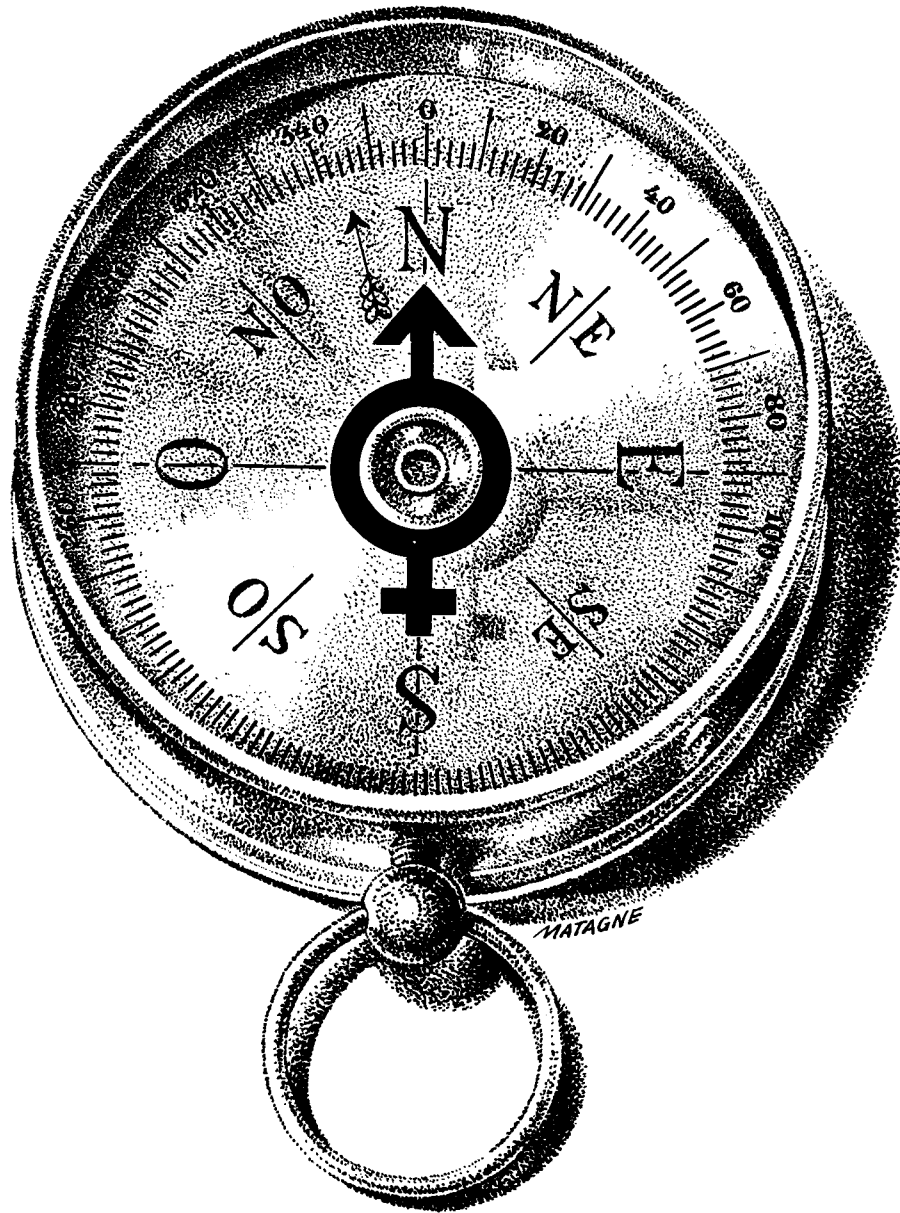


Women of Europe

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

March was a particularly busy month for European Parliament as it had two sessions, both in Strasbourg.

During the session from 9 to 13 March, several women were the rapporteurs, in each case on major issues.

The first was Ann Clwyd (UK, Socialist), the author of a report on the economic, occupational and social integration of the handicapped. The resolution endorsed by Parliament covers many aspects of the lives of handicapped people and recommends that they should be fully integrated in social security systems, that there should be positive discrimination in favour of the disabled by reserving a given quota of jobs for them (as in Germany), that an "appropriate" allowance should be given to this category of workers and that a major effort should be made in the field of education.

Ann Clwyd opened the debate (attended by about 200 handicapped people from every country in Europe) by calling for reliable research on the number of handicapped people in the Community (estimates range from 13 to 23 million) and their needs. She pointed out that handicapped people often have to cope with material difficulties as well as their disabilities. Governments should recognize the problem and increase their aid (unlike her own government, she said bitterly, which had reduced such aid). She felt that we should be concentrating on:

raising the standard of living of handicapped people (especially by action at Community level through the channels of the Regional and Social Funds);

securing jobs for the disabled (the European Commission was asked to consider national experiments to see how job opportunities for the handicapped could be improved);

integrating the handicapped in society by special efforts with housing and community facilities (the rapporteur quoted Denmark as setting a good example in this field);

providing unsegregated education.

If action is taken in these fields, Ann Clwyd said she was convinced that the handicapped could become full members of society.

Maria Luisa Cassanmagnago-Cerretti (Italy), speaking on behalf of the Christian Democrat group, stressed the need for prevention - not just in childhood but even in the pre-natal stage. She agreed that handicapped children should be integrated in "normal" schools, but she pointed out that this should not be done at the expense of the special attention that such children will still need. Teachers must be properly trained to welcome and help children with special problems. We must return to the path of respect for every human being, concluded Ms Cassanmagnago, so that handicapped people too may enjoy freedom and decide as to their own futures.

Danielle De March, spokesman for the French Communists, declared her agreement with a whole series of suggestions:

- the poverty with which the handicapped are afflicted should be brought to the public attention;
- the handicapped must have an adequate income;
- the handicapped working in sheltered employment should not be exploited;
- a national disability allowance should be given;
- full advantage should be taken of progress in the medical field;
- information should be given;
- transport infrastructure should be improved.

The Danish spokesman for the Liberal group, Tove Nielsen, stressed that it is not up to the handicapped to adapt to society but that society should adapt to its handicapped and offer them help, including financial aid. Although she acknowledged that European Parliament can probably do little more than provide information in this field, she pointed to the very dramatic situation of handicapped people in countries outside the Community, which have even fewer facilities.

Another Liberal, Marie-Jane Pruvot from France, appealed to the sense of solidarity and the open-mindedness of governments, employers, teachers and families. Some disabled people can be just as "profitable" workers as anybody else. She described the lot of profoundly handicapped people; for them (and for their families as well), very special moral and material help is needed.

Sile de Valera, an Irishwoman from the Progressive Democrats group, also spoke of the thankless and often unrecognized role of families and charitable bodies. They must be given assistance, especially by increasing the services that can be given to handicapped people in their own homes.

Other special problems were raised in the debates: the problem of the mentally handicapped (brought up by Beata Ann Brooks, UK, Conservative); leisure, the arts and sport (Phili Viehoff, Neth, Socialist); and access to buildings (Suzanne Dekker, Neth, D'66). Johanna Maij-Weggen (Neth, PPE) had some criticisms of her colleague's report, which she thought should have been more practical. Else Hammerich of the Danish movement against the EEC was the only speaker to call for an effective national policy rather than EEC measures.

Marie-Jane Pruvot was the rapporteur for problems associated with young people. She made a series of proposals concerning the European Youth Forum, education and training, exchange visits for young people and voluntary work. She said that the future of Europe depends on how the young are educated. The criterion of an immediate return must take second place to the consideration of what can be done for European youth. In particular, every young European should feel "at home" in every other country of the Community. In the course of the debate, Phili Viehoff called for the introduction of a satisfactory form of social security for the young, and Beata Ann Brooks said that more thought should be given to careers guidance in the schools.

The German Christian Democrat, Marlene Lenz, introduced a report on relations between the EEC and Rumania, initiated by the Committee on External Economic Relations. She expressed congratulations on the agreement on trade in industrial products and on the joint EEC/Rumania committee. She hoped that the European Commission would expand the Community's contractual economic relations with other Comecon countries. The agreements already reached, in her opinion, are entirely in the spirit of the conference on security and cooperation in Europe.

Luciana Castellina (Italy, Independent group) was the author of a report on the operation of Stabex, a scheme whereby countries in Africa, the West Indies and the Pacific are guaranteed an income for certain exports. Her overall assessment of the way in which the system worked in 1977 and 1978 was favourable.

During the debate on the Prag report on the linking of work and training, Paola Gaiotti de Biasi from Italy, speaking for the European People's Party group, emphasised the psychological, sociological and cultural value of this method and its role in reducing unemployment. She would like to see the system of education reformed in the Community. The British Conservative, Elaine Kellett-Bowman expressed her view that vocational training should be brought in line with new technologies. In the opinion of Sylvie Le Roux (France, Communist), young people's aspirations may find an outlet in the revival of the economy as a whole.

