nature (on Poland, Turkey and Bolivia), Parliament wound up its debate on the campaign against world hunger by adopting the motion tabled by Bruno Ferrero (Italian Communist). The outcome of lengthy discussion in committee, the resolution sets out a list of proposals for rural and agricultural development in developing nations, food aid and trade in agricultural and food products.

Mrs. Focke (German Socialist) is the author of a working document on European Community food aid and emergency aid. Acknowledging that food aid is still vital, she nonetheless said that it should be given on a multiannual basis so as not to discourage efforts by receiving countries to find their own supplies. Mrs. Focke also regretted the restrictive attitude taken by her own Government at United Nations debates on relaunching North-South negotiations.

Another German Socialist, Mrs. Wieczorek-Zeul, was the rapporteur for the Committee on External Economic Relations. She pleaded that European markets be made more open to Third World products and called for a closer watch over the dealings of European firms in the sector of food products being exported to the Third World.

The rapporteur speaking for the Committee on the Environment and Public Health, the Italian Communist Vera Squarzialupi, raised a fundamental issue: the struggle to combat the diseases by which the peoples of the Third World are decimated. The Community must devise a true policy in this field, in which both facilities and people are involved.

Many women made their voices heard in this long-running debate, urging the need for prompt and practical help.

Mrs. Cassanmagnago-Cerretti (Italian, Christian Democrat), for instance, stressed that voting in the forthcoming Community budget would provide the opportunity for proving that we really want to practise what we preach.

Mrs. Spaak (Belgium, FDF) called for a choice to be made from the various measures proposed in the Ferrero resolution, whereas Mrs. Agnelli (Italian, Liberal group) suggested creating a "peaceful and humanitarian" action group capable of taking emergency action anywhere in the world.

Louise Weiss (French, European Progressive Democrats) called on Governments to take into account the respect for human rights in developing nations at the time of deciding on aid policy. Raising the problem of population, Mrs. Dienesch, of the same group, wondered about the motivation of western countries when encouraging developing nations to reduce their birth rate. In her opinion, it is a form of fear when faced with the threat of demographic power.

The Italian Radical, Emma Bonino, together with her colleagues in the same group, did not vote for the resolution as it does not require Governments to comply immediately with their commitment to allocate at least 0.70% of their gross national product to public aid.

Once again, European Parliament turned to the problems of the steel industry. It adopted two resolutions (one on the initiative of Mrs. Salisch, German, acting on behalf of the Socialist group) asking the Commission and Council to implement the social measures required to help the industry as soon as possible.

The problem of equal opportunities for women within the Commission was raised again by members of European Parliament during question time. In reply to a question by Roland Boyes (British, Labour), Mr. Vredeling spoke for the Commission and said that the method of recruitment should in principle afford equal opportunities for women, although things do not always work out in practice. The highest grade achieved by women officials in the Commission is A2. An internal working party is to prepare a report on Commission procedures. According to Mr. Vredeling, however, there is no question of establishing quotas for women officials in certain grades.

On the fringe of European Parliament's plenary sitting, on the initiative of the ad hoc committee on women's rights, an exhibition of photographs illustrating the effects of apartheid on women is being held in Strasbourg. Opened by the president of European Parliament, Mrs. Veil, and Mrs. Roudy, the chairman of the ad hoc committee, the exhibition includes a large number of very interesting documents on loan from the United Nations Centre in Brussels (108 rue d'Arlon, 1040 Brussels). The director of the Centre, Miss Gastaut, considers that this venture is an example of the way in which special measures to aid African women can be applied, in response to the call at the Copenhagen conference.

Wives and the Taxman

In reply to a parliamentary question, the European Commission listed the arrangements in individual countries for the taxation of wives.

- Belgium The earned incomes of married couples are not aggregated if the total is Bfr.375,000 or under. Where the incomes are aggregated, they qualify for a supplementary allowance of Bfr.56,000.
- Italy Married couples are taxed separately.
- Denmark,
U.K.,
Ireland,
Netherlands In certain cases, separate taxation of some of the earned income of spouses is allowed, although the income categories eligible for this type of taxation and the conditions governing its application vary considerably.
- Germany Under the "splitting" system, the combined income of married couples is halved to determine the rate of tax applicable.
- France Under the "family quotient" system, the combined income of husband and wife is divided into a number of parts according to family responsibilities to determine the rate of tax applicable to each part.
- Luxembourg A supplementary allowance is granted where both the husband and the wife receive wages or salary, and the "splitting" procedure is used to calculate the tax payable.

This information does not take account of any changes that have been made in the course of 1980.

The Macciocchi affair

European Parliament has called on the French Government to reverse its decision to do away with the post of associate professor held by the member of Italian Parliament, Maria Antonietta Macciocchi, at Paris VIII University. Without going into the legal quibbles, Parliament expressed its belief that Europe "cannot live and fulfil itself unless it is a Europe of culture".

THE COPENHAGEN CONFERENCE

Danske Kvinders Nationalraad - the Danish National Women's Council - spared no effort to ensure that the conference in Copenhagen would be a success. "Women of Europe" would like to express its admiration of the imagination and generosity of the Danish women and their willingness to work day and night. The account of the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women has been sent to us by the Danske Kvinders Nationalraad (only the headings, sub-headings and layout of pages are the work of "Women of Europe").

Copenhagen, the world capital for women

Thousands of women came together in Copenhagen from all quarters of the globe in the summer of 1980 to take part in the United Nations conference and the mid-decade forum.

The whole thing started with the Women's Year in 1975. During the summer of that year, UNO held a women's conference in Mexico at which a programme of world action was adopted - a sort of weapon to fight for equal rights for women and their participation in development and in the preservation of peace. The programme of action was confirmed by UNO, which also declared that the ten-year period from 1975 to 1985 would be the "Decade for Women".

It was also decided in Mexico that another conference would be held in five years' time, at which the results achieved could be reviewed and a plan could be drawn up for work over the second half of the decade. This interim conference, organized by UNO, took place in Copenhagen from 14 to 30 July 1980.

The mid-decade forum was organized by non-governmental organizations with consultative status at UNO. In so doing, they followed an example that has almost become a tradition: holding a meeting of the "shop floor" groups that parallels the UNO conference and deals with the same themes as that official conference.

The UNO Conference

UNO conferences are major and very solemn events to which United Nations member states send their official delegations. They have a pre-set agenda, a set time for speakers, a list of speakers drawn up in advance and very little room for the spontaneous.

UNO had prepared substantial working documents for the Copenhagen conference. Information supplied by member states on progress in implementing the world programme of action was collated and all the information was sent out to the member state delegations beforehand.

The amount of progress made was not very great. It is true that various improvements had been achieved with regard to certain specific points, but most reports were of stagnation, even regression.

The main theme of the Copenhagen conference was the same as for the Decade for Women: equality, development and peace. Within this framework, however, the conference concentrated on three fields: training, employment and health.

On the three committees, the conference had to contend with mountains of paper relating to basic information, drafts and proposed amendments. A plenary session of the conference was held parallel to the committee meetings. Each country had a quarter of an hour to present its own report on women's position nationally and on the position it had adopted regarding the problems being considered by the conference.

The final day of the conference was used to present a suggested programme of action for the last half of the decade. Late that night, the programme was adopted at the final vote by a majority of those attending the conference.

The programme of action

The programme is a bulky document setting out a total of 218 points.

It begins with a historical review of women's position, followed by a chapter setting out the conceptual framework and the basic data. It goes on to define the objectives of national and international activities. A special section is devoted to the subject of assistance for certain special groups of women such as the victims of apartheid, refugees and Palestinians.

The conference also approved 48 resolutions pertaining to a series of economic and cultural problems involving women immigrants, the handicapped, battered wives, prostitutes, etc.

In many respects the working programme is a revision of the world plan of action adopted at the Mexico conference, but it also contains chapters that are entirely new.

One of these chapters discusses the role of women's associations in societies, calling upon governments to involve such groups in their work, particularly any work on implementing the programme of action. Governments are also asked to give women's organizations moral and financial support.

A resolution on the problems of migrant women also broached a new subject not included in the original world plan of action.

Compared with the world plan of action, the programme of action contains new observations on the influence of the economy on the situation of women. A close link has been established between several points in the programme of action and stress was placed on the need for a new international economic order. A clear-cut statement was made that women's opportunities for promotion and equality depend on their financial status, access to credit and the ownership of property and their access to the production system, sales channels and paid employment.

The work done at the UNO conference was on the whole marked by its objectivity and the desire to concentrate on the concrete problems faced by women. At certain moments, however, the discussions were dominated by the problems of international politics.

An emotional occasion

It is rare for official ceremonies to arouse emotion, but there were many people with a lump in the throat when the time came to sign the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women adopted by the UNO General Assembly on 18 December 1979.

As each country's name was called, in most cases it was a woman who rose to her feet in the great hall of the Bella Centre. Instead of the sober clothing worn by professional diplomats, the hall was brightened by a diversity of national costumes. Above all, women themselves committed both their own futures and the nations they represented by their signatures.

For the first time in world history, an international convention was signed by a majority of women. The names of 51 countries were called out one by one; 11 countries had already signed the Convention before the Conference.

An ink scrawl at the foot of a document is a very modest token of the incessant activities of millions of women. What needs to be done now is for national governments to ratify - in other words, implement - the Convention. In those parliaments, women are not so numerous as at the Bella Centre.

The task facing women's organizations now is to launch into action to make their governments translate into reality something that is still only a declaration of intent.

Two paragraphs in the programme of action relating to the Middle East situation sparked off very lively debate.

The first concerns the struggle against all forms of discrimination and lists a number of examples, including imperialism, colonialism, zionism, racism and apartheid.

The second deals with aid to Palestinian women and recommends that this assistance be provided jointly and in cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization.

A number of countries refused to place zionism on a par with racism and expressed some doubt when the time came to define procedures for providing aid to Palestinian women.

When a separate vote was taken on each of these paragraphs, the countries in question (mainly Western nations) voted against them or abstained. Nonetheless, the paragraphs were adopted by a majority of votes. When the programme of action was put to the vote as a whole, 94 countries voted in favour, 22 abstained (including the Scandinavian nations and EEC member states) and 4 voted against (United States, Canada, Australia and Israel).

It is hard to predict the consequences of this voting pattern to the implementation of the programme but since a large majority of the countries approved most of the points submitted to them they feel themselves to be under an obligation to put the programme into practice.

Extreme poverty

A resolution adopted without a vote was one in which the Conference launched an "urgent appeal to all women and all men to concern themselves primarily with the rights of women who, with their families, still live in intolerable conditions of poverty, and to all governments to study and eliminate the socio-economic causes of poverty".

In the same motion, the Conference "urged women to take more action in support of the efforts made by the poorest women in pursuit of their aspirations and interests and their right to a voice and participation in public affairs, to social progress, to development and to the enjoyment of world peace".

In a preamble to this appeal, the Conference considered that in many regions of the world the poverty of some sections of the population had worsened during the first half of the Decade for Women.

The attention devoted by the Conference to the issue of abject poverty was due above all to the ceaseless efforts and the impressive report formulated by the international movement A.T.D. (Aid to all Distress) - Fourth World. This report emphasized how great a gap has been created between women who in fact enjoy the benefits of emancipation and those who are kept in a state of subjection by their poverty.

Useful address: Mouvement international A.T.D. Quart Monde
197 avenue du Général Leclerc
F-95480 Pierrelaye

Difficulties shared by women

The official Conference and the Forum showed up great differences in the status, training and attitude of women, but it also showed that women are faced with the same fundamental difficulties throughout the world.

In the words of Lise Østergaard, the Danish Minister of Culture who was elected Conference President, "we all have the same problems, it is just that we have come to different stages of development".

In every society, the education that women receive is of a lower standard than men's.

Women are given the most menial, the lowest paid and the least regarded jobs.

Women have little influence over decision-making.