The battle against drugs

European Parliament's Committee on the Environment, chaired by Kenneth Collins (of the British Labour Party) has been considering the problem of drugs in the light of a working document drawn up by Christiane Scrivener (France, Liberal), in which she expressed the hope that special efforts would be made in Europe to help children realise the consequences of the use of drugs from the age of ten on.

Vera Squarcialupi (Italy, Communist) reminded the Committee of the success achieved by the United Nations with its special fund to promote conversion away from certain products in Thailand, Mexico and Burma. Could not the European Community consider action along these lines directed at countries of which it is a major economic partner?

Willim Francis Newton Dunn (UK, Conservative) suggested that public hearings should be arranged on the problem of drugs. During the same working session, a representative of the European Commission said that the question of drugs could possibly be tackled at Community level as part of the discussion on the use and misuse of pharmaceuticals.

Charlemagne Prize

The international "Charlemagne Prize" awarded by the town of Aix-la-Chapelle has been won by Madame Simone Veil in 1981 and is to be handed to her on 28 May.

Among the political questions tackled in March, Parliament briefly discussed the situation in Spain (in which a German Liberal, Mechtild von Alemann, raised her voice) and - at greater length - the situation in the Western Sahara. Two MEPs disagreed with the clearly pro-Moroccan analysis of the situation by the rapporteur: Maria Fabrizia Baduel-Glorioso from Italy (Communist) considered that he was too partial in his views and reminded him that the Sahari people is recognized by 45 countries and some of the international organizations; and her compatriot from the Radical Party, Maria Antonietta Macciocchi, also voiced her criticisms.

Special session at the end of March

The special session from 23 to 26 March was devoted mainly to the big debate on farm prices. The various parliamentary groups were very divided, the Commission advocating a 7.8% increase while some MEPs wanted to see prices raised by as much as 16% or 18% (in the case of the Greek MEPs). Nevertheless, a majority finally adopted the resolution tabled by Giosuè Ligios (It, Christian Democrat) who, with the support of the whole of the EPP group, proposed an average 12% increase.

During the general debate, Gloria Hooper (UK, European Democrat) expressed conflicting views held by the Committee on the Environment, Public Health and Consumer Protection: the prices recommended in the Ligios report do not take consumers' problems sufficiently into account and the increase proposed by the Commission should be the maximum permissible.

The spokesman for the Italian Communists, Carla Barbarella, upheld another view, calling the Commission's proposals unsatisfactory. In common with other speakers, she expressed regret that the European Commission should have included proposals that amount to actual reforms of the common agricultural policy in its proposals on prices. The French Liberal, Simone Martin, and Winifred Ewing (Scotland, DEP) also defended the CAP.

The Belgian Socialist, Anne-Marie Lizin, explained that she would vote in favour of the resolution despite certain reservations, while a member of the same group, Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul from Germany, regretted that the resolution was somewhat over-protectionist.

Their British colleague, Barbara Castle, went much further, calling for a freeze on farm prices for products of which there is a surplus and for the payment of direct aid to farmers who are in real need (what are called "deficiency payments", which the Commission is unable to accept). Danielle De March stated the reasons why French Communists would be voting against the resolution, which were completely different: the prices suggested were too low and Parliament had refused to discuss the problems faced by agriculture in the Community as a result of enlargement.

The April session

The problem of the small number of women officials in the more senior administrative grades of the Commission was raised in Parliament once again. Elaine Kellett-Bowman (UK, Conservative) had questioned Mr Tugendhat on the situation in grades A4 and A5 (the middle ranks of administrators) and in C3 (secretaries, for instance). Comparing the position in 1981 and in 1976, the Commissioner quoted the following percentages: A4 - 3.57% (2.4%); A5 - 6.77% (4.7%); and C3 76.68% (83.37%). Mr Tugendhat admitted that these figures were "deplorably low" but said that there had been an improvement all the same, with the number of A4 and A5 women

officials increasing by 50% over a four year period and a parallel rise in the A6 and A7 grades in which women account for 13.70% and 14.20% of the total.

Maria Fabrizia Baduel-Glorioso (Italy, Communist group) then raised the problem of the top grades, A1, A2 and A3, saying that the absence of women at this level means that the Commission is a body that does not reflect the electorate as a whole. Mr Tugendhat quoted the names of women in grade A2: Renée Van Hoof, who heads the interpreting service, the largest in the world (she is Belgian), the Dane Inger Nielsen, who plays an important part in enlargement negotiations, and the British official, Pauline Neville Jones, his chef de cabinet. Even so, he regretted that there were no women in grade A3 (division head).

Questioned by two Dutch MEPs, Johanna Maij-Weggen (PPE) and Suzanne Dekker (D'66), on provision for part-time employment, Mr Tugendhat said that this is obviously not possible with the higher grades. He could not conceive of a part-time director general, he said, man or woman. He also acknowledged that one problem might be the age limits that are imposed, since these often make it impossible for women who have devoted a period of years to bringing up their children from then embarking upon a career. When the British Conservative member Mr Seligman asked whether women should not be opting for a career as wives and mothers. Mr Tugendhat defended women's right to choose for themselves. Women who want to take up a career should be able to do so without having to put up with any form of discrimination, he concluded.

Taking the final vote on the Newton-Dunn resolution on protection against lead, European Parliament took a stand that will help to prevent discrimination between men and women. Yvette Roudy (France, Socialist), Johanna Maij-Weggen (Neth, PPE), Christiane Scrivener (France, Liberal) and Else Hammerich (movement against Danish membership of EEC) spoke in the debate, while Domenico Ceravolo (Italy, Communist) asked Parliament to be consistent in its views during the debate on the position of women and to reject any discrimination which might give rise to the dismissal of women or the refusal to give them jobs.

In a lengthy debate on textiles arising from a discussion of the renewal of the multifibre arrangement, several MEPs took the floor to defend the interests of male and female workers in this industry (which employs many women). Elaine Kellett-Bowman, for instance, the British Conservative, spoke up for free trade but called for protection for European workers against cheap imports both from developing nations and from industrialized countries. Similar views were expressed by Winnie Ewing from Scotland (DEP), who criticized the U.S. for exporting to the EEC but not importing enough from the poorer nations. Marie-Claude Vayssade (France, Socialist) in turn criticized the multinationals and called for a true industrial plan for European textiles. Barbara Castle expressed herself in far stronger terms on the excesses of the multinationals and liberalism in the domain of free trade. She would like to see the planned development of world trade in textiles as part of a genuine policy for the redistribution of purchasing power.

In the debate on the European Council meeting in Maastricht on 23-24 March, in which Parliament as a whole proved to be highly critical of the outcome, the Conservative spokesman was Lady Elles, who was disappointed that the Council had not reached a decision on the seat of European Parliament (merely confirming the status quo). While it is said that EEC funds should

be used to promote an economic revival, 70% of the Community budget is in fact devoted to supporting agricultural prices. She was happy, on the other hand, that the question of index-linking had been raised, as it is a mechanism that generates inflation. On the political side, she thought that the Community should react far more firmly to USSR interference in other countries, using the weapon of agricultural and technological trade as an arm of its foreign policy to exert pressure on Moscow. At the other end of the political spectrum, the spokesman for the French Communists, Sylvie Le Roux, deplored the failure of the European Council to reach a solution to the crisis, and also expressed great hostility to any attempt to tinker with the index-linking of wages.

Paola Gaiotti de Biase (Italy, Christian Democrat) was the rapporteur on an apparently technical subject, the export of baby-beef from Yugoslavia to the Community now that Greece, who also exports this product, has joined the EEC. In fact, however, the issue has an important political aspect: baby-beef is one of the very few products that Yugoslavia is able to export to EEC countries and the volume should not be reduced. The EEC should not go back on the commitments into which it entered when signing the cooperation agreement with that country. Paola Gaiotti stressed the importance of the Community's relations with Yugoslavia, a country that is both in the Eastern bloc and in the Mediterranean, one that is non-aligned and which has a crucial strategic role, a country that is now facing serious economic and political difficulties.

The same speaker took part in the emergency debate on the Franco-German loan in response to two resolutions from Italian MEPs. Although Paola Gaiotti signed the Christian Democrat resolution calling for this venture to be raised to Community level, she considered it rather too "diplomatic". She would have liked a far more forceful condemnation of this tendency towards "Europe à la carte", or a "two-speed Europe".

The doyenne of European Parliament and a member of the group of European Progressive Democrats, Louise Weiss, spoke in the debate on the Law of the Sea. While many of her colleagues openly deplored the delays on the part of the United States in adopting the text of the Law of the Sea, she argued that it was understandable that it would want to give the matter thought before conferring such an important responsibility as the exploitation of the sea bed on an international organization. She naturally hoped for a fair distribution of the wealth of the sea but she warned against the temptation of demagoguery in this field.

San Marino

Maria Lea Pedini has been elected "captain regent" of the Republic of San Marino. A 26-year-old Socialist, with a 3-year-old son, Jacopo, she is the first woman to hold a post of such high responsibility in the history of the Republic. She is a member of its Women's Union.

In the territory of San Marino, the office of captain-regent is an amalgamation of the duties of president of the Republic and the president of its Chamber of Deputies.

COURT OF JUSTICE OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

A woman Advocate General

On 17 March 1981, Simone Rozès was appointed Advocate General at the Court of Justice of the European Communities, the first woman to hold this office.

The former president of the Paris Courts, she was also the first woman to be appointed to that position.

A Court Judgement and 14,000 Women

A judgement delivered by the Court of Justice may be beneficial to the 14,000 or so women who are employed by Lloyds Bank.

With the active support of the Equal Opportunities Commission, a test case was brought by Susan Worringham and Margaret Humphreys against the bank and was referred to the European Court of Justice by the British Court of Appeal for its opinion.

This is the background to the case: Lloyds Bank obliges its male employees aged under 25 to pay a contribution of 5% of their gross earnings into a pension scheme. In practice, this 5% is paid by Lloyds in the form of an extra amount (also 5%) paid to male staff who have to make such contributions. This amount is then deducted and paid directly into a special pension fund on behalf of the male workers.

This arrangement is not made for female staff under the age of 25. According to the plaintiffs, in practice this means that men earn 5% more than their female counterparts, a difference that is extended in certain ways, for example when calculating certain benefits such as termination payments, unemployment benefits and family allowances.

The Court of Justice upheld this view and stated that in fact "contributions paid by an employer under a pension scheme, or the rights and benefits to which a worker may be entitled under such a scheme, constitute 'pay' as provided by article 119 of the Treaty of Rome".

The Court confirmed that the requirement of equal pay laid down by the Treaty of Rome must be satisfied without waiting until it is specifically embodied in national legislation. As a result, women employed by Lloyds may ask for their salary scales to be brought into line with those of their male colleagues retroactively over a number of years.

FACTS, INSTITUTIONS AND LAWS

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

Women Refugees

The United Nations General Assembly has adopted a resolution on women refugees and displaced women in which it notes "with profound concern" that women and children make up a majority of refugees and displaced persons in most regions. One of the points made by the resolution is that encouragement should be given to the participation by women, including women refugees, in the administration of refugee aid programmes, in particular the supply of food, shelter and essential medical services in the host countries, as well as to their participation in training and guidance programmes in host and resettlement countries.

The Voluntary Fund

As its name indicates, the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women is a common fund to which nations contribute on a voluntary basis to fund programmes launched in the Decade for Women. Each of the member nations is asked to take a financial part in this scheme, under which the money will essentially be directed towards women labouring under the heaviest disadvantages, the women of the Third World. Have you placed pressure on your own Government to ensure that it pays its share?

The Convention

By late January 1981, 79 states had signed the United Nations Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. Even so, signing the Convention is not enough. Each Parliament must ratify its Government's signature. Have you asked your Government to go to Parliament to ratify that signature?

Useful address: United Nations
New York 10017

B E L G I U M

After Copenhagen

The advisory committee on the position of women attached to the Foreign Ministry, which acts in close liaison with the U.N. Women's Commission, is entrusted with the task of reviewing ways of furthering the interests of women. It has now brought out its report on what will be the "post-Copenhagen period".

Its recommendations include: "The economic crisis bears heavily on women's employment and steps should be taken to ensure that women have equal access to employment and equal rights to retain their jobs; there must also be a genuine effort to retrain women so that they can find work in innovative fields. We must also require that laws on equal pay and status be put into application and that unpaid work done by women in the home, farmer's wives and the wives of the self-employed who assist their husbands be held in due regard."

The Foreign Ministry, for its part, has confirmed that it has already embarked on the procedure for the ratification of the U.N. Convention on the ending of discrimination against women which was signed by Belgium in Copenhagen on 17 July 1980.

Useful address: Commission consultative de la Condition de la Femme
Rue des Quatre-Bras
1000 Brussels

The Handicapped

The women's department in the Ministry for the French Community has brought out a booklet with the title of "Handicapés", designed to be "a breath of friendship and a smile for all the men and women who read it". In essence, it suggests that "well people" should be more open-minded and welcoming to the handicapped. The very tone in which the booklet is written, in discussing matters such as ways of looking, talking and visiting, inspires friendship and trust.

Useful address: Service de la Femme
Ministère de la Communauté Française
Galerie Ravenstein 79
1000 Brussels

Women at Sea

In reply to a question raised by Mr Ernest Glinne, a Member of European Parliament, the European Commission stated that - according to the Belgian Government - women may enroll in the "deck officer" section of the higher school of navigation in Antwerp, and have been able to do so since the 1980-1981 academic year. This school is the first step towards training for a career as deck officer, including that as the master of an ocean-going vessel.

The "engineering officer" section, on the other hand, is still barred to women because enrolment is conditional on the applicant having worked on board for a period where, according to the Belgian Government, trainees have to do work that women are forbidden to carry out because of its dangerous or unhealthy nature, according to Belgian legislation protecting women workers.

The European Commission is to see whether this ban is covered by the provisions of the directive of 9 February 1976 regarding implementation of the principle of equal status in access to employment, training and professional advancement and working conditions.

Useful address: Hogere Zeevaartschool
Noordkasteel - Oost t
2030 Antwerp

Women in a period of crisis

A reduction in unemployment benefit has been decided by the Government in Belgium as part of its package of measures to combat the crisis and narrow the serious budget deficit. This is a cut of about a fifth of the allowance paid to people who live alone and a third in the case of married or co-habiting people, i.e. people whose unemployment benefit is not the main source of income for the family.

Women are more directly affected by this measure, which came into effect on 1 April. Seeing it as a form of indirect discrimination, women's groups have formed a common front and have complained to the authorities.

A delegation of French- and Dutch-speaking women representing all shades of the political spectrum was received by Mr Ivor Richard, a member of the European Commission with responsibility for employment, social affairs and education. He said that he was increasingly concerned about the growing number of acts of indirect discrimination against women during this period of economic recession and, for his part, he would take care that European directives on equality of status (pay, employment and social security) are being applied in full. With this in mind, a careful look would be taken at the position of unemployed women in Belgium.

A discriminatory contribution

All civil servants, both men and women, have 6.5% of their gross earnings deducted as a contribution towards the Widows' and Orphans' Fund, but the 200,000 women in public service complain that they forfeit all their contributions because the Fund does not pay out a pension to widowers even if they are in need. Furthermore, the Fund does not pay an allowance to the orphans of women civil servants, even if they were the children of divorced women. The only exception (but only five cases are quoted) is that made for orphans of unmarried mothers who receive an allowance on condition that they have not been recognized by their fathers.

With the firm support of the association entitled "Solidarité Femmes Emploi" (Working Women's Solidarity), women civil servants have summonsed the State before the lower civil court in Brussels on the grounds that it has unjustifiably enriched itself at their expense. They claim repayment of five years' contributions.

Useful address: Solidarité Femmes Emploi a.s.b.l.
1a Place Quételet
1030 Brussels

Rest periods for women

The Belgian national air line, Sabena, is puzzled. According to the law women must be allowed a minimum rest period of eleven hours between one working period and the next. Because of its schedules, however, flight crews have a shorter break between two periods of duty. What should be done? Should certain routes be the province of men alone or should the air line break the law? This matter of conscience has now been cleared up by the "Women's Employment Committee", which recommends that the law be changed and special concessions made in the case of the female staff of transport companies.

Useful address: Commission du Travail des Femmes
Ministère de l'Emploi et du Travail
Rue Belliard
1040 Brussels

Refresher training

The institute of European studies in the Brussels Free University has held two refresher training courses for magistrates and those practising in the field of social law. The first course was on freedom of movement and the second on equal pay for male and female workers.

With changes in legislation and the growing body of jurisprudence, it is important for those working in the law to keep abreast of developments at all times.

Useful address: Institut d'études européennes
39 Avenue F.D. Roosevelt
1050 Brussels

Improving the law

The Commission of the European Communities has called on Belgium to take steps to end a form of discrimination that exists in its public sector, conflicting with the EEC directive on equality of status in employment. Up to this time, only women public sector employees were entitled to take a long leave (unpaid holiday) from their employment to bring up a child or for other family reasons and retain the right to return to their job at the end of the period, as well as holding on to their length of service and social security entitlements. This right is shortly to be extended to male employees, to comply with the European directive. A draft royal decree along these lines has recently been submitted to the ministerial committee on the status of women.