Throughout the world, women shoulder the main responsibility for children, the sick and the elderly.

Women are more or less excluded from the economic system.

This last point was emphasized in the UNO Conference working document which traced a picture of the economic status of women:

- women make up a half of the world population;
- women account for one third of the recognized labour force (those in paid employment);
- women do more than 60% of the total number of hours worked;
- women receive only 10% of the wages and salaries paid in the world as a whole;
- women own less than 1% of world wealth (land and property, capital, means of production, etc.).

A few figures

145 countries sent delegations (compared with a total of 133 in Mexico).

There were 1326 delegates, 1019 of whom were women.

127 delegations were headed by women, 18 by men.

1270 journalists and mass-media specialists were accredited to the Conference.

Nearly 200 speeches were made during the plenary session.

Almost 3 million pages were printed and distributed.

Danske Kvinders Nationalraad
Niels Hemmingsensgade 8
1153 Copenhagen

The Forum

Concurrent with the sessions of the official Conference at the Bella Centre, a Forum of non-governmental organizations was being held at Copenhagen's Amager University.

For ten days, close on 8,000 women from 127 countries created their own conference, as unofficial as possible. A hundred or so round table discussions, seminars and working groups were arranged each day, attended by 250 African women, 350 Latin-Americans, 800 Asiatics, 950 North American women and almost 5,400 Europeans, including 3,300 Danish women, without forgetting women from the Caribbean and the Middle East.

The subjects tackled were too numerous to list, ranging from violence to technology and from breast-feeding to banking systems.

The venue for discussions on the themes chosen for the official Conference was the Royal School for Librarians, where some of the best known personalities in the women's movement were to be heard and encountered in person: the Bolivian Domitila Barrios de Changara, Maria Lourdes di Pintassilgo (former premier of Portugal), the Senegalese sociologist Marie Angélique Savané, Betty Friedan from America and her fellow-citizen, Hilda Bernstein, famous for her prolonged struggle against apartheid, as well as Ester Boserup, the first economist to have pointed to the links between women's status and economic development.

A forum within the Forum, "Exchange" provided a meeting place - with the help of Women's Studies International - for women committed to the campaign for development. Through international solidarity, the travel costs of a large number of women from every region in the world had been paid. As the result of several months' preparatory work, Exchange brought together about twenty working groups to study development technology and the use of the mass media in the education of women.

Women's Studies International is a joint title covering several groups: Feminist Press (U.S.), National Women's Research Association (U.S.), Women's University Bombay (India) and the Institut Simone de Beauvoir in Montreal (Canada). Their efforts were focussed on four seminars: on a more searching view of knowledge about women; non-sexist teaching /educational materials; women and public property; and curricula of studies for women. They were supplemented by a good ten round-table discussions on more specialist themes such as "women and literature" and "feminism and its new horizons".

These are only a few examples of the Forum's countless activities. Each day, "Forum '80", a newspaper brought out by a team of independent journalists, summarized the work of the official Conference, reported on the mass of activity at the Forum and devoted a full page to the plans for the following day, with inevitable last-minute changes.

In practice, every group, every organization and even every person attending could go to the organizers and obtain a meeting room and even equipment to show their films and slides.

One feature of the Forum deserves special mention: Vivencia. Five years before, in Mexico, the need was felt to improve communications among women and organizations. All those taking part had realised how little they knew of the true extent of the women's movement. The International Women's Tribune Centre decided to take things in hand - to the extent feasible! - and Vivencia was born.

Vivencia was just a space, in actual fact a dining room in the University where anyone was entitled to display her publications and documents, a mini-exhibition or an information panel. There was no programme or planned activity but an "agora" where, as in ancient Greek cities, people could meet to talk freely, groups could form as they found common ground and as easily disperse. There is no doubt that the most fruitful and the most unexpected contacts were made at Vivencia.

Whereas it was the lot of Palestinian women refugees and the victims of apartheid that was the subject most aired on the platform of the official Conference, in the Forum the main issue was that of civil rights for women in every quarter of the globe. The Forum was the venue for the Argentinian women of the Plaza De Mayo who were without news of their imprisoned children, the tortured women from San Salvador, the Chilean women in exile, the Bolivian women who had suffered from yet another coup d'état, the Jewish women from Arab countries, the women from Western Sahara and even Russian women who had been driven out of their country.

Brought face to face with these terrible first-hand accounts, those at the Forum were reinforced in their shared desire to fight against inequality, injustice and suffering and to fight for peace. Half a million signatures collected by the (Scandinavian) Women's Peace Movement were placed on the Conference table.

It was agreed that no resolution binding on the Forum as a whole would be passed. Although a few documents were forwarded to the Conference, they committed only their signatories. This rule of procedure was seen as frustrating by some women but it had the virtue of reflecting reality. The Forum was a place where many views were aired and it would have been useless to try to create a majority, still less a unanimous, opinion.

K I K

Many events were arranged in the field of the arts, most of them by the leaders of KIK (Kulturel Information og Koordination - "cultural information and coordination"). A moving picture of women's creativity was conveyed by the concerts, exhibitions of paintings and sculptures, theatre performances, literary talks, films, etc. The occasion even saw the birth of an international organization of women's artists. For further information, write to Annelise Hansen, KIK, c/o DKN, Niels Hemmingsensgade 10, 1153 Copenhagen.

Women and development in UNO

The eleventh extraordinary session of the U.N. General Assembly from 25 August to 15 September was devoted to international economic cooperation and development. Mrs. Lucille Mair, Secretary General to the Copenhagen Conference, took the opportunity to stress the fundamental links between women's status and economic and social development.

The working documents relating to the new international economic order often refer to this principle. The statement has been made that the full and effective participation of the whole population in all phases of development must be obtained, as envisaged in the Plan of Action formulated by the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women. Appropriate measures should be adopted to bring about profound social and economic changes and to eliminate the forms of structural imbalance that make women's status even more disadvantaged than before and which prevent her from making progress. To this end, all countries should make an effort to ensure that women are involved in the process of development in every sector and at every level, on a par with men both as active participants and as beneficiaries.

It is impossible to give a full account here of a Conference so full of interest.

For further information on the Copenhagen Conference, please contact one of the following United Nations information centres.

Belgium, Netherlands and Luxembourg	U-N Information and Liaison Office 108 rue d'Arlon <u>B - 1040 Brussels</u>
Denmark	U-N Information Centre 37 H. - C. Andersen's Boulevard <u>1553 Copenhagen</u>
France	U-N Information Centre 4/6 avenue de Saxe <u>75700 Paris</u>
Germany	United Nations Information Service Palais de Nations <u>1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland</u>
Greece	U-N Information Centre 36 Amalia Avenue <u>Athens 119</u>
Italy	U-N Information Centre Palazzetto Venezia, Piazza San Marco 50 <u>Rome</u>
United Kingdom and Ireland	U-N Information Centre 14/15 Stratford Place <u>London W1N 9AF</u>

FACTS, INSTITUTIONS AND LAWS

B E L G I U M

A new ministerial committee

The Belgian Government has decided to set up a "ministerial committee for women's status".

The subjects on the preliminary agenda for the committee include arrangements for hours of work, social security, civil rights and a plan for creating a minimum quota for women candidates at local elections.

The committee is to be chaired by the Prime Minister, backed by Mrs. Van Raemdonck, advisor to the Government on women's status.

Useful address: Comité Ministériel pour le Statut de la Femme
Cabinet du Premier Ministre
16 rue de la Loi
1000 Brussels

A law that concerns YOU

"Equal status for men and women: a law that concerns you!" is the translation of the explicit title of a booklet published by Belgium's committee on women's work and the Ministry of Employment and Labour. It has also been brought out in Dutch under the title "De gelijke behandeling van mannen en vrouwen: een wet die ook U aangaat!".

Useful address: Vrouwenarbeid Kommissie Commission du Travail des Femmes
Belliardstraat 51 51 rue Belliard
1040 Brussels 1040 Brussels

A woman standard-bearer

For the first time in the history of the Belgian Army, a regimental flag has been carried by a woman.

The standard of the 4th Training Centre - which numbers many women - has been entrusted to a female 2nd lieutenant escorted by five female NCOs.

F R A N C E

Widows' insurance

A bill tabled by Mrs. Monique Pelletier, Minister for the Family and Women's Status, setting up a form of "widows' insurance" has now become law.

With effect from 1 January 1981, widows aged under 55 who have had children will receive a monthly allowance if their income is lower than a certain level. The allowance will be fr.1,500 a month for the first year after they have lost their husband, fr.1,000 during the second year and fr.750 during the third year.

In France, there are more than three million widows; 175,000 women lose their husbands each year and, of this number, about a quarter are under 55 years of age.

Useful address: Ministère délégué à la Condition féminine
39-43 Quai André Citroën
75015 Paris

Sexuel information

Since 1 June 1980, an information centre serving women and the family has been replying to telephone questions regarding sex and parenthood.

Along the lines of the service covering legal and social matters, work and practical life, a new team of specialists is available to answer queries from the public, on telephone no. 544.56.46 or 705.33.60 in Paris. There are plans for gradually establishing this type of information service in other women's information centres in the province.

Useful address: Centre d'Information féminin et familial
Boîte postale 400
75327 Paris - Cedex 07

Making adoption easier

Various official measures have been adopted in France to promote adoption. Since 1970, the number of adoptions taking place each year has doubled from 2,409 to 4,802 in 1977. Over the same period, the number of children available for adoption has fallen sharply from 46,000 to 23,000. This reduction is a reflection of a greater ability to regulate pregnancies and the extra help being given to unmarried mothers.

Useful address: Ministère de la Condition féminine
39-43 Quai André Citroën
75015 Paris

Help for large families

Action to support large families is being considered or has already been decided upon in France. From 1 July 1980, for instance, maternity leave for mothers with large families has been increased from four to six months (eight weeks before childbirth and eighteen weeks after). About 45,000 women will be affected by the new measure every year, according to the Ministry for Women's Status.

Minors from families with at least three children must be accepted by canteens, day nurseries, holiday camps for children, etc., even if only one of the parents is in paid employment. This measure should ease the burden of mothers of large families who are not in employment.

Post-natal allowances will be paid in a lump sum, not in three instalments spread out over a period of two years, when a baby is born to a larger family. Apart from simplifying official procedures, parents are given financial support when they need it most, in the month after childbirth.

Useful address: Ministère délégué à la Condition féminine
39-43 Quai André Citroën
75015 Paris

Protestantism and Women

Claudette Marquet, a minister in the French Reformed Church, has been quoting a few facts and figures on the position of women in the churches arising after the Reformation, in an article appearing in Le Monde (17 July 1980, page 2).

A woman is the vice president of the Protestant Federation of France, and several women are on the Federation Council. Of the twenty members of the National Council, the governing body of the French Reformed Church, five are women, one of these being the vice president.

Women have been allowed to engage in pastoral duties as ministers in their own right since the end of the war in the case of the Lutherans, since 1966 in the Reformed Church. There are a good fifty women out of a total of about 1,100 ministers in all the churches combined.

Mothers at University

Mrs. Monique Pelletier, Minister for the Family and Women's Status, has pushed through a law which will make it easier for mothers to enter university. A law enacted in November 1968 paved the way by promoting access to university education by those who have already embarked upon their working careers, whether or not they already hold university qualifications. The scope of this law has now been extended to mothers who may, on certain conditions, gain access to university education and diplomas.

Useful address: Ministère de la Famille et de la Condition féminine
39-43 Quai André Citroën
75015 Paris

Information on women's employment

The Comité du Travail féminin - "women's employment committee" - has brought out an analytical report on the documentation and information seminar on women's employment held in May 1979.

More than 200 people took part in the symposium, where they considered ways of setting up and organizing a widespread system for the gathering, processing and distribution of facts and figures on women's employment.