In the same spirit, a draft decree is being drawn up which will bring the country in line with the U.N. convention that states that nationality cannot be altered by marriage. The Belgian law will amend the position regarding the nationality of married women and their children.

Finally, women will find it easier to return to the world of work once the existing obstacle of age limits is removed. Local and provincial authorities as well as other local bodies have been asked to increase the maximum age for recruitment of staff to 50, as has already been done by the ministries.

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

Employment in Brussels

The Secretary of State for the Brussels Region, Ms Goor, has arranged a day's discussion on the theme of "opportunities for unemployed women seeking a job in the Brussels region". This is an area where special problems arise because it is predominated by the civil service and companies in the service sector.

Through its specific efforts in favour of women, the European Social Fund may provide incentives for the authorities to make a financial contribution towards new job training and retraining programmes.

Useful address: Secrétariat d'Etat à la Région Bruxelloise
9 Rue Ducale
1000 Brussels

1979 Report

The Committee on Women's Employment has published the report on its work in 1979, setting out the official views expressed by the Committee and describing research, publications, symposia, etc. The report is an interesting work of reference for specialists, but it also gives every woman an idea of how far we have come ... and how far we still have to go.

Useful address: Commission du Travail des Femmes
53 Rue Belliard
1040 Brussels

News knows no frontiers

Like ripples in a pond, news travels in ever wider circles. Information is not hemmed in by our geographic frontiers, and it can even cross more ancient, less visible barriers: the barriers of language, traditional relationships, ideological sympathies or lack of sympathy and intellectual laziness.

What is being achieved by Danish women in association is important to Irish women farmers. What Italian housewives are saying is relevant to women jobless in Great Britain. The problems of battered wives in Germany are of concern to French jurists.

Information must spread even better and faster, for the sake of solidarity, so that one group's experience can be put to good use by many others. Information is a tool that we have to learn how to handle. For example:

any group making a document public, even if the document consists of a single page, should remember to insert its name and address;

don't assume that the whole world knows about you; "come to the meeting next Sunday at 3 o'clock at the exhibition hall" is meaningless, as there may be dozens of exhibition halls;

don't forget to note the date - and that includes the year! - in any document, as it is of some importance in keeping records and for historians;

avoid using in-words or the kind of jargon that means a lot to fellow-militants but nothing to the ordinary reader of a petition or your publicity;

answer letters at once, especially when they come from another country - a note to say that you have received a letter followed by a longer missive later is far better than silence due to absent-mindedness or, worse, indifference.

Thank you, all and every one.

"Women of Europe"

D E N M A R K

Women in Denmark - Yesterday and Today

It has often been hard for outsiders to obtain information on the position of women in Denmark because the literature on the subject is published mainly in Danish, a language which few people understand outside Scandinavia. This obstacle has now been removed, since a book has come out in English entitled "Women in Denmark - Yesterday and Today".

The Danish National Women's Council and the Danish Society have asked Inga Dalsgard, whose whole life has been devoted to action in the cause of women, to write this book as a response to this growing need to enlighten the rest of the world as to the lives led by Danish women and their struggle to achieve equal rights and improve their lot.

The book starts with a chronological review of the period from the earliest archaeological discoveries up to about 3000 B.C., and from this date to our own days. Only brief information is given on the older days and the book comes into its own when it moves into the period, about 1850, when women's rights first became an issue, and continues up to the new feminist movement of the 1970s. Even so, it describes the lives of women during Viking times and in early Christianity, as well as the oppression of women and the witch hunts in the Reformation, which reached Denmark in the 16th and 17th centuries.

The clearest picture, then, is of the last 130 years. The author goes into depth into the main manifestations of women's struggle and the women's organizations, as well as their objectives: the right to training and work, the right to take part in political life, the controversy on sexual liberation from the 1880s to our own times. Women workers' associations and housewives' groups, restructuring of family life in an industrial society and the role of the family: all these are illustrated directly and indirectly by a description of the changes in the law on marriage and in all the legislation and regulations that govern family life.

The author goes on to explain how both the original and the new feminist movement was one of the main agencies for the changes that have taken place in society: the first industrial revolution of the 1880s and the economic boom and education explosion of the 1960s. We are now right in the middle of an economic crisis and clearly many of the achievements won with such great effort by women's associations are under threat. We might well wonder whether we shall not see everything that we have obtained slip from our hands over the years to come. We are faced with the task of finding ways of reinforcing what has been done and improving the status of women even further.

Finally, the book has a section on the position of women in Greenland and that country's union life.

Overall, it gives a broad view of the history of Danish women, and has been written by someone who has thrown herself heart and soul into the women's movement, devoting her whole life to the struggle for women's rights.

The publication can be obtained from:

Det Danske Selskab
Kultorget 2
1175 Copenhagen K

F R A N C E

Rheims: a woman Rector

Rolande Gadille, professor at the University of Lyons III, has been nominated the rector of the Rheims Academy. Under the French administrative system an academy is like a "province", with the rector acting as its "governor" in the field of education. Ms Gadille is the second woman to hold office, as Yvonne Lambert-Faivres has been the rector of the Dijon Academy since March 1980.

Three stars

For the first time in the military history of France, a woman has risen to the rank of three-star general. Her name is General Medical Officer and Inspector Valérie André. She qualified in medicine in Paris in 1948 and immediately joined the Army health service with the rank of Captain. Her title is the equivalent of major general.

Today's fathers

The Higher Council for Sex Information, Birth Control and Family Education has arranged a symposium in Paris on the theme of "the fathers of today", at which changing male attitudes and roles in EEC countries were discussed in depth in several round table meetings.

Those who came to the symposium reviewed trends in the concept of fatherhood, the role of the father in the decision to have a child, voluntary fatherhood or the rejection of fatherhood, men and family planning, today's relationships between men and women, fathers and pregnancy, fathers and childbirth, the care provided by a father, the evolution in the roles of husband and a wife generated by the fact that the wife has a career outside the home and, of course, changes in the father's rights that have occurred in the past few years.

It would be unfair to try to summarize in a few lines such a wealth of thought and ideas, in many cases highly original. We would note one point on which many speakers agreed: now that the man is not the partner who takes the initiative in deciding whether to have a child, he is making a greater effort in bringing up his children and surrounding them with love.

This attempt to shoulder more responsibility does not always come naturally, however. A Danish psychologist pointed out that while future fathers accept that they have equal responsibility before the baby is born, this does not always happen in practice. Men are still prepared to play with their children, cuddle them, give them their bottle, but they tend to disappear when the nappies need washing and the bottles need to be made up. One risk is emerging: that the new relationship between father and child is designed primarily to exclude the mother - as a sort of revenge.

Françoise de Boissieu, secretary general to the Higher Council for Sex Information to whose energy a great deal of the success of the symposium was due, stressed that children can only benefit from the harmonious sharing of family responsibilities by their fathers and mothers.

Useful address: Conseil Supérieur de l'Information Sexuelle
29 Boulevard Raspail
75007 Paris

The care of young children

Evelyne Sullerot has reported to the Economic and Social Council on ways of caring for young children. In her report, one of her recommendations is the setting up of "school crèches" for the two- and three-year olds.

At the meeting of the Economic and Social Council, listeners were reminded that almost a million and a half families in France have more than one child aged 26 months or over, and 60% of the children aged under 3 are looked after entirely by their mothers.

Useful address: Conseil Economique et Social
Palais d'Iéna, Avenue d'Iéna
75008 Paris

The promotion of women's employment

The State Secretariat for Women's Employment has sent out a "practical guide to the promotion of women's employment in the company" to 20,000 employers.

In the introduction to the guide, Nicole Pasquier says: "Only by voluntary effort can the stereotyped ideas entrenched in the public mentality be altered". To help employers embark on constructive self-criticism, statistical tables are given with the suggestion that they fill them in for themselves. They cover such matters as the number of women at the different levels of skill within the firm, the proportion of women by comparison with the total number hired and promoted, the average differences between the amounts paid to men and women at different levels, etc.

Useful address: Secrétariat d'Etat à l'Emploi Féminin
25 Avenue Charles Floquet
75700 Paris

The custody of minors

The problems that arise from the awarding of custody of children to one of the parents in a divorce were considered by a working group set up by Monique Pelletier, who was at the time the Minister with responsibility for the Family and Women's Status.

The report formulated during this study session emphasizes the importance of listening carefully to the child, possibly even before the parents' divorce becomes irreversible. It also recommends specialist training for the people who are involved at the time of a divorce (social workers, magistrates, etc.). Finally, the report proposes that divorcing parents should be made aware of the difficulties that their children are likely to encounter and the ways of dealing with those difficulties as far as possible.

Useful address: Ministère à la Condition Féminine
Tour Mirabeau
3943 Quai André Citroën
75015 Paris

G E R M A N Y

There has been a major debate in the Bundestag (the German Parliament), sparked off by the report on women and society - "Frau und Gesellschaft" - by a commission of enquiry chaired by Ursula Schleicher.

All the political groups acknowledged that women are entitled to choose between the family and the world of work and that efforts should be made to reconcile the two worlds. This will not be possible until there has been a radical change in the attitudes of both men and women.

The report suggests more than a hundred measures that would promote female emancipation. The Bundestag decided that each parliamentary committee should state its views on those proposals coming within its own sphere.

Dr Helga Wex, the leader of the CDU (Christian Democrat) women's group, urged changes in the electoral system, with each voter being made responsible for listing candidates in the preferred order in the electoral lists (not the party machinery, as at present). This "open list" system would make it possible for women voters to promote women candidates.

Ingrid Matthäus-Meier, a member of the Liberal Party (FDP), declared herself in favour of a general cut in working hours so that men could share family and domestic responsibilities with their wives. She would also like to see a special law relating to the struggle against discrimination between the sexes.

With Dr Helga Timm acting as its spokesman, the Social Democrat Party (SPD) urged improvements in the world of work that would promote harmony between family life and working life. According to the SPD, there is no real freedom of choice - either for men or for women. The legislation on the protection of employment should be reviewed to find out ways of giving women access to the whole range of employment opportunities.

Useful address: CDU/CSU-Fraktion and/or FDP-Fraktion and/or SPD-Fraktion
Bundeshaus
54000 Bonn 1

Frauen '80

This is the title - meaning "women in the 80s" - of a publication brought out by the Federal Minister for Youth, the Family and Health, which first appeared as a report by the Federal Republic at the time of the Copenhagen conference. Antje Huber, the Minister for Youth, who is also responsible for women's affairs, decided to reprint the report so that it could obtain a broader readership. An English translation has been produced (The Situation of Women in the Federal Republic of Germany, 1980), as well as a translation into French.

Useful address: Bundesministerium für Jugend, Familie und Gesundheit
Kennedyallee
53 Bonn 1

Firemen ... and firewomen

The Hanseatic free city of Hambourg's firefighting department is considering the recruitment of women. It has already contacted the "Leitstelle Gleichstellung der Frau" - the women's equality service - in the city and the latter is now trying to find out everything it can on this subject in other European countries. Please send any details of the status, training, specific duties and actual experience of women firefighters to Gisela Chudziak, whose project this is.

Useful address: Senatkanzlei
Leitstelle Gleichstellung der Frau
Gisela Chudziak
Postfach 10 55 20
2000 Hamburg 1

Who does what

An outstanding piece of work by Ursula Salentin and Paula Maeder has been published by the German Women's Council - Deutscher Frauenrat - as part of its series of "Informationen für die Frau", February 1981. This is a panoramic view of the departments with responsibility for women's affairs in ministries at Federal level and in the Länder (the provinces). The document describes the status, programme, method of operation, names of the people responsible and the addresses of the departments in question and is invaluable to anyone trying to make contact with the authorities in Germany. The Bundestag is not overlooked: a list of women members of the Federal Parliament is given with a breakdown by party, as well as a list of the parliamentary committees of which they are members.

Useful address: Deutscher Frauenrat
Augustastrasse 42
5300 Bonn 2

Fathers' rights

More and more children are being born out of wedlock. As the law now stands, these "illegitimate" children may not be entrusted to their fathers, even though they have very concrete obligations. Fathers must make a financial contribution towards the maintenance of their children, and those children are entitled to a share in their fathers' estate.

The matter has been raised before the German constitutional court, the Bundesverfassungsgericht, which has confirmed that the mother alone is entitled to the custody of children, although the Vormundschaftsgericht (tutelary court) has powers to grant fathers visiting rights to their illegitimate children if these are in the children's interest.

Useful address: Bundesverfassungsgericht
Pressestelle
75000 Karlsruhe

1984 European Elections

Caterina Chizzola, the secretary general to the Union of European Federalists, would like to draw the attention of European women's associations to the "uniform electoral procedure" that should be adopted by European Parliament for its 1984 elections.

At the first election for European Parliament, the various national electoral systems were used, sometimes with surprising results: a person elected in one country would not have been voted in if he had stood in another. Under no system was there a "quota" of women candidates to encourage political participation by women, as has been pointed out by the women's associations.

It is now a matter of urgency that European Parliament should face up to its responsibilities and suggest a truly uniform and truly democratic plan to the Council of Ministers. Civic organizations should make the views of citizens known to the members of European Parliament. Mario Albertini, President of the Union of European Federalists, has already written to MEPs along these lines.

Useful address: Union des Fédéralistes Européens
49 Rue de Toulouse
1040 Brussels

The Marriage Register

At the request of an association of women doctors, the Bundestag committee on Petitions has recommended that the wife's occupation be specified in marriage registers from now on, as is already the case with the husband's calling.

Useful address: Petitionsausschuss des Bundestages
Bundeshaus
53000 Bonn 1

Clarification

Although the CDU (Christian Democrat Party) and the CSU (Christian Social Party) form a common group within the Bundestag, they are separate organizations. The "Frauenvereinigung der CDU" (association of women members of the CDU) and "Frauen Union der CSU" (union of women members of the CSU) are also separate bodies.

Useful addresses: Frauenvereinigung der CDU Frauen Union der CSU
Friederich Ebert Allee 73-75 Lazarettstrasse 33
5300 Bonn 8000 Munich 19

Family allowances

For the time being, family allowances amount to DM.50 for the first child, DM.120 for the second child and DM.240 for each child after the second (not DM.140 and DM.340, as stated in error in issue 17/80, November/December 1980).

G R E E C E

Working population

In 1979, the total working population stood at 3,375,000 (compared with 3,235,000 in 1971), of whom 2,358,000 were men (2,329,000 in 1971) and 1,017,000 were women (905,000 in 1971).

A general census was held in April 1981 and the latest figures should be available in the next few months.

I R E L A N D

The age of recruitment

A case being brought on the subject of the maximum age for staff recruitment is being followed with greater interest by very many women who are hired as temporaries by the authorities.

The case in question has been brought by Grainne O'Broin, who has been working for a local health department for ten years ... as a temporary. In this instance, the maximum age for recruitment for a permanent post is 27. Nevertheless, Grainne O'Broin points out, mothers cannot return to their careers until after the age of 27 and this constitutes a form of discrimination.

If Grainne O'Broin wins her case she will earn more and enjoy security of employment, social security if she is ill and the right to a pension. As a matter of principle, hundreds of women will also benefit from the improvement to their career prospects.

The Employment Equality Agency is awaiting the outcome of the proceedings before making its comments known to the Government, which might have to amend its legislation, at least as far as it concerns the public sector.

Useful address: The Employment Equality Agency
 Davitt House
 Mespil Road
 Dublin 4

Equality Agency tackles Stereotyping

A second series of radio commercials by the Employment Equality Agency is urging girls to think in terms of a trade when they leave school. Typical is one which features two women cleaners.

"How d'you stick it?", asks one of them.

"I have to. I've no training and two small kids. I don't know why you're here", says the second.

"Just filling in," replies the first, "I'm starting an apprenticeship next month."

The message is simple and part of the Agency's education function, promoting equality of opportunity.

Useful address: The Equal Employment Agency
 Davitt House, Mespil Road
 Dublin 4

First artificial insemination service

The Dublin Well Woman Clinic has set up Ireland's first artificial insemination service. Up to now, childless couples have been obliged to seek this kind of help in Britain. The announcement has not come without some controversy, including criticism from the Roman Catholic Church.

Useful address: The Dublin Well Woman Clinic
63 Lower Leeson Street
Dublin 2

I T A L Y

Women's advisory bodies: the past and the future

Rome was the venue for an important meeting of "Consulte Femminili" (women's advisory bodies), devoted to their role and their plans for the 1980s.

It is only just ten years since "Consulte Femminili" came into existence, through the concerted efforts of the leading women's associations in Italy. At the time, what was needed was to voice the ideas of women's social forces until women could take their rightful place in a political system where everything was in favour of men. This was made possible by the special status granted to local and regional authorities.

The "advisory bodies" are set up by the authorities at regional, provincial and local levels. Their members are representative women's organizations desirous of closer and more effective links with the authorities. There are many dangers: that the organizations may lose their own personalities within these bodies, that they become too enmeshed in red tape, that the bodies themselves become a tool in the hands of the local authorities.