Useful address: Comité du Travail féminin
1 Place de Fontenoy
75700 Paris

G E R M A N Y

At school

Figures published by the Federal Ministry of Education and Science show that some progress has been made: only 47% of pupils leaving school at the end of their primary education are girls; 54% of those who leave school at the end of secondary education are girls, and 49% of those who complete their education at the gymnasium or lycée.

A growing number of women are attending evening courses: 46% of the total, according to the latest figures available.

The great problem continues to be early vocational training for women, who tend to opt for a short period of training, restricted to what have traditionally been women's trades and crafts.

Useful address: Bundesministerium für Bildung und Wissenschaft
5300 Bonn

Equality before the Courts

Responding to an objection raised by the works council, an industrial tribunal has forced the Miele company to rescind its appointment of a man whom it decided to hire rather than a woman with equal qualifications on the grounds that she "would get married and have children".

Useful address: Arbeitsgericht Frankfurt
Pressestelle
6000 Frankfurt

Women in the police force

It is becoming increasingly common to find women police officers in certain regions in Germany. In Hamburg, Berlin, Hesse and Lower Saxony, for instance, women have received the same police training as men, including practice in marksmanship - although their work is usually more peaceable. Policewomen are in general the officers who are called in when the offenders, or victims, are women or children.

Speaking in Hanover, the Minister, Mr. Möcklingshoff, has expressed his wish to see policewomen being made more specifically responsible for contact with the general public in every district of the city. In Hamburg, where there are already over 150 policewomen, 50 women are to be recruited every year, a policy which is being closely watched by the other regions where Hamburg's example may be followed.

Useful addresses: Innensenator des Landes Berlin
1000 Berlin

Senator für Inneres
2000 Hamburg 1

Innenminister des Landes Niedersachsen
4000 Hanover

Innenminister des Landes Hessen
6000 Wiesbaden

Businesswomen

It is always hard for a woman to achieve a position of responsibility in a large company, although a growing number of women are holding senior posts in sales, marketing, finance and personnel departments. According to an employers' representative at a hearing in the Bundestag (the German Federal Parliament), one of their faults is "a tendency to gossip".

Training is a great hurdle. Only one out of four women white- and blue-collar workers is employed in a skilled job.

It is hardly surprising, then, that many women start up in business in a small way so that they "can be their own boss". Second-hand clothes, craft products, food, art galleries: women are willing to have a go at many projects. In theory, the chambers of industry and trade in all the larger towns have the facilities to give free advice to women who want to start their own businesses.

Useful address: Industrie- und Handelskammer (in each town in question).

I R E L A N D

Coping with baby

Maire Geoghegan Quinn, Ireland's first woman cabinet minister, has some encouraging words for women with family responsibilities who also want to go into politics: "do it". In a newspaper interview, she reveals that her most hectic period as a junior minister came during Ireland's six-month EEC presidency last year. Her boss, Industry and Commerce Minister Des O'Malley, was occupied with EEC business in the period coinciding with the birth of her second son. "I wanted to breast-feed him," she says, "so I kept him with me...I got on with the work of preparing legislation and all the jobs which the Minister would normally do. Mind you, I got a lot of support from the staff in the Department and from the Minister."

Off the air!

A radio programme called "Women Today", presented by Marian Finucane, has been causing raised hackles and applause in roughly equal proportions in Ireland over the past year. The series was put on the air in the first place as a result of criticism from the Council for the Status of Women regarding the lack of air space given to women.

The series was unique in that it was not only beamed at women listeners but also featured feminist issues and was presented by women. It tackled subjects looked on as taboo: for instance, a programme dealing with sexuality was taken off the air because of complaints from some listeners. This in turn created a furore and Radio Eireann, the national broadcasting authority, was besieged with callers demanding its return.

According to the presenter, the programme on family law created most listener interest.

Useful address: Women Today
Radio Eireann
Dublin

Divorce still illegal

Mr. Gerry Collins, Ireland's Justice Minister, has confirmed that the Government has no plans to amend the constitutional prohibition of divorce. Dr. Noel Browne, an Independent member of Irish Parliament, sought to change the position when he tried to launch a motion during Private Members' Time.

The Divorce Action Group, backed by the Irish Council of Civil Liberties, is continuing its fight. It has drawn attention to the figures: an estimated 20,000 people in Ireland are separated, a figure which is thought to increase by about 700 a year; more than 5,000 alone are deserted wives unsupported by their husbands and in receipt of social welfare.

Senator Mary Robinson, speaking in support of the Divorce Action Group, has said that there is a widening gap between the text of the Irish Constitution and the changing way of life.

Useful address: Divorce Action Group
19 Upper Beechwood Avenue
Dublin 6

I T A L Y

Regional power and women

During the recent regional elections, women's organizations conducted a campaign to improve the representation of women in the regional assemblies.

Not only were there more women on the lists of candidates but also more of those candidates were elected, with women winning 50 out of the 720 seats. For the first time they took seats in the regional assemblies of the Marches (4), Calabria (2) and Basilicata (1). A point of interest is that women are consistently better represented in the regions of greater economic strength: in Lazio (the region around Rome), for instance, there are 7 women regional deputies, 6 in Lombardy and 5 in Tuscany, 6 in Piemonte.

The fruits of her labour

According to a judgement delivered by the Constitutional Court, a woman who works is entitled to all the social benefits arising from her work "on the same conditions and within the same limits" as men. The case before the Court was a question of the payment of family allowances to a woman with a child under age and a dependent husband. A presidential decree of 1955 had granted allowances to a woman in employment only if her husband suffers from "permanent disability" preventing him from doing any work. The Court judgement has now declared this clause illegal.

The judgement implies that work done by either husband or wife gives an entitlement to family allowances. It will be left to the discretion of the couple to decide which one should be registered as the beneficiary of those allowances.

L U X E M B O U R G

Lumping together taxable incomes: a matter of debate

Under Luxembourg tax law, a married couple's earned income is aggregated for taxation purposes. The situation differs from that in Belgium: there has been no real campaign against this tax arrangement and the lumping of incomes together has never seriously been called into question.

In a memorandum on Luxembourg tax policy recently published by OGBL (the Luxembourg independent trade union federation), however, this problem is taken up. It is one that is growing in importance as women's work is extended. The authors of the memorandum do not go so far as to reject the "cumulative" principle but they propose that a given amount be tax exempt, corresponding to a monthly allowance of Lfr.5,300. This special allowance could be justified by the argument that a husband and wife clock up a total of 80 hours' work a week but are taxed as if they earned their joint income in 40 hours.

An allowance of this kind would in essence be of assistance to women with a career. It would also be a good thing to clarify the expenses that are included in this allowance, such as day nurseries and household help.

Useful address: OGBL
Boulevard John F. Kennedy
Esch-sur-Alzette

Medical checks on pregnant women

Without in any way departing from the objective of the Law of 20 June 1977, to provide health protection for pregnant women and young children, it has been made more flexible. Article 2 of the Law extends the benefits of the childbirth allowance to pregnant women not satisfying the conditions that prove legal domicile in the country but whose husbands have lived in the Grand Duchy for at least three years. In addition, to make up for the shortage of gynaecologists, certain country doctors are to be allowed to make ante-natal checks on pregnant women so that they do not have to make repeated long journeys.

Useful address: Ministère de la Santé
Luxembourg

Guaranteed alimony

We are all too familiar with the sad stories of divorced women whose former husbands have been ordered to pay alimony but find a thousand ways of wriggling out of their obligation. We also know that this money is vitally important to the woman, who usually have to care for the children. Without funds, she has to suffer from the consequences of her husband's behaviour and make humiliating applications to the social welfare agencies.

In July, members of the Luxembourg Parliament voted in favour of a law creating a national solidarity fund which will advance alimony and recover it from the debtor through any of the legal channels. Nevertheless, the fund will advance or recover alimony only if there is a court order to the husband to pay alimony, if every attempt to recover the amount owed has been made and failed, if the creditor is in financial difficulties and if the creditor is legally domiciled in Luxembourg and has lived there for at least five years.

To assist the fund in its work, the Government has placed the sum of fr.10 million at its disposal as an initial subsidy.

Useful address: Ministère de la Famille
Luxembourg

N E T H E R L A N D S

Children and their surnames

The Dutch Minister of Justice has agreed to allow children to take their mother's surname, a provision that is of special importance in cases of separation, divorce, widowhood or common-law marriages.

The condition imposed by the Ministry is that the mother must have raised her child on her own for five years and that she does not intend to change her status in the near future by marriage or remarriage.

Whatever the position, however, there are provisions for consulting the child involved at the age of 12 so that the authorities can confirm that he or she wishes to adopt that name.

Useful address: Ministerie van Justitie
Schedeldoekshaven 100
The Hague

More equality in marriage

Job de Ruiter, Dutch Minister of Justice, and his woman colleague, Jeltien Kraaijveld-Wouters, Secretary of State for questions of emancipation, have tabled several amendments to civil law which, if accepted by Parliament, will give a married woman rights more nearly equal to her husband's.

The rights covered are the choice of domicile and all matters relating to the raising of under-age children. The husband will not have the final say but, in the event of dispute, a couple may submit the problem to a district reconciliation tribunal.

The ministerial proposals were drawn up in the light of a report setting out the views of the Emancipatiekommissie (Emancipation Commission), although not all of the report's recommendations have been adopted.

Useful address: Ministerie van Justitie
Schedeldoekshaven 100
The Hague

UNITED KINGDOM

Equality through Law

If you have a complaint about sex discrimination, you are more likely to go to court about it in Britain than anywhere else in the Community. It is true that you will find firm support from the Equal Opportunities Commission which backs one such case in five, sometimes by giving general advice, sometimes by paying the legal costs or representing the complainants at all levels of justice right up to the European Court of Justice.

The Equal Opportunities Commission has so far backed three cases up to the European Court. Mrs. Wendy Smith, who argued that she should be paid the same as the man who held her job before her, won her case (Women of Europe no. 14). Mrs. Jenkins, a part-time worker, is claiming the same hourly rate of pay as men doing similar full-time work in her firm. If she wins, over four million part-time workers, most of them married women, could find their pay improved. In the third case, the European Court is being asked to rule whether men and women should be treated equally in U.K. occupational pension schemes.

The Commission backs men as well as women when there is legitimate complaint. Mr. Jeremiah, for instance, won his case in the Court of Appeal when he argued that there was discrimination against men at the Glascoed Royal Ordnance Factory, where they sometimes had to do unpleasant work when volunteering for overtime which women were not expected to do.

The Commission is also backing Mrs. Quinn in her claim that a Leicester furniture store has refused to give her credit unless her husband acts as her guarantor, whereas her husband was extended credit without difficulties being made. It is a matter of principle of the greatest importance, as the courts will have to rule on the implications of the Sex Discrimination Act.

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

Equal citizenship at last?

New Government proposals defining British citizenship have been welcomed by the Equal Opportunities Commission. Baroness Lockwood, Chairman of the EOC, believes that the strength of opinion expressed by women and the women's voluntary organizations in particular has had a real influence on the Government's thinking.

In its "White Paper" on citizenship, the Government admits that "ideas on the status of women have changed" since the British Nationality Act was passed in 1948. Under the proposed legislation, foreign women would not be automatically entitled to British citizenship through marriage, and the means of obtaining British citizenship would be the same for both sexes. It would also be possible for women to transmit citizenship to their children born abroad on equal terms with men.

Copies of the White Paper may be obtained from Her Majesty's Stationery Office (ref. 7987, £2.25).

Useful address: HMSO
Atlantic House, Holborn Viaduct
London EC1

Home ownership

Britain's highest court, the House of Lords, has confirmed that women have important rights in the disposal of the matrimonial home. Two wives whose husbands had mortgaged their houses to a bank without their knowledge and then failed to keep up the charges were entitled to resist claims for possession by the bank, the court said. The women were also protected because, having contributed to the purchase of the houses, they and their husbands shared a common tenancy of the home. They had "over-riding interests" of occupation and the bank's appeal for possession was dismissed.