Something that typifies the spirit in which the "Consulte" work: the programme for the Rome meeting omits the names of the women reporting in the name of their own advisory bodies, since their contributions are seen as the outcome of collective work, a feature of these "women's advisory bodies".

At the end of the meeting it was agreed that a national coordination body should be set up. A "political document" stressed the desire of the advisory bodies to involve every woman in the efforts being made (implying not only the members of the organizations). Emphasis was placed on health and social reform, with help being given not only to women but to all those people being cared for by women: the sick, the old and the handicapped.

The problems of housing were also considered. Women must be able to order their family lives in decent housing in which they can retain their sense of independence. On the subject of employment, the "Consulte" stated that women would use their imagination when fighting to ensure that the rights already granted them by law are also given to them in practice.

Finally, the advisory bodies were to keep a watching brief on changes in legislation, actively supporting any beneficial changes proposed by the politicians.

Useful address: Consulta Femminile - Provincia di Roma
Via S. Eufemia 19
Rome

Priority

The Italian Socialist Party group has tabled a bill in Parliament which would give "socially disadvantaged persons" priority in employment.

Companies in the public and private sector employing a work force of more than 15 are already obliged by law to give priority to war orphans and widows, disabled veterans and civilians disabled by war. Their quota is 15% of the work force, but the number of people qualifying on this account is steadily dwindling. It is suggested that 6% of the priority positions should be set aside for the socially disadvantaged, in other words single parents, widows and separated and divorced people, who often have at least one dependant child.

Useful address: Anna Maria Luminari Moretti
Gruppo P.S.I.
Camera dei Deputati
Rome

Earlier retirement

In the public service, a woman is entitled to a pension after 15 years' work, a man after 20 years. Is this not an unjustifiable form of discrimination against men?

This was the question referred to the Lazio regional administrative tribunal. In its ruling, it stated the view that the five-year difference was fully justified by the role of women in our society, in this instance their two-fold task of working as civil servants and working in the home.

The tribunal has recognized the facts as they stand today. Husbands may be able to persuade it to change its mind one day if, as is hoped, they take a greater share of the household duties.

Widowers and the transfer of pensions

The Ministry of the Treasury has notified the departments concerned of a change in the law on pensions, introduced as a result of a decision by the Constitutional Court.

Under a 1977 law, the pension received by a father and husband could, on his death, revert to the orphans and widow. The Constitutional Court has now ruled that a pension earned by a woman in her employment could, in the same way, be transferred to her surviving husband on her death.

Employment and health

In Lombardy, the regional department of public health is trying to promote interaction among the departments and authorities concerned with women's health at work. In issue no. 3 (January 1981) of the journal "Notizie d'igiene", a common methodology for industrial medicine and advisory bodies is suggested and a questionnaire is included to help in screening work - even screening for psychological disorders.

Useful address: Assessorato regionale alla Sanità
Notizie Sanità - Notizie d'Igiene
Via Pontaccio 10
Milan

Ignorance and contraception

According to a survey conducted in three Italian hospitals on women who have had voluntary terminations of their pregnancies, it seems that a majority of women having abortions have not been practising contraception. About one in four even says that she has received no information on contraceptives.

Useful address: Centro educazione matrimoniale e prematrimoniale
Via Eugenio Chiesa
Milan

L U X E M B O U R G

Abortion: a review of the situation

For almost three years now the Grand Duchy has had new legislation on the voluntary termination of pregnancy.

Introduced at the time of the then Minister for the Family, the Socialist Mr Benny Berg, it seems that the law on "sex information, the prevention of clandestine abortion and the regulation of pregnancy terminations" is more controversial than ever.

Let us summarize the provisions of the law of 13 July 1978, which went against the demands made by feminist circles in that the right to abortion is based solely on medical grounds. The law states that an abortion carried out in the first twelve weeks of pregnancy is not a punishable offence if:

continuation of the pregnancy or the living conditions to which the birth of the child might give rise might endanger the physical or mental health of the pregnant woman;

there is a grave risk that the child might be suffering from a serious illness, physical malformation or serious mental disorder;

the pregnancy is the outcome of rape.

It is a condition that the pregnant woman should have consulted a gynaecologist, who must draw her attention to the medical risks of an abortion, and that she should have given her written consent.

It now seems that doubts have arisen as to the application of, and compliance with, the provisions of the law.

According to the feminist organizations and those responsible for family planning, there has been no change since the new law came into effect. In the light of testimony gathered by "Info-Femmes", a service started up by the Luxembourg women's movement that provides help to those with unwanted pregnancies, a great majority of women who want to have an abortion are still forced to go to another country since Luxembourg law does not allow abortion on social grounds and since it is obviously fairly rare for there to be medical grounds for an abortion. The family planning services also state that they have to send 10 to 15 women a month to the Netherlands for advice, since there is no legal basis for the provision of contraceptive information in the Grand Duchy.

The present Health Minister has stated to the Chamber of Deputies that the number of official abortions carried out in clinics is no more than one or two a week. He argued that it is impossible to demand that clinics run by nuns - and this is the case with the great majority of hospitals in the Grand Duchy - force their staff to do work that goes against their conscience.

The existing Government has declared its intention to abide by the law as it now stands.

A tax rebate and its consequences

A further step towards fairer conditions for women with jobs has been taken by the Luxembourg tax authorities. For the first time, tax law has recognized that such women need and are entitled to employ household help if they are not prepared to do two days' work in one. In so doing, it appears to have acknowledged, in the taxation of households in which both the husband and wife work, expenditure on day nurseries or other arrangements that have to be made for the care of children.

Under the Luxembourg regulations of 1 February 1968, a flat-rate rebate was allowed in respect of the employment of help in the home, but it was hedged in by extremely restrictive provisos. For example, only women in employment with three or more children were entitled to the rebate.

The new regulations introduced on 28 January 1981 state that the rebate may be obtained by certain categories of handicapped persons and also by families with a child aged 13 or under. A flat-rate rebate of up to Bfr.18,000 may also be claimed by households whose child is looked after in a crèche or by a baby-minder receiving any form of payment.

An audio-visual pack

To explain in simple terms how the European Community works and also to describe the problems now faced in building up the Community, an audio-visual pack has been produced by the European Commission's Directorate General of Information.

The issues at stake are illustrated by 80 slides with original drawings. Perre Servoz, the man who created the audi-visual, has also produced a "guide to the presenter" which will help with the arrangements for a discussion evening or seminar. The pack is available in all the Community's official languages as well as in Spanish, Portuguese, Irish, Welsh, Arab, Swahili, Turkish and Chinese.

Useful address: Directorate General - Information
 Commission of the European Communities
 200 Rue de la Loi
 1049 Brussels

N E T H E R L A N D S

A law on equality of status

The Dutch Government has been working on a bill on equality of status. Commonly known as the "law against discrimination on the grounds of sex", its scope extends far beyond this title. The law will probably ban all forms of discrimination based on marital status or sexual behaviour (the point at issue being homosexuality), but it will also embrace labour law, mortgage loans, education and other fields.

In 1975, the lawmakers turned their attention to equal pay, in March 1980 to equality of status and, in July 1980, to equality between men and women in employment in the public sector. Even so, Dutch law - while complying in general with the guidelines laid down by European Community directives - is not very widely applied in practice, in some cases not being applied at all. At least this is the view of many organizations, including the influential FNV union central body and Rooie Vrouwen (women's organization within the Partij van de Arbeid, the Labour Party).

According to the criticisms that have been voiced, the law has brought only a few improvements to the position of women on the labour market. This failure is particularly apparent in the provision for complaints (as complaints may be made only by individuals, not groups) and in the absence of penalties for those employers who defy the law.

The Dutch Emancipation Commission - Emancipatiekommissie - has drawn the Government's attention to the anomaly of there being two advisory committees on matters of equal status, one for companies in the private sector, the other for the public sector. In the same way, it is not right that some people may take proceedings without having to consult an advisory committee whereas others are under an obligation to do so. The Emancipation Commission recommends that the new law immediately sets up a single "ombudsman committee" to deal with all complaints.

There is a specially urgent need for new legislation, argues the Commission, since current regulations are so disparate that it is difficult to discern the wood for the trees.

The country will have to wait a few more years for equality of status in tax matters. At the end of 1979, the Government submitted a bill to Parliament which was an approach towards tax equality and individual taxation. The second house debated the bill in March 1981, but felt that it did not take sufficient account of the fast changing social situation: the family, married and unmarried couples, etc. This is a very radical debate in the Netherlands, as it is concerned with the principles that underlie the Government's taxation policy. A family's income may well be affected by individual taxation and individual social security.