The case was fully reported in The Times Law Report of 20 June 1980.

Useful address: The Times
New Printing House Square
Gray's Inn Road
London WC1X 8EZ

Battered women in Northern Ireland

A new law, the Domestic Proceedings (NI) Order 1980, passed last April, gives protection for battered wives and children in Northern Ireland, but it does not include common-law wives.

The Northern Ireland Equal Opportunities Commission has started a campaign for this protection to be extended to women living in a stable relationship with men without being legally married. It feels strongly that a woman should be protected from physical violence in the home whether or not she is married.

The Minister responsible has said that he will consider extending the law if there is sufficient support. To drum up this support, the Northern Ireland EOC has written to all Northern Ireland MPs, and is calling on all women's organizations to join them in their campaign.

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

Sex discrimination in college

The Council for National Academic Awards and the Equal Opportunities Commission have drawn up guidelines for eliminating sex discrimination in colleges running courses approved by the former body.

Both the CNAA and the EOC are concerned that colleges should not only comply with the letter of the law but also actively promote equality of opportunity for students of both sexes.

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

Too few college nurseries

The Equal Opportunities Commission is concerned at the threat to nurseries in colleges and universities. Guidance from the University Grants Committee has stated that grants to universities may no longer be used to cover the costs of a nursery. In addition, it may be more difficult for student unions to fund nurseries as they are to be financed through the University Grants Committee which might make its lending conditional on compliance with its own policy on nurseries. Finally, cuts in public spending will result in competition for funds between existing nurseries and other college facilities such as indoor sport complexes.

In Great Britain as a whole, the majority of colleges are still without a nursery or creche. Of the colleges surveyed in an EOC report, "Nurseries in Colleges and Universities", only 146 provided regular facilities to cater for 2,300 children. Less than half of these nurseries take children under the age of two.

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

An "equality caravan"

An "equality caravan" is doing a round of towns in Northern Ireland. Launched by the Northern Ireland Equal Opportunities Commission, it serves as a mobile advice centre on equal rights. In the words of the Commission Chairman, Mrs. Margot Neill, "we think it is important to meet people in all parts of Northern Ireland and to promote equality of opportunity between the sexes".

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

Guidance for careers literature

"A Guide to Equal Treatment of the Sexes in Careers Materials" has been published by the Equal Opportunities Commission. It gives practical suggestions to employers and writers on careers about removing the sex bias when discussing jobs in general, but it also provide examples of writing techniques that avoid the trap of implying bias by the words one uses. For instance, the plural form can replace the reference to "he" or "she", and terms such as "business executive" or "camera operator" can be used instead of "businessman" or "cameraman".

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

Greek women officials on fact-finding visit to

Brussels and Luxembourg

Greece is preparing for its forthcoming membership of the European Community. As part of those preparations, a group of nine senior women officials from Greek ministries came to Brussels and Luxembourg to find out about the administrative machinery of the Community.

The officials from the Ministries of Finance, Culture, Industry, Labour and Justice had all taken an advanced French-language course and a preparatory seminar in Athens.

These Greek civil servants will not necessarily become Eurocrats; the intention is to help them to understand EEC procedures and policies.

WOMEN OF GREECE, WELCOME!

The official date on which Greece is to become the 10th member of the European Community is 1 January 1981, but "Women of Europe" would like to welcome the women of Greece here and now.

It is always a matter of satisfaction to enlarge a circle of solidarity. Women of Greece will contribute the wealth of their experience and they in turn will find support and inspiration within the Community in achieving the essential objective stated by the Treaty of Rome: improvement of the living and working conditions of their peoples.

The first step is to become acquainted. Here are a few facts, figures and items of information taken from the national report presented by Greece to the Copenhagen conference and the speech made on that occasion by Mrs. Alexandra Mantzoulino, Member of Parliament and head of the Greek delegation to the UNO conference.

Population

According to estimates dating back to 1977, Greece has slightly more women than men, 4,730,524 (51%), compared with 4,537,954 men (49%). On the labour market, women account for approximately a total of the working population. It should be borne in mind that a very large number of women do unpaid work on the land - about 400,000.

A growing number of women have jobs: over the period from 1974 to 1978, the figure for women in paid employment rose by 20%, compared with 11% in the case of men.

The law

The Constitution enacted in 1975 states (in article 4, para. 2) that "Greek men and women have the same rights and the same obligations". Law 133/1975 forbids unequal pay for men and women. A national collective agreement was reached that provides for a move to achieve equal pay by equal stages, culminating at the end of June 1978, but it covered only the lowest wages and unskilled workers. It is not unusual to find women who earn less than their male colleagues with the same level of skill and the same length of service.

In 1978, women civil servants were granted the right to draw family allowances as well as their male counterparts, provided that their husbands were not also employed in the civil service. The situation differs in the banking sector, where women are entitled to the family allowance even if their husbands are employed in the same field.

Work

Little by little women are taking up careers which have formerly been a male preserve. Women have been members of the diplomatic corps since 1969. From 1979 on, women were allowed to join the police force. In 1980, port authorities were allowed to hire women for the maritime police. During the summer, the first girls to graduate from the national navigation colleges founded in 1978 received the patent which entitles them to become a deck or radio officer in the Merchant Navy.

Women are also to be found in national and local authorities and in the field of justice, although they are still too few. At the competitive examinations for admittance to the Polytechnic, women candidates in the field of architecture were at the top of the list.

The picture is less satisfactory when we come to the jobs conventionally considered as suitable for girls. By family tradition, girls have become nurses, secretaries and hairdressers or have worked in the tobacco industry. The Government has issued no measures to change women's attitudes (or the employers') or to provide a different form of vocational training for girls. In industry, no more than 3% of women are considered to be engaged in skilled jobs.

It will be no surprise to learn that very many women are calling for the creation of a Government body with special responsibility for ensuring that such discrimination is eliminated.

Health

With one doctor per 450 head of population - a very respectable ratio - the Greek medical system nonetheless suffers from imbalance: 75% of doctors are established in Athens and Thessalonica, serving 36% of the total population.

A matter for self-congratulation over the past few years has been the sharp drop in peri-natal and infant mortality. One undoubted factor contributing to this achievement has been the existence of 1,700 consultation centres throughout the country. Special efforts are being made to help people in lower income groups. The measures as a whole are of particular benefit to women, whose life expectancy in Greece is now 74.6.

Until 1979, the only bodies concerned with family planning were two private organizations. A law was then enacted that made it possible to open five family planning centres in the same year. Close attention is paid to the problem of hereditary disease, especially to a form of anaemia peculiar to Mediterranean countries and chromosome anomalies.

To help working mothers, 732 centres for young children are run or supervised by the State and there are about a hundred private day nurseries. Altogether they care for about 54,000 children. The number of places available is still far short of what is needed, but it is notable that 120 centres were opened with Government aid in 1979 alone.

Another field of special concern is the provision of information on nutrition, with the Ministry of Agriculture (Domestic Economy Division) launching a campaign to improve the population's dietary habits.

Education

Co-education has long been common in Greece and no longer causes much debate. The law has now officially ratified the practice, requiring all new schools to cater for both boys and girls.

A 1977 reform of the educational system increased the period of compulsory education from six to nine years, the school-leaving age being raised to 15. It is a measure of special benefit to girls, since the tendency used to be for girls to give up education as soon as they had completed their compulsory schooling.

Continuing education is especially important as it provides an opportunity to make up for past inequalities in the school system. Over the past few years, a growing proportion of women has been noted in adult education centres. The "open universities" set up in six provincial towns in 1979, however, have not yet succeeded in attracting as many women as might be wished. There is still a need for women themselves to take advantage of the cultural facilities being provided, especially in the provinces.

There has been a real improvement in the role played by women in higher and university education. Out of 100 students, for instance, the number of women has risen from an average of 7 (in the 1970-71 academic year) to 27 (1976-77) in advanced technical studies, and from 31 to 38 in the universities. There has been an impressive "spurt" in agriculture and veterinary science, as well as in law, medicine, mathematics and even theology.

As in the rest of Europe, Greek women suffer from the traditional handicaps in the course of ~~their education and their working and social life~~. Just like us, they have to bear the brunt of family responsibilities and combat prejudice, the force of habit and an upbringing designed to relegate women to domestic chores; they have to overcome the petty injustices of laws and regulations. The list is all too familiar. There is no doubt that in Greece special stress must be placed on the rural environment, where one out of three of its women live. Any strategy for women's emancipation must take this factor into account.

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

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

Women farmers in the Community

"The vocational role of women farmers in the European Community" was the central theme of debate at the seminar arranged in Frascati near Rome by the women's group within COPA (Committee of Agricultural Organizations in the EEC) in association with the women's movement of the Italian confederation of owner farmers.

The final report gives a picture of the work and research done over the past few years in EEC countries. In short, women working on the land would like their vocational training to reflect more closely the responsibilities that in fact they have to shoulder. They call for recognition of the woman farmer as exercising a vocational skill in their own right, and for the full social protection that would logically ensue from such recognition. The issues were discussed at length during the seminar and will be the focus for political action over the next few months to come.

Useful address: Commission féminine du COPA
 25 rue de la Science
 1040 Brussels

Movimento Femminile della
Confederazione Nazionale Coltivatori Diretti
Via XXIV Maggio 43
00187 Rome

Regional development

CECIF (the International Women's Council European Centre), acting jointly with the Italian Women's Council, held a seminar in Rome in the spring on "women's participation in regional development and town planning". CECIF took this opportunity to ask the member organizations to review the issue at national level. The French women's architects' union (Union française des Femmes architectes) produced these revealing figures on the percentage of women architects by comparison with men: France, 2.2%; Belgium, 4.5%; Great Britain, 40%; Denmark, 5%; Netherlands, 4.5%; Germany, 4%; Italy, 5%; Greece (soon to join our ranks), 15%.

CECIF has formulated a "charter" that sets out the different ways in which women can be involved in regional development.

Useful address: CECIF
 2 allée L. Goebel
 Luxembourg

Socialism and Feminism

The International Socialist Women has arranged a seminar in London on the theme of "Socialism-Feminism". In the opinion of those attending the seminar, women have not yet achieved the position in political life to which they are entitled. Only in Scandinavia has the 20% barrier - the proportion of women elected to political office - been crossed.

Not only women are to be blamed for their prolonged indifference to politics: very few male politicians are taking any concrete action to change attitudes and behaviour towards women. It was with regret that the women meeting in London felt they had to call for a specific quota of places to be allocated to women in the Socialist International and in the national delegations taking part in this organization's congress.

There can be no confusion or incompatibility between Socialism and feminism. The Socialist women meeting in London found no special difficulty in issuing the militant declaration: "feminism is not a political programme but it forms part of a Socialist view of the world, for both men and women".

Autism in Europe

A conference on "Autism Europe 1980" arranged by the parents of autistic children was held in Ghent at the end of June. The thread running through the conference was how to help parents to help themselves and their children. For the first time in Europe, parents, those working in the field of mental health and the authorities had an opportunity to discuss their respective roles in the support that can be given to autistic children and adults.

The Belgian Association de Parents d'Enfants Psychotiques (Vereniging voor Ouders van Psychotische Kinderen), which was the body taking the initiative, can also provide information on its fellow organizations in other European countries.

Useful addresses: APEP/VOPK
1a avenue de la Capricorne
1200 Brussels

National Society for Autistic Children
1a Golders Green Road
London NW11

Club Europa

Club Europa is an independent international association chaired by Marise Goldsmith-Dansaert which is trying to organize an "inter-information bank". The first issue of its journal states that Club Europa's essential aim is to "devise and promote various ways of bringing the women of Europe into closer contact, lifting all barriers between them, enabling them to correspond, arrange all forms of inter-exchange of a personal, family, social, professional and cultural nature, especially by coming to know and appreciate each other, discovering each other and broadening their knowledge of other countries' customs and ways of looking at things".

Useful address: Marise Goldsmith-Dansaert
8 rue Jean Mermoz
F-78100 Saint-Germain-en-Laye

B E L G I U M

Children and Society

"The child's place in society" was the theme of a congress recently held by women in the Social-Christian Party (PSC). Since they are very active in the life of local communities, the thinking of the congress is sure to be continued at the level of towns and villages.

The plan of action includes new designs for public housing to cater for the needs of children and their development, improvements to the environment, far more parks and play areas: the list is not exhaustive, and every suggestion is welcome.

Useful address: Fédération des mandataires communaux du P.S.C.
41 rue des Deux-Eglises
1040 Brussels

Women and health

Socialistische Vrouwen (Socialist Women) have made an outstanding contribution to the work being done by their party on health care. A short but closely-worded 10-page document analyses woman's position from a two-fold viewpoint: her specific physical nature and her social role.

The document reviews woman's life from childhood to old age, passing through adolescence and motherhood. It does not neglect subjects less frequently discussed such as eating habits and industrial medicine. Ample coverage is given to special protective measures, seen in the light of the latest scientific data.

Useful address: Socialistische Vrouwen
Gachardstraat 20
1050 Brussels

In defence of day nurseries

A precocious baby on the flyleaf of a tract clenches its fist and declares "my creche is my freedom": the women's committee of the Belgian Communist Party is focusing on the threat to day nurseries which it says is being caused by budget cuts.

Among its demands are that payment by parents should be in real proportion to their income and that men as well as women nursery staff should care for children in the day nurseries.

Useful address: Parti Communiste de Belgique, Commission féminine
18-20 avenue de Stalingrad
1000 Brussels

Understanding the economy

The French-speaking branch of the National Council of Belgian Women has set up an "economy" committee whose two-fold aim is to help women to understand more about economic mechanisms and to state the priorities as seen by women. The theme for the year is energy, seen from women's viewpoint. Various Council committees are to join in this research: the Family Economics, Environment and Employment Committees, for example.

Useful address: Conseil National des Femmes Belges
1a place Quételet
1030 Brussels

The children of unmarried mothers

The women's committee of the European Movement's Belgian Council is waging a campaign to ensure that any child born to an unmarried mother and who is not adopted by her has exactly the same rights as a child of a married mother.

The women's committee reminded Mr. Martens, the Prime Minister, that the European Court of Human Rights has already given its ruling on this point of law: any distinction between a married and an unmarried mother is an infringement of article 14 of the Convention of Human Rights.

Useful address: Mouvement européen - Commission féminine
49 rue de Toulouse
1040 Brussels

GRIF - Women's University

Founded in 1973, GRIF (Groupe de recherche et d'information féministe - feminist research and information group) very quickly made a name for itself through the quality of its work and the distinguished nature of "Cahiers du GRIF", the first French-language feminist journal. At the end of 1978 GRIF decided to take a sabbatical to rethink its work within the feminist movement. In the autumn of 1979, GRIF founded the Women's University, whose objectives are comparable to those of the Virginia Woolf Centre created in Rome at roughly the same time.

Reviewing the situation after the 1979-1980 academic year, it has been satisfactory in terms of the interest aroused among women but disappointing in terms of the aid obtained from the authorities. Despite favourable views expressed by the authorities and the senior council for permanent education, it was a long time before GRIF was granted the status of "general permanent education service" and even now it has received no subsidy that would enable it to recruit a full-time leader.

Undismayed, GRIF is soldiering on. The Women's University has opened its doors for the new academic year with a more intensive curriculum and more flexible hours for women from the provinces. GRIF has also announced the appearance of a series of publications devoted to feminism to be published by Editions de Minuit (Paris) in the spring of 1981.

Useful address: GRIF
1a place Quételet
1030 Brussels

"Voyelles"

To mark its first year of life and the setting up of its own publishing house, the magazine "Voyelles" has arranged an exhibition on "women in the comic strip, and women illustrators", at which the work of twenty or so female illustrators was put on show.

The magazine has found its own style now. It is trying to bridge the gap between women's media and general information. Political reports and investigations into social issues blend happily with articles on beauty and health in its columns.

Created, run and enlivened by women, Voyelles was designed as a cooperative venture to preserve its independence.

Useful address: Voyelles
Boulevard de Waterloo, 99
1000 Brussels

A feminist library

"Le Féminaire" is the name given to a radical feminist information and research centre run by Claudine, Evelyne, Isabelle, Isabel and Régine. It houses more than 400 books in French and English, magazines and press cuttings, forming the embryo of a data bank on radical feminism. The review of the press published by Le Féminaire is quite frank about its bias: "This review is subjective! There are no pluralists here!".

Useful address: Le Féminaire
1 rue Herman Richir
1030 Brussels

D E N M A R K

Help to women in the Third World

Kvindernes U-landsudvalg (K.U.L.U., or the women's committee for the Third World), a group of 23 Danish women's groups and associations, has held a seminar on the "responsibilities of Third World women in the family and at work". Delegates came to the seminar from Norway and Sweden as well as from Denmark. They gave thought to ways in which the development aid provided by Scandinavian countries could be more responsive to women's situations, particularly in Bangladesh, India, Kenya and Tanzania.

Analytical papers were read by specialists and the delegates went on to decide to reinforce the cooperation among women's groups, the organizations providing help to the Third World and female research workers specializing in the problems of women's status. There will be more joint efforts along these lines in Scandinavia, and a booklet is to be issued on "aid to women" to set out Scandinavian thinking on the problem.

Useful address: Kvindernes U-landsudvalg
Købmagergade 67
1150 K Copenhagen

F R A N C E

Unmarried mothers

"To let you know you are not alone, that others have gone before you and are ready to help you, a group of young unmarried mothers has come together to found a national association of unmarried mothers in France". This declaration of intent sets the tone of the association, which has never minced its words in the few years in which it has been operating.

The magazine "Mères célibataires" supports and pursues the work done by the association, printing legal advice, information on such matters as toys and nutrition, personal case histories and those invaluable small ads which help to create a feeling of solidarity.

Useful address: Mères célibataires
135 boulevard de Sébastopol
75002 Paris

Contact with China

A visit to China by a delegation of Frenchwomen is still having its effects. On their return, those taking part have been telling the members of their organizations about what they have seen, and the interest aroused has been remarkable.

To take a few figures at random, in China women hold 40% of the jobs in education, 50% in agriculture, 58% in medicine and 60% in the textile industry.

There are 741 women delegates to the People's Assembly, 21.1% of the total. In Government, 14 women are ministers or deputy ministers.

On her return from China, the chairman of the European Movement's women's committee - Janine Lansier - writes: "Truly we had the feeling of a community of spirit existing between us, a feeling of profound solidarity. The women we talked to showed a touching desire for more openness, for closer relations and for friendship with women in the rest of the world. And there is a special feeling for Europe in this desire for contact. It is up to us militant European women to respond to their appeal."

Useful address: Commission féminine du Mouvement européen
Mme Janine Lansier
24 rue Feydeau
75002 Paris

Adoption

The legal procedure for adoption is by no means simple. Its implications are institutional (involving the way in which the administrative bodies work) as well as psychological and educational.

This is the reason why it is so important for people wishing to adopt to go to the soundly-based, experienced voluntary bodies. In France, these are La Famille adoptive française and the Fédération Nationale des Associations de foyers adoptifs (the latter has just merged with the Foyers adoptifs internationaux).

These adoption associations are particularly concerned at the problem of children considered to be hard to place in adoption (because they are a little older or because they have mild handicaps) and at the risk of trafficking in human lives when foreign children are adopted (even now, these account for 20% of the total number of adoptions).

Useful address: La Famille adoptive française
90 rue de Paris
92100 Boulogne

Fédération nationale des Associations de foyers adoptifs
28 place Saint Georges
75009 Paris

A women's information agency

Set up in September 1979, Agence femmes information (women's information agency, or AFI for short) has been pressing on tenaciously with its outstanding work. Claire Poinsignon, Catherine Vimenet and many others have built up what is already a vast library of information on a whole range of subjects: married women's tax position, women and Islam, contraception and many other issues.

Cécile Badiche, the only full-time paid employee because of the shortage of funds, is full of hope: AFI has decided to bring out low-cost cassettes to make it easier to supply information.

Every Friday and Saturday from 1 to 9 p.m., the telephone is permanently manned by people who can answer queries (tel. 236.36.33 and 233.43.71).

AFI's aim is not just to reply to questions from women, however, but to exert pressure on the media. In the information circuit, an agency is often the first to take a close look at an event. Women must be among the first to have their say, before the facts are distorted or relegated to oblivion.

Useful address: AFI
104 boulevard Saint Germain
75006 Paris

Women engineers

Out of the 200,000 qualified engineers in France, about 11,000 (5.5%) are women. An association grouping women engineers - the Cercle des Femmes Ingénieurs - was set up in 1958 with the aim of promoting their image and dispelling the preconceptions held by girls and their parents about engineering as a profession. It also feels that it has special responsibility for transmitting scientific knowledge. According to Nicole Becarud, the chairman of the Cercle, "scientific progress and understanding of that progress provide women with the key that will unlock the door to the future, as it affects them in their daily lives and in their work".

Useful address: Cercle des Femmes Ingénieurs
c/o Madeleine Rousseau
3 rue Vauquelin
75005 Paris

Women's working and living conditions

The Fédération de l'éducation nationale (FEN), the federation of teachers in the public sector, has arranged a day devoted to thought on "women's living and working conditions". Most of those taking part had to cope with three jobs: as a teacher, as a unionist and as a mother. Three working groups studied women and the militant movement, women and education and women and society.

Useful address: FEN
48 rue La Bruyère
75009 Paris

Living in the present

"Vivre au temps présent" is the title of a touring exhibition arranged by the European Communities Information Bureau in Paris.

Visiting 33 towns and cities in France, the exhibition illustrates the priorities for Community policy: energy, information technology, regional development and consumer information.

French women's organizations and their local sections have taken this opportunity to participate in the discussions being held in the towns on the exhibition itinerary.

In Lille, for instance, the European Movement's women's committee helped to organize a debate on "woman in Europe, today and tomorrow", at which members of European Parliament and of the ad hoc committee on women's rights replied to questions put to them by women.

Useful address: Bureau d'information des Communautés européennes
61 rue des Belles Feuilles
75782 Paris

G E R M A N Y

Facts and figures

The German countrywomen's federation, Deutscher Landfrauenverband, has been keeping a precise account of its activities. According to its latest published figures, its members are estimated as 450,000, of whom 238,545 are directly affiliated by their membership of the 10,930 local bodies; the others are members of the federation by virtue of taking part in independent regional organizations.

In 1979, Deutscher Landfrauenverband notes with satisfaction, its membership increased by about 5% of the number of directly affiliated members.

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

For peace and disarmament

A group named Friedenshexen ("witches for peace") has embarked upon a campaign for peace and disarmament. In the wake of the success achieved in Scandinavia, signatures have been collected with the clarion call of "women break the silence".

In the same spirit of pacifism, Marie-Louise Berg has organized a "march on Bonn" to protest against women's national service.

Useful addresses: Friedenshexen, c/o Frauenzentrum
Stresemannstrasse 40
1000 Berlin 61

Marie-Louise Berg
Bonnerstrasse
Solingen

Home-bound women

Katholische Frauengemeinschaft Deutschlands, the powerful and long-standing association of Catholic women in Germany, has been looking into the position of women in the home. At the end of their project, the members emphasized that housework is a job like any other but with the added difficulty of the blurring of the distinctions between work and private life.

The association is claiming recognition for housework as an occupation and all the consequences in terms of social security, accident insurance, vocational training, etc. It has brought out a booklet setting out those claims.