Women's organizations have come out against any measure that slows down the process of emancipation (such as the reduction in the unemployment benefit payable to women whose husbands have a high income). As a result, the Government has withdrawn its bill and is preparing another which will take the comments expressed into greater account.

Useful address: Ministerie van Financiën
Korte Voorhout 7
The Hague

Cultural minorities

Over the next decade, it is likely that the number of people belonging to a cultural minority in the Netherlands will rise to 800,000 - mainly Turks, Moroccans, people from the Dutch Antilles, Molucca and Surinam, as well as gypsies.

The Education Minister has drafted a bill on education designed for such minority groups and has asked the Emancipation Commission for its comments. In those comments, the Commission stresses that emancipation policy should in principle apply to all women, including the women members of minority groups, and that the traditional sexist roles in this field too should be reformed.

In education, it is of special importance that women and girls in cultural minorities should be given equal opportunities. The programme envisaged should be improved with this in mind. It is not just a question of broadening the potential of the women in question; their husbands and children would also benefit. Contact between school and home is made extremely difficult by the effacing role of the woman in certain minority groups. For example, only women teachers are allowed to talk to Turkish and Moroccan mothers.

The Emancipation Commission feels that women teachers should be involved in courses for parents (which would include reading and writing as well as other matters), and that there could be provision for teaching parents at home. When a mother lives in isolation from society, her children are inevitably affected. Mothers must be helped to break out of the vicious circle of solitude.

Useful address: Emancipatiekommissie
Sir Winston Churchilllaan 366-368
Rijswijk

Women and the army

In principle, women are to have access to all duties in the Dutch army. They will have the same rights and the same opportunities for promotion as their male counterparts, as well as equal access to fighting units.

A "think-tank group", Vrouw in de krijgsmacht, (women in the army), set up by the Defence Ministry, has brought out a set of proposals. In matters of principle, the EEC directive on equal status is merely transposed from the civilian to the military sphere. Specific aspects of the question are to be considered in greater detail by this group.

Because women's physical performance is not the same as the performance laid down by army regulations (strength, speed, training), most of the women soldiers undergoing army training do not come up to the training requirements. To resolve this problem, the decision was reached to split military duties up into three groups: fighting units, the units providing support to the fighting units and administrative units. The physical requirements will be different depending on the group in question.

When new barracks are built, due thought will be given to the provision of separate sleeping and washing quarters for men and women.

Useful address: Ministerie van Defensie
Plein 4
The Hague

U N I T E D K I N G D O M

Equality and the Courts

With the support of the Equal Opportunities Commission, Ursula Hurley, a waitress, has won her case against an employer who had dismissed her after one night's work, not on grounds of incompetence but because she had three children. This, he said, made her "unreliable". The Employment Appeal Tribunal ruled that the employer was wrong under the Sex Discrimination Act 1975.

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

Equal retiring age wanted

Men and women should retire at the same age. This, according to "EOC News", was the view of 88% of those questioned in a survey of attitudes to retirement ages in Britain, where at present women may retire at 60 and men at 65 under the state pension scheme.

The survey found that 62% of those questioned wanted retirement for both sexes at 60, although 25% would have liked it even earlier. Nearly all (95%) wanted special benefits, such as cheap travel, to be available to both men and women of 60 or over provided they had retired from employment.

The Equal Opportunities Commission will be taking these findings into account in pushing its policy with the Government for the same retiring age for men and women.

Useful address: EOC News
 Overseas House, Quay Street
 Manchester M3 3HN

Positive discrimination

Although the Sex Discrimination Act was passed in 1975, there are still employers and training boards unaware of its full implications. It is not always realised, for instance, that the law allows for positive discrimination in favour of either sex for training in work in which one or the other is under-represented.

The Equal Opportunities Commission has issued a useful leaflet entitled "Positive Discrimination in Training Schemes", outlining the conditions under which one-sex courses can be provided.

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

Reforming the Industrial Tribunals

The Equal Opportunities Commission for Northern Ireland is seriously concerned that cases of equal pay and sex discrimination are not always satisfactorily handled by industrial tribunals. It has recommended some practical ways in which the system can be improved.

Individual applicants often find the entire process difficult and unpleasant and, at the end, feel they have been unfairly treated, the Commission says. To avoid this, it wants a simpler procedure for bringing cases before the court, better training for those who sit in judgement, the appointment of more women and younger people to sit on the tribunals and the establishment of a special division with responsibility for equal pay and sex discrimination cases.

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

Congratulations...

... to Rosemary Jude, who has received the diploma of honour of the Federation of European Industrial Editors Associations. She is the first woman to be elected national chairman of the British Association of Industrial Editors.

A marriage of words

In every language, scrupulous writers find it hard to think of a non-sexist word to describe certain occupations. "Women of Europe" has not escaped criticism on this count.

In a letter to the Equal Opportunities Commission news publication, Betty Boucher suggests a new neutral word, MAIN - a contraction of MAN and MAID.

The word "manpower", which has no neutral version in English, would become "mainpower"; "man-made" - meaning artificial or synthetic - might be "main-made" and not lose credibility.

It's an idea ...

Emanuele Gazzo, winner of the Adolphe Bentinck Prize

The Adolphe Bentinck Prize, created to commemorate the eminent Dutch diplomat, has been awarded to Mr Emanuele Gazzo, the director general of Agence Europe, for all his efforts and work.

A career journalist since 1945, in 1953 Emanuele Gazzo established the Europe press agency in Luxembourg and has headed it ever since without a break. Discussing his work, Gaston Thorn has said "How demanding and how severe you can be! And how enthusiastic and warm! You act as our conscience."

Women's emancipation has never been treated as a minor problem in the columns of Agence Europe, quite the contrary.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY ON 8 MARCH:

-----AGAINST UNEMPLOYMENT, FOR PEACE-----

Every country in the European Community devoted 8 March, International Women's Day, to the campaign against unemployment and for peace. The tone of the day was serious, with marches, discussions and meetings.

In Germany, for example, women's organizations took as their slogan "Lohnleichheit, Frieden, Arbeit für alle" (equal pay, peace and work for all women). The women of the DGB (the German union federation) demonstrated in particular against the spirit in which pay negotiations are being undertaken, without due regard for the elimination of pay discrimination. They are also concerned at the plan to integrate women in the army, a concern that is shared by militants in the Frauenpartei (women's party) which has launched a campaign for peace and the withdrawal of tactical nuclear weapons from the Federal Republic. The women's party would like every pacifist feminist group in Europe to join forces in a common campaign, and has launched an appeal along these lines.

In Italy, a women's march against war was arranged in Umbria. The Day was marked by a national poster competition, which was so successful that a catalogue of the entrants was published.

In Venetia, to protest against the drama of abortion, women handed out parsley, not mimosa, to passers-by. In Naples, still reeling from the shock of the earthquake and its consequences, a feeling of bitterness reigned - bitterness at a society that takes so long to change. Women want to take part in the reconstruction of society in a different style, just as much as the rebuilding of houses.

In Perugia, international women's solidarity on behalf of women political prisoners and those who have disappeared in Argentina was expressed: "per servire la pace, rispetto alla libertà" (to serve peace, respect freedom).

In Luxembourg, the big day was preceded by an information campaign on the theme of unemployment, instigated by the Women's Liberation Movement. A reminder of the figures: women earn an average of 35% less than men; women account for about 55% of the jobless.

"Women against the crisis" was the watchword for an assembly of over 50 groups and organisations in a national demonstration in Brussels. The right to work, shorter working hours, the same social security for men and women, no cuts in community facilities ... a rare degree of unanimity was expressed that day.

In Ireland, women's groups are aware of the need for informing and mobilizing even more women. In Dublin's Liberty Hall, information stalls were set up and entertainment was provided by women jazz and traditional musicians.

In France, International Women's Day was not marked by a common purpose. "Vivre et travailler en pleine égalité" - "live and work in full equality" - was the title of the information week arranged by CGT (the general union federation). In Paris itself, women sympathizers of the "psychoanalysis and politics" group marched on one side to campaign "against misogyny", while followers of the "feminist collective for the 8th March" paraded on the other, taking up the issue of abortion in the light of a recent trial of doctors.

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

In memoriam

It is with infinite regret that we learned of the passing of Irmgard BOHM on 28th January last, after an incurable illness that struck her down the previous summer - one that she bore with outstanding courage, in full awareness of what was to happen.

Since 1970 she had been a member of the bureau of the International Women's Council, where she acted as secretary to its meetings. She very quickly made her mark by her lively intelligence, her innate feeling for human relationships and her quality of warmth.