Useful address: Gemeinschaft Hausfrauen
 Katholischen Frauengemeinschaft Deutschlands
 Prinz-Georg-Strasse 44
 4000 Düsseldorf

The needs of the 80s

The German secretaries' association - Deutscher Sekretärinne-Verband - has held its annual congress with the theme of "the needs of the 80s". Founded in 1956, the association has distinguished itself by its business-like and remarkably effective work in organizing courses, making contact with the authorities and employers, publishing a magazine, "Sekretärin", arranging regional groups, etc.

The prospects for the 80s are that the economic situation will be difficult, office equipment will be more sophisticated, employers will demand far more in the way of foreign languages, etc. It is the association's aim to help its members to cope.

Other women's organizations might to well to learn from the association's professional sense of presentation and layout and its ability to marshal the facts.

Useful address: Deutscher Sekretärinnen-Verband ev
 Ritterstrasse 53
 6700 Ludwigshafen 14

Women and marksmen

A scandal has erupted in Buxtehude: after the crowning of the "king of the crack shots", men have refused to allow their traditional parade through the town to be led by Lisa Peters even though, by virtue of her office as the mayor, she was the person who should have done so.

The marksmen dug out the text of their 16th-century statute which said that "men shall lead the king of the marksmen through the city streets".

Lisa Peters has relinquished her prerogative this time, but the controversy has not ended there: there are girls among the gun enthusiasts, and they have already announced their plans to take part in the march next year.

Useful address: Lisa Peters
 Stellvertretende Bürgermeisterin
 Buxtehude

I R E L A N D

Women in the Unions

The Irish Transport and General Workers' Union (ITGWU), the largest union in the country, has voted for the establishment of "positive structures" to encourage equality for women members.

An unprecedented two-and-a-half hours of debating time was devoted to the policy document, Equality for Women, drawn up by the union's research department. Union encouragement for equality might mean positive discrimination to reserve positions for women on the union's governing councils.

Women comprise 28% of the Irish work force and a third of ITGWU members are women, but there are no women on its executive.

Useful address: Irish Transport and General Workers' Union
Liberty Hall
Dublin 1

Energy - Options during the Eighties

The Irish Housewives Association has held a packed public meeting on "Energy - Options during the Eighties".

Energy is the central issue adopted by women's organizations in Europe. Ireland is particularly vulnerable in this respect: it has little coal and few hydroelectric power stations. Gas and oil have been discovered, but only in small quantities. The traditional fuel is peat, but its output is low. In this context, self-discipline by Irish citizens is an important factor in energy policy.

Organized with the help of the European Communities Information Bureau in Dublin, this meeting provided an opportunity for Mrs. Molly Cranny, the chairman of the Irish Housewives Association, to encourage women to inform themselves on a subject of paramount importance to all sections of our Community.

Useful address: Irish Housewives Association
8 Dawson Street
Dublin 2

Divorce Irish-style!

"Can You Stay Married?" is the misleading title of a new self-help book which illustrates how complicated life can become for people in Ireland facing marital breakdown. Despite its name, the book is mainly about getting unmarried, within the limits permitted by law: by formalizing their separation or annulment.

The authors, Nuala Fennell, Deirdre McDavitt and Bernadette Quinn, are famous for being the founder-members of the women's organization, AIM, which has for many years taken up the cause of women with marriage difficulties. The book is published by Kincora Press, 16 Pembroke Road, Dublin 4, at a price of £Ir.2.50.

Useful address: The AIM Group
P.O. Box 739
14 Upper Leeson Street
Dublin 2

The facts about single parenthood

Recognition has grown in Ireland for the problems facing single parents and their families. One practical example has been the recent establishment of the Federation of Services for Unmarried Parents and their Children, incorporating a number of voluntary and statutory organizations for single parents. The Federation runs an information centre and has published the papers delivered at its seminar on "the Unmarried Parent - working towards the best decision". The papers include single parents' accounts of their own and other people's experience when involved in the decisions facing single, pregnant women on whether to keep their babies or place them for adoption.

Useful address: The Federation of Services for Unmarried Parents
and their Children
11 Clonskeagh Road
Dublin 6

"Together we Stand"

This is the title of a new feminist guide to women's rights in Ireland. It has emerged from a pirate radio series put out by a small group of Limerick women. The hour-long programme, "Big W", covers a variety of topics of special interest to women and features local women personalities, women artists, etc. Surprised and then encouraged by the interest aroused among women listeners, one of the presenters, Cathie Chappell, compiled the sort of practical information supplied on the air, with humorous illustrations being provided by Charlotte Cryer. The cost of the booklet is 50p.

Useful address: Bottom Dog
109 O'Malley Park
Limerick

Social welfare entitlements

It is not too late to mention the April 1980 issue of an information bulletin, "Relate", published by the National Social Service Council. At the modest price of 7p., the bulletin is devoted to women's welfare entitlements and includes the addresses of voluntary organizations concerned with specific groups of recipients such as single women, widows or deserted wives.

Useful address: The National Social Service Council
71 Lower Leeson Street
Dublin 2

I T A L Y

Recognition of deserving women

The International Saint Vincent Prize for the "woman of the year" has been awarded to Carmen Annes Dias Prudente from Brazil.

Mrs. Dias Prudente has set up an outstanding service that operates 24 hours a day: calls can be taken from any country in Latin America for advice and information on cancer. A team of 75 doctors gives its services free to man the telephone, giving calm and factual advice within no more than three minutes' time. Known as "Telecan", this exemplary organization has rendered an invaluable service, especially to women concerned about breast cancer.

Eight women were suggested as candidates for the Saint Vincent Prize, every one of whom deserved to win. This award, which takes its name from Saint Vincent in the Aosta Valley from which it is awarded, is the equivalent of a Nobel Prize for women. Its merit is that it turns the spotlight on the hitherto unregarded work being done by outstanding women. The more prestigious international prizes reflect the age in which they were established, an age dominated by male culture, admiration for science and the worship of efficiency. The Saint Vincent prize, which was created in more recent times, pays homage to the achievements of women who are furthering the progress of civilization in every field.

Useful address: Premio internazionale Saint Vincent, c/o S.I.T.A.V.
Via Felice Cavallotti 36
00152 Rome

Energy and society

The Consiglio Nazionale Donne Italiane (National Italian Women's Council) and the Associazione Imprenditrici Dirigenti di Azienda (Association of women heads of businesses), in cooperation with the European Commission's information departments, have held a seminar in Rome on "energy and life options".

The aim was both to inform women about the current situation in Europe and to obtain feedback from them on their thoughts about the new ways of living made necessary by the crisis. The debate mirrored an attitude that is becoming more and more common among women in Europe: the energy crisis is not just something to put up with but should be taken as the opportunity for changing behaviour patterns to promote our general longer-term interests.

Useful address: C.N.D.I.
Via Ennio Quirino Visconti 55
00193 Rome

Occupation: secretary

A secretaries' association has just been formed in Italy: the "Associazione Italiane Professione Segretaria". Its aims are to promote the economic, social, legal and professional interests of secretaries by pooling the benefits of their experience, popularizing new working techniques and providing a service for the convenience of its members.

Useful (but temporary) address: A.I.P.S.
Via Scarsellini 17
Milan

History of the Movement

A centre for historical research on the Women's Liberation Movement in Italy has been in existence for a few months now in Milan. Its purpose is to collect published and unpublished documents and materials on women's status and the women's movement. A catalogue is being compiled and will soon be available for consultation at the Feltrinelli Foundation library.

The centre would be interested in any ways of cooperating with women's centres in other countries.

Useful address: Centro di studi storici sul movimento di liberazione
della donna in Italia
c/o Fondazione Feltrinelli
Via Romagnosi 3
20121 Milan

A women's centre in Turin

The "Casa della Donna" has just opened its doors in Turin. A project dear to the hearts of women's groups since 1974, the house provides an independent "space" where women can meet, discuss their problems and generate a feeling of solidarity.

Useful address: La Casa della Donna
Via Vanchiglia
Turin

Part-time employment

The Italian union of Soroptimist International Clubs in Italy has launched a wide-ranging survey on part-time work, with 70,000 questionnaires being sent out to find out about current trends in Italy.

The findings are to be made public at a national Soroptimist seminar to be held at Sirmione del Garda in April 1981.

Useful address: Unione nazionale dei Soroptimist International Clubs
d'Italia, c/o Tina Leonzi
Via B. Castelli 4
26060 Mompiano (Brescia)

L U X E M B O U R G

"Divorcio": men band together

Two years have elapsed since divorced women in the Grand Duchy came together to defend their rights as wives, mothers and home-makers, under the name of "Unifed".

Men have been finding that divorce is not just a woman's matter: it raises just as many financial and moral problems for the male partner. A new group has been formed, called "Divorcio", to come to the help of any man faced with divorce proceedings or difficulties with alimony or their families (their children, visiting rights, etc.). It will also be making every effort to counteract the weaknesses of the new divorce law.

Telephone contact: 48.23.76 or 58.52.20

Life goes on

The number of women with breast cancer is growing steadily. If a breast has to be removed, most women dread the human trauma just as much as the medical consequences.

An American who underwent the operation, Francine Timothy, was the first to act. In founding the association known as "Reach to Recovery", her aim was to give fresh courage to the women concerned and stimulate them to lead a normal life. Today it has become a world movement, its work starting where the doctors leave off.

The women of Luxembourg have now set up their own national group, whose name in French is "Vivre comme avant" ("living as before"). The group has taken part in the first world congress in Copenhagen. Like their sisters in other countries, the voluntary workers in the Grand Duchy want to provide moral encouragement, visit women who have had surgery if they want to be visited and, in short, contribute all their help and understanding to women who need them.

Useful address: "Vivre comme avant"
Luxembourg tel. 44.67.62

N E T H E R L A N D S

Women and microprocessing

To celebrate its 60th anniversary, the Dutch YWCA is preparing for a congress on "the social and cultural consequences of microelectronics to women", taking a bold and resolute look at the future rather than turning to its past.

To be held on 7 February 1981, this carefully planned conference will take as its point of departure three reports that have already been published (and which may be ordered from Publi-Vorm, Parkweg 20a, Voorburg). What effects will the microchip have? In which of its consequences should we be in favour and what are the dangers we should be fighting against? These are the questions being asked by Roos Baljé-Rijnders, the leader of the "chip" work group.

Useful address: YWCA-Nederland - Werkgroep "Chip"
"Rivendell", Randel 28
Marum

Women and Theology

"De moed om te zien" (the courage to look) is the explicit title of an exhibition in Amsterdam's Bible museum - Bijbels Museum - on women and theology. Probably for the first time, women have presented their own image as they see it in the Bible and in the churches.

Useful address: Bijbels Museum
Herengracht 366
Amsterdam

A "talent bank"

The Dutch women's group of the Liberal Party, V.V.D. Vrouwen, has had the bright idea of setting up a "talent bank". Very simply, it is drawing up a list of women members and the fields in which they have specific experience or know-how. If the need suddenly arises to find out about a problem of which little is known or to take action in a new area, the "talent bank" will give the names and telephone numbers of the best people to contact with no more effort than dialling a number.

Yvonne Gruis, who has started up this service, hopes that it will be used to mobilize women with specific expertise in a whole range of subjects.

Useful address: Vrouwen in de VVD, t.a.v. Yvonne Gruis
Prins Bernhardstraat 18
2825 BE Berkenwoude

Anthropologists

LOVA is the abbreviation for Landelijk overleg vrouwenstudies in de Antropologie (national think-tank for the study of women in anthropology), a group of women research workers from eight Dutch universities in which anthropology is studied ("not to be confused with Western sociology").

LOVA is also the title of the journal brought out by the association four times a year, containing specialist articles and a list of correspondents in the universities. It is difficult but rewarding reading for a layman: the main terrain for anthropological work is in the developing nations, where women's position is studied in a disciplined and scientific spirit.

Useful address: LOVA, c/o Sandy Roels
I.C.A. Kamer 105, Stationsplein 10
Postbus 9507
2300 RA Leiden

UNITED KINGDOM

Where are the new Feminists?

This is the question being asked by several women journalists in the British press these days. Anna Coote in the New Statesman and Suzanne Lowry in the Observer admit that, after several years of urging the women's cause in their columns, they are beginning to be flaked out and would like new and younger women to take their place with new ideas and energy.

"There is still a battle to be fought," writes Anna Coote, "but where is the new generation of feminists straight out of school to elbow us veterans out of the way?" There are some, she admits, but not the hordes she would like to see.

If there are hordes of new feminists and fighters "out there", Suzanne Lowry begs them to write to her "and put some new heart into the clapped out old guard".

Useful address: Suzanne Lowry
The Observer
8 St. Andrew's Hill
London EC4

Single parents - male and female

According to an estimate put forward by the National Council for One Parent Families, there are 850,000 single parents bringing up a million and a half children in Great Britain today. An average of a third of one-parent families' income comes from social security benefits, compared with a twentieth for two-parent families.

Only eight years ago, one-parent families were so little considered that the census virtually ignored them. Today all relevant Government statistics - on housing, social security or population data - include them. Above all, the Chancellor of the Exchequer lends an ear to their demands.

Established as far back as 1918, under different names the Council has been leading the battle for the rights of single parents for over half a century. It is supported in its work by an excellent periodical, One Parent Times, which is full of legal information and practical advice for lone parents, both men and women.

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

Widows' rights

The National Association of Widows has estimated that there are three million widows in England and Wales today. Founded in 1971, the Association now has many local groups. It is concerned not only with the moral crisis faced by women when they lose their husbands but also with the financial problems with which they have to cope. In a "1980 Widows' Charter", special stress is placed on the need for removing the liability for tax on widows' allowances.

The Association has a watchword to the effect that: widowhood is a tragic but an honourable estate in our society.

Useful address: National Association of Widows
Chell Road
Stafford ST16 2QA

Scottish Women

The Scottish Convention of Women is planning a conference/celebration for the spring of 1981 to receive the reports of the Copenhagen conference and to formulate plans for the next five years.

Among the subjects of concern to women in Scotland is the absence of legislation on domestic violence, the complicated and expensive divorce proceedings under Scots law, the media's portrayal of women and the improvement of provisions for child care.

Useful address: Scottish Convention of Women
c/o Christeen Armitage
6 Skene Street, Broughty Ferry
Dundee DD5 3ET

Not much fun at the top?

Women managers tend to be better educated and drive themselves harder than their male peers, but they also suffer greater stress. This is the conclusion of a survey published in the June issue of Personnel Management, the first research of its kind to be done in Britain.

The authors, Cary Cooper and Marilyn Davidson of the Manchester Institute of Science and Technology, base their findings on replies from 125 women managers. The profile that has emerged is of a woman of about 40 with an average salary of £9,000, likely to be single or divorced. In addition to their normal workload, such women have to cope with feelings of isolation, the burden of being the "token woman" and considerable prejudice and discrimination.

The research shows that over 60% of the women are characterized by high achievement, hard driving of themselves, striving, motivation, competitiveness, abruptness of gesture and speech, devotion to work and a preoccupation with deadlines that gives them little time for leisure. Such people, the survey notes, are particularly prone to heart attacks.

Useful address: Personnel Management, attn. Susanne Lawrence
Business Publications Ltd.
109-119 Waterloo Road
London SE1 8UL

Travel Bursary 1980

Each year the Women's Farm and Garden Association offers a £100 bursary to agricultural or horticultural students for travel. This year the winner is Gillian Riley, who is engaged on a three-year course for her doctorate in beef-cattle reproduction and nutrition. She intends to use the bursary to visit research laboratories in Holland and France to study their techniques.

Useful address: The Women's Farm and Garden Association
Courtauld House, Byng Place
London WC1E 7JH

Ethel Chipchase, a fighter for women's rights

Ethel Chipchase has retired as Secretary of the Women's Advisory Committee of the Trade Union Congress.

Born in Poplar in East London, her home was bombed out during the war. She started her working life as a typist and cashier, and one of her earliest acts of defiance was to bring out six girls in protest at being forced to work overtime without pay on a Saturday afternoon. On the Monday morning she was asked to choose whether to resign or be sacked. In those days, there was no union to back her up.

In the 1960s she worked with a variety of organizations for legislation on equal pay for equal work, which resulted in the Equal Pay Act 1970. From 1976 to 1979, she served on the Equal Opportunities Commission. She can understand, she says, that militant younger women are not satisfied with the present position of women, but in the balance sheet for the last ten years the advances are well on the credit side. Even so, she admits bluntly, there is still too much discrimination on the shop floor and too many men who think of equality only as a word to be included in a resolution.

If women are to enjoy equality of opportunity, she argues, they need back-up provision. The law should insist on the provision of adequate nursery and child-care facilities to relieve the pressures on women at work and not leave it to the discretion of local authorities, as happens now.

A keen walker and a member of the Ramblers' Association for nearly 30 years, Ethel Chipchase is looking forward to having more time for her favourite recreation but she admits to being sad at leaving her work when there is still so much work to be done.

Her successor as Secretary to the Women's Advisory Committee is Mrs. Ann Gibson.

Useful address: Women's Advisory Committee
Trade Union Congress
Great Russell Street
London WC1

Women's Studies

Women's Studies is the title of a quarterly publication produced by the Workers Educational Association, one of the oldest British popular education organizations.

Edited by Carolyn Brown, the publication is a lively reflection of the many activities created by women in making the best possible use of permanent education.

Useful address: Women's Studies
c/o Carolyn Brown
176 Hagley Road
Stourbridge DY8 2JN

THE CHANGING EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

Part-time work

This autumn, the Standing Committee on Employment is to launch on a study of part-time work. To stimulate this work, the European Commission has brought out a statement on the subject.

Opportunities for access to the labour market for those seeking part-time work should be improved. Part-time work must not be given different treatment; access to part-time employment should not be restricted to women or limited to the type of work making least demands in terms of qualifications.

More than nine million people have a part-time job in the Community today. In Denmark and the United Kingdom, part-time work has become part of the tradition, involving 18% and 16.9% of the total working population respectively. The situation is very different in Ireland and Italy, where the percentages are 3.7% and 2.5%.

There is far greater demand for part-time work than is reflected by the actual number of people who have found such employment. It is the field in which the ratio between supply and demand of jobs is the least favourable to those seeking work. In Germany, for example, there is only one job vacancy for every ten applicants for part-time employment.

According to the European Commission, the aims of Community efforts should be to:

- a. apply the principle of minimum thresholds (number of hours worked or wages payable to the worker) for access to social security schemes. These thresholds should apply to the payment of social security contributions and the individual's right to social welfare benefits. They should be so designed as not to prejudice the rights of full-time workers.
- b. state the principle of the equality in matters of employment law for full-time and part-time workers, taking the shorter working hours into account. In creating that equality, the following aspects should be taken into consideration as a minimum:
 - . the existence of an individual contract of employment (specifically the basic hours of work and their apportionment);
 - . the right to a minimum wage, the procedures being comparable to those prescribed for full-time work in each member state;
 - . equal opportunities for promotion;
 - . protection against dismissal;
 - . entitlement to company benefits and facilities.

The Commission believes that the systematic development of part-time work cannot be the only solution to the problems of employment or the problems of society as they relate to the reconciliation of working and family responsibilities.

The main problems arise from the fact that it is the woman who has to bear the burden of family responsibilities. In the majority of cases, the reason for wanting to work part-time lies in the difficulty of reconciling full-time work with the demands of the family. Most part-time workers will always run the risk of being placed in a separate category, where they are less well placed to play a real part in working life or to find out about their rights. Although each worker should retain his or her freedom of choice, the ideal solution would be gradually to reduce the hours of work and to distribute those hours better and, at the same time, to persuade both partners to share the unpaid family duties and the responsibility of paid employment more equitably.

Non-discrimination: procedures in the event of infringement

The European Commission has authorized Vice President Henk Vredeling to take infringement proceedings, in pursuance of article 169 of the EEC Treaty, against six member states regarding the application of the Directive of 9 February 1976 on equality of status for men and women in access to employment and vocational training and advancement and in their working conditions.

The member states in question have passed specific laws giving men and women equal status, but some points of this legislation do not comply with the EEC directive. Letters have been sent to serve notice on the six Governments in question, on the following grounds:

- Belgium The Belgian Government has not taken steps to implement the principle of equality of access to vocational guidance and training (article 4 of the Directive) and, contrary to article 5 of the Directive (equality in the conditions of work), in the public sector leave for the purpose of bringing up a child is granted only to the mother, not to the father.
- Denmark The Danish law on equality of access to vocational training and on equal working conditions applies only if the workers are employed at the same workplace (which restricts the scope of the obligations set out in articles 4 and 5 of the directive). In the same way, this law restricts the scope of the principle of equal access to vocational guidance and training so that it is applicable merely to "guidance and training with a view to paid employment".
- France The law of 10 July 1975 authorizes the practice of recruiting men alone or women alone for certain civil service bodies; it also provides for separate conditions governing access to that employment for men and women, which is in conflict with article 3 of the Directive and cannot be deemed to be covered by the very stringent list of allowance exceptions set out in article 2.2.
- Ireland According to Irish law, certain jobs (for example, in psychiatric hospitals and wash-houses) are exempted from the requirement that there should be equality of access; although they are deemed to be special cases, they appear to be incompatible with articles 1, 2 and 3 of the directive.

In addition, only women are allowed to practise the profession of midwife, something that is in conflict with article 3 of the Directive. The Employment Equality Act of 1977 excludes certain categories of persons from the full exercise of their right of appeal to competent bodies (infringing article 6 of the Directive).

Italy The law of 9 December 1977 does not fully cover the question of equality in all working conditions, infringing article 5 of the Directive. Furthermore, the three-month "adoption leave" to care for a newly adopted child is granted only to female workers (which is also in conflict with article 5).

United Kingdom The 1975 Sex Discrimination Act applies the Directive only partially to the status of the liberal professions (conflicting with articles 3, 4 and 5 of the Directive). Private households and small firms are also excluded from its field of application, infringing article 2. The job of midwife is partially excluded from the application of the law as regards equality of access to employment.

The Commission has already served notice on Germany, the Netherlands and Luxembourg regarding their failure to apply the Directive, but in the meanwhile bills have been tabled in their respective Parliaments and the Commission is now considering the position.

The Lomé Convention

"We are proud of the Lomé Convention ... because it is in the forefront of the socio-economic war to save humanity from unfair exploitation, hunger and sickness, ignorance and poverty." This is the declaration made by Mr. Muna, President of the Cameroun National Assembly and Co-President of the Consultative Assembly that groups parliamentarians from the countries of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific, as well as their colleagues from European Parliament.

During a meeting of the Consultative Assembly, Mrs. Focke (German Socialist) submitted a report that reviews the situation since Lomé 1 (the first Convention) and the prospects for Lomé 2 (the second Convention signed at Lomé, which improves and extends its predecessor).

In her report, Mrs. Focke pointed to the satisfactory results achieved by STABEX, the arrangement for stabilizing export prices which gives a guaranteed income to Third World nations exporting basic products.

Mrs. Focke also paid homage to the non-governmental organizations that are active in the field of development aid. More than 250 of these NGOs maintain relations with the European Community. Through their intervention, the people affected by the projects can participate more actively. By the end of 1979, more than 500 projects presented by the NGOs had been funded, benefiting 85 Third World nations.

Health Education

"The role of the doctor in health education" was the theme of a symposium arranged by the European Commission in cooperation with the International Federation of Health, Preventive Medicine and Social Medicine and with the International Health Education Union.

The Council of Ministers of the Community devoted to Health in November 1978 had stressed the importance of health education and the need for a strategy which would encourage preventive behaviour among the population.

The symposium in Luxembourg acknowledged that what is needed is to give health education a new dimension. It is the individual himself who can take the first step towards this end by taking an active role in managing his own health and fighting against certain diseases that come with more advanced civilization, in particular those arising from over-indulgence in tobacco, alcohol and medical drugs, as well as the diseases due to mal-nutrition.

In this educational process, the general practitioner has very special responsibility, for he is well placed to advise both individuals and their families, while he can also maintain close links with other facilities within the health organization (preventive medicine in schools, industrial medicine, post-natal care, etc.).

In conclusion, the symposium called for health education concepts and methods to become an integral part of the general training of doctors, particularly in the additional training given to general practitioners.

The self-employed women

At the request of the European Commission, a group of experts is preparing a report on the status, working conditions and vocational training of the self-employed women. Through this research it is hoped that the Community Directive on equality of status for men and women in employment can be applied more equitably. It should be noted that this report will also tackle the problems of women married to the self-employed, such as the wives of tradesmen, craftsmen and farmers.

University research scholarships

This year the European Commission has once again granted scholarships (to a maximum of Bfr.180,000) to young university research workers to help them pursue their work on European integration.

Out of a total of 17 scholarships, 7 have been awarded to women: Annie Cohen-Solal (Paris-North University), Brigid Laffan-Burns (National Institute for Higher Education, Limerick, Ireland), Angelika Lippe (Berlin Free University), Jocelyne Loos (Paris IX University), Ruth Mulvad (Aarhus University, Denmark), Nathalie Vavasseur (Paris I University) and, finally, a team consisting of Anna Zielinska and Andrzej Stepniak (Gdansk University, Poland).

The age of retirement

A closer look at the idea of "flexible retirement" has been taken by the European Commission, from a two-fold viewpoint. On the one hand, it wishes to take into account the aspirations of older workers and their need for social welfare protection. On the other, it is concerned for their financial situation, particularly with the prospects for rescheduling of working hours in mind.

The European Commission is considering three guidelines, which could be summarized as follows:

1. A system of flexible retirement from a certain specific age (such as 60) might be introduced, as well as a maximum age. The worker would be entitled to choose his own age of retirement without being swayed in that choice by too great a difference between the level of his pension.
2. Gradual retirement might be made possible, so that retirement would no longer mean that a person is cut off from his or her working life from one day to the next. A worker who reaches the minimum age could retire if he wishes, but if he decides not to do so immediately he could be given the opportunity to reduce his workload little by little. Within certain limits, the loss of earnings would be compensated and he would retain his full entitlement to social security benefits.
3. A regulatory mechanism could be introduced that would make the system of flexible retirement or gradual retirement more responsive to the economic needs of the community. Employment policy measures could be adopted, for instance, if there is a continuing high level of unemployment. They could remain in force for a limited period with financial inducements being offered to encourage earlier retirement, thus freeing jobs for others. In a period of full employment, on the other hand, the emphasis would be on continuing work for a longer period under the arrangements for gradual retirement.

The campaign against illiteracy

The European Communities "Youth" Forum has sent a resolution on illiteracy to the European Commission and Parliament. It has asked the Commission to make an overall, in-depth study of illiteracy within the Community, to attempt to evaluate the effectiveness of existing literacy programmes and, finally, to conduct a campaign that will ensure that all young people and adults in the Community are able to read and write within the next ten years.

According to the Forum, a campaign of this kind should be conducted within the context of the European Social Fund, since illiteracy is the major obstacle to vocational training.

Useful address: Forum de la Jeunesse
66 avenue de Cortenberg
1040 Brussels

Women and the European Community

The influence exerted by the European Community is all too often viewed solely from the economic angle. Nevertheless, due to the incentive provided by the Commission many ventures have had, or will have, major consequences for women in the social field. A publication has been issued that reviews the situation: it is entitled "Women and the European Community - Community action - Comparative National Situations". It is a summary account of EEC action designed to bring about equality between men and women at work, in the fields of pay, social security, education and training policy, working conditions and unemployment.

Published by the Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, this large-format 109-page book contains many statistical tables with clear comments. It is undoubtedly the first time that comparisons can be made between countries in such different fields. It is a good working tool, one that will provide convincing support for your arguments. On sale at the price of Bfr.240 or Fr.fr.35.

Useful address: Office des Publications
B.P. 1003
Luxembourg

"Traité de Rome" in Lisbon

The boat called after the Treaty of Rome has made a well publicized call at Lisbon. Just as Portugal was knocking at the door of the Community, the press noted with interest that the crew was international and that the master was a woman. Denis Carrim, it pointed out, berthed at the port of Belem with impeccable style.

RESEARCH, MEETINGS AND BOOKS

Workplace Attitudes to Maternity and Nursery Facilities is an interesting case study. With a work force of almost 70,000, Lucas Industries is one of the largest employers in the United Kingdom. A detailed sample survey throws light on the opinions of women at work; the unions explain their demands; and current legislation is explained. It will be helpful to compare this case study with other research being conducted in the Community.

Useful address: APEX, 22 Worple Road
London SW19 4DF

An international festival of women's films is to take place in Brussels in April 1981, when new and recent full-length and short films will be shown. Three bodies are pooling their efforts to ensure that the festival is a success: the Belgian associations, Cinélibre and La Femme dans le Cinéma, and "Les Gémeaux" arts centre in Paris.

Useful address: La Femme dans le Cinéma, c/o Evelyne Paul
99 rue Camille Lemonnier
1060 Brussels

Europ is a curious magazine, brought out in French and English, whose writers change every year. In fact they are young journalists who are brought together by the "Journalistes en Europe" association for a few months at a time. The June 1980 issue, devoted to the Mediterranean, has a lengthy section on "women's conditions" - a fresh look at a little known situation.

Useful address: Europ, 33 rue du Louvre
75002 Paris

The Women's Press Book Club has issued its first catalogue. The aim is to offer information and discount prices on about 50 books a year. These books, by or about women, will be chosen with special emphasis on literature, art history, politics and health. The Club will also offer imported titles from the U.S. and Australia. Membership for those inside or outside the U.K. is on a subscription basis: £10 for a once-only payment or £5 for one year. Members will be sent four catalogues a year. Further information from the Women's Press Book Club, 124 Shoreditch High Street, London E1 6JE.

A selective bibliography of books, pamphlets, reports and special issues published between 1967 and 1978 has been brought out under the title of "De Vrouwenleeswijzer". Deliberately selective (many articles are reprints), this reference work also gives useful addresses of women's associations and groups both in Belgium and in the Netherlands. The price is Fl.10, to be made payable to Post Office cheque a/c 1882264 in the name of Penningmeester (the treasurer), Informatie en Documentatiecentrum van de Nederlandse Vrouwen Raad (Dutch Women's Council information and documentation centre), The Hague.

La voce che è in lei (the voice in her) is an anthology of Italian women's writing between 1800 and 1900. Giuliana Morandini provides an interesting overall view of literature produced by women in an age that saw the first stirrings of emancipation, revealing how greatly women's problems and the right to self-expression are linked (Edizioni Bompiani, Milan, Lit.4,500).

Women, Work and Trade Union Organization is a much needed 36-page pamphlet on relations between women and trade unions in the U.K. According to the authors, Judith Hunt and Shelley Adams, equality for women cannot be achieved through action at the workplace alone, but the trade union movement can play an important part in both local and national campaigning for the provisions that are essential to women's equality. Available (at 60 p.) from Judith Hunt, Assistant Secretary, AUEW/TASS, Onslow Hall, Little Green, Richmond, Surrey TW9 1OM.

Eco e Narciso, parole e silenzi nel conflitto uomo-donna (Echo and Narcissus, words and silences in the conflict between man and woman), by Marina Mizzau, analyses some of the masterpieces of 19th-century literature and reveals the subjection of the heroine to the man and the way in which she is "forbidden" to communicate. A literary analysis, but one that is very close to the reality of today. Edizioni Boringhieri, Turin, Lit.8,000.

Frauenpolitik in Europa (women's policy in Europe) is the central issue taken as the theme for issue 16 of the journal "Transnational". Articles are by authors from different countries, with different political horizons, as is only right for a publication that is close to the European Movement. Published by Europa Union Verlag GmbH, Bachstrasse 32, postfach 15 29, 5300 Bonn 1.

Virago, the English-language women publishers, has brought out their new catalogue. They specialize in books by, for and about women, which can be obtained from Virago, 5 Wardour Street, London W1 (U.K. and Eire), from Uitgeverij en Boekhandel Van Gennep, Nes 128, 1012KE Amsterdam (Netherlands) or from Boxerbeels Inc., Limmastrasse 111, 8031 Zürich (rest of Europe).

Comment vivent des femmes seules - how women alone live - is the title of a survey conducted by the Centre féminin de rencontres et d'échanges, published by the Belgian Minister for French Culture as part of the Cahiers JEB series. The report is not new (1978), but "Women of Europe" has just discovered it: its contents are still topical.

Useful address: Centre féminin de rencontres et d'échanges
89, rue Saint Henri
1200 Brussels

Les femmes et l'espace quotidien is a report commissioned by the Ile-de-France regional delegation for women's status. The women who have contributed to this research put forward many concrete proposals: the height of children's sand-pit walls, the maintenance of open space, etc. All too often the authorities forget that a town is the business of the people who live in it. Useful address: 29 rue Barbet de Jouÿ, 75700 Paris.

Change is the title of both a publication and an organization, whose aim is to research and publish reports on women's status throughout the world. Edited by Georgina Ashworth, Change seeks to alert public opinion, foster an international exchange of information and advance the human dignity of women. The first reports will range from Singapore and Tanzania, from Chile to Mali, from France to Colombia. All contributions are welcome.

Useful address: Change, 62 Chandos Place,
London WC2

Council of Europe Action for Equality between Women and Men is a publication commemorating the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women. The Council of Europe sometimes works in unusual fields - for instance, "women's participation in sporting activities at every level and in the administration of sport". Useful address: Council of Europe, B.P. 431 R6, 67006 Strasbourg Cedex.

Femmes du monde entier (women the world over) is published by the Fédération Démocratique Internationale des Femmes (FDIF), an association with 129 member organizations in 144 countries. Published in German, English, Arabic, Spanish, French and Russian, this quarterly reflects the opinion of Communist women or sympathizers. Useful address: Femmes du Monde Entier, 13 Unter den Linden, 108 Berlin.

De vrouw en haar particulier vermogen (woman and her own property) is an account of two days' discussions on the subject in Antwerp in 1978. It is unusual for such a close look to be taken at woman's economic status, her rights and her obligations. Both men and women - bankers, stockbrokers and insurers - contributed towards this analysis, with its wealth of facts and figures. Useful address: Association belge des banques, 36 rue Ravenstein 1000, Brussels.

Female Sexual Mutilations by Fran P. Hosken is a "guide for action" in a field which has horrified Western women. For the first time perhaps, a thorough analysis is given in this 100 page, closely packed book, with stress being placed on the facts, not on the emotional aspect. Already dubbed the "Hosken Report", the book is published by Women's International Network News, 187 Grant Street, Lexington, Mass. 02173, U.S.

Abortion - The Facts is a report produced by Agenor, an association named after the father of Europe which promotes debate from the progressive viewpoint. The situation in 15 countries, from Portugal to the Netherlands and from Ireland to Greece, is described in the hope that contact and solidarity will be stimulated. Reports have already been published on apartheid, nuclear energy, the Dutch radicals and other subjects.

Useful address: Agenor, 13 rue Hobbema, 1040 Brussels.

Women in Development: the need to persuade women to play a part in the process of development is a matter of growing concern to the developing nations, the countries giving aid and the international organizations. There has been general agreement that women are an integral part of this process, but up to now there has been little information to help the decision-makers find about their specific role.

This report, which focuses on women in four developing nations (Malaysia, Fiji, Sri Lanka and the Dominican Republic), collates the findings of surveys and anthropological documents to throw fresh light on the problem: that of breaking through the vicious circle of hunger, poverty, illiteracy and early motherhood.

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