Above all it was on the International Women's Council European committee that all her qualities were brought out to the full. The chairman of this regional group from 1975 to 1979, she turned it into a soundly structured and forceful association whose research and discussions were taken into account by many international organizations. One of her special projects was research on women immigrants in Europe, the final report on which has become one of U.N.O.'s basic documents.

We shall miss her and we shall never forget her. Her example will help us to press on tenaciously with our efforts to build a better society in which women will finally take the position they deserve.

This obituary by Nellie Wiener mirrors the feelings of "Women of Europe" on hearing the announcement of the death of Irmgard Bohm.

International understanding

"European women put international understanding into practice" is the theme chosen for the second congress of Soroptimist International of Europe to be held in Cologne from 5 to 7 July 1981. Special attention will be devoted to the role of women's organizations in developing nations and to the problems of women immigrants, including "second generation" immigrants.

Of special note: the Cologne Gürzenich orchestra will be performing Brahms' symphony no. 2 under the baton of Sylvia Caduff during the opening ceremony, in the presence of the President of the Federal Republic of Germany, Karl Carstens.

Battered wives

The idea of an international conference was born when a Dutch magazine threatened to publish the addresses of the hostels where battered women are finding shelter and help. It showed the powerlessness of an isolated movement which has only sporadic contact with similar organizations in other countries.

More than 200 women came to Brussels from 17 different countries to discuss the problem of violence against women, especially violence in the home.

Among the themes for discussion and thought were the economic and legal position of women in our countries, police and justice, specific problems raised by the creation and running of battered wives' hostels.

At the close of the conference the decision was reached to study and publicize national legislation so that full advantage could be taken of all its provisions, and to improve that legislation where needed.

Despite differences of language and background among the women taking part in the conference, all were unanimous on one fundamental point: the firm desire to change women's position in society so that they can decide how they want to live themselves.

Useful address: Collectif pour femmes battues
29 Rue Blanche
1060 Brussels

CREW Reports

CREW Reports is the title of a monthly fact sheet published by the Centre for Research on European Women.

CREW Reports (about a dozen pages) outlines developments in national, international and Community organizations that are likely to affect women, so that individuals and women's groups have more time to react and take part in decision-making.

The publication is available in English, but it may be issued in other languages later if the demand exists. Copies are available on request from the Centre and visitors are welcome in office hours, but it is advisable to telephone first - 230.47.47.

Useful address: CREW
+ 22 Rue de Toulouse
1040 Brussels

B E L G I U M

The National Council of Belgian Women

The French-speaking section of the National Council has held its general assembly at which its president, Fanny Fuks, discussed two important and topical problems on which the forty or so groups that make up the Council could act: energy conservation and the future of women's employment as it is affected by information technology.

On the first point, the assembly decided to arrange a seminar consisting of six sessions, leading to a recommendation to be made to the Minister for Economic Affairs.

The introduction of information technology into everyday life calls for training and preparation, perhaps starting at a very young age. These new technologies, however, may open out new vistas for women, on condition that they are indoctrinated by appropriate vocational training or carefully planned retraining. Steps will be taken to contact the authorities responsible and girl students will be given a preliminary briefing, in particular at the Koekelberg Royal Athenaeum on the outskirts of Brussels.

The National Council of Belgian Women has already set up a working group to prepare for the forthcoming local elections. Local politics are manifestly the arena in which women can express their political commitment most readily. The Council would like to promote their participation at this level, as - apart from anything else - local affairs provide excellent training for political action at other levels.

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

INFOR-FAMILLE

A non-profit-making association, Infor-famille has set itself the target of informing and educating women and families. In its efforts, it sets store by three main principles: both the person seeking advice and the person giving that advice are anonymous; the information given will be derived from many sources; and information will be given free.

Already five information centres have been brought into being - in Wavre, Charleroi, Liège, Mons and La Louvière. A quarterly newsletter (Infor-famille) reports on the many activities of the association (one instance: a "plumbers' workshop) and on interesting and valuable things being done by other organizations (such as the shelter for women in difficulties newly created in Braine-l'Alleud). Issue 14 is devoted to women, with very practical articles such as the one headed "conquer the fear of cancer".

Useful address: INFOR-FAMILLE

<u>72 Rue du 4 Août</u>	<u>14 Rue Léon Bernus</u>
<u>1300 Wavre</u>	<u>6000 Charleroi</u>
<u>19 Rue de la Vilette</u>	<u>15 Rue de la Halle</u>
<u>4000 Liège</u>	<u>7000 Mons</u>
<u>11 Rue de Bouvy</u>	
<u>7100 La Louvière</u>	

Women and the unions

FGTB-ABVV (Belgian general federation of labour) is devoting more and more attention to the participation of women in union life. The problem was tackled at a statutory congress of the central union body and it was also the focal point of a training course designed for women.

To mark this occasion, Marina Hoornaert - the person responsible for women's affairs in the Dutch-speaking branch of the union federation - drew up a major working document that sets out the reasons why women are under-represented in the unions and suggests various reforms that would increase their participation.

Among the causes listed are the over-conventional role that women still have to play in society, sexist education, deeply rooted prejudice, failure to share the household chores, a reluctance to speak out in public and what is still inadequate training for those who do have the courage to launch out into militant action.

The reforms suggested include: establishing quotas to ensure that the number of women in union bodies is proportional to the number of women members of the union as a whole; formulating a special system of training designed specifically for women, which would teach them how to express themselves in public, how to take notes, draw up minutes for their colleagues, etc.

Useful address: F G T B A B V V
 42 Rue Haute Hoogstraat 42
 1000 Brussels

Violence directed against women

"Is violence against women a problem of society?" was the theme of a fascinating symposium arranged by the United Nations Association in Brussels through the efforts of Marlise Henrion.

The papers and discussions ranged over many points: economic and social aspects of such violence; psychological factors; the legal angle; and the special case of rape - something that happens all too frequently and that has long been underestimated by the authorities.

The reports presented to the symposium can be obtained from the United Nations Association in Belgium.

Useful address: Association pour les Nations-Unies
 Rempart de la Vierge 5
 5000 Namur

Abortion: the facts

The Belgian Federation for Family Planning and Sex Education, through its documentation and information centre, has published a "file on abortion" of exceptional value in a special issue of its journal CEDIF-INFO.

The issue reviews current legislation and sets out the medical and psychological conditions that must be satisfied before a pregnancy can be terminated. It also gives a detailed survey of the attitudes adopted by the various political groups to the problem of abortion, as well as the views held by the associations campaigning for the decriminalization of abortion by national legislation.

Useful address: CEDIF-INFO
 51 Rue du Trône
 1050 Brussels

The Y.W.C.A. after Copenhagen

The Young Women's Christian Association has held a national information day, open to all Belgian women's groups, to review the situation after the Copenhagen conference and plan its members' efforts accordingly.

Women are not yet truly aware of their rights and responsibilities, it was claimed during this day of discussion. As part of its standard work of training and informing, the Y.W.C.A. will pay very special attention to the problem of women in the world of work. In Belgium, 1,300,000 women work. How many have real occupational qualifications? This is a field for campaigning for greater awareness.

Useful address: Y.W.C.A.
43 Rue Saint Bernard
1060 Brussels

Textbooks: an appeal

At the Brussels "Maison des Femmes" - women's centre - the group that calls itself "Changeons les livres scolaires et les livres d'enfants" (let's change the textbooks and children's books) is very much aware of the false image of women conveyed in education, especially through the way school textbooks and children's books are written. The group has set itself the task of publicizing the sexism of these books and the extent to which they are out of touch with reality, promoting the non-sexist books that are brought to its attention. "We would be very happy to come into contact with groups in other countries working in the same field as ourselves," says Jeannine Evrard, one of the group's leading members.

The "reading committee" is arranging an exhibition of textbooks and children's books, both sexist and non-sexist. About 300 will be on display, together with comments, at Maison de la Francité, 18 Rue Joseph II, Brussels, from Saturday 23 May to Saturday 30 May 1981.

Useful address: Changeons les livres scolaires
c/o Maison des Femmes
29 Rue Blanche
1060 Brussels

Why be committed?

Do you want to work in local politics, in your district or in your region? A booklet produced by the women members of the Christian Social Party explains why and how women can become active within a political party.

Stress is placed on the original approach that women take to society and to "injustices not yet perceived as such by others".

Useful address: Nathalie T'Serclaes
Secrétariat national des Femmes P.S.C.
41 Rue des Deux Eglises
1040 Brussels

D E N M A R K

A new member of the Danish National Women's Council

With a great sense of satisfaction, the general assembly of the Danish National Women's Council agreed - by acclamation - to the application for membership made by the federation of Danish women workers, Kvindeligt Arbejderforbund KAD, one of the leading occupational groupings of women in employment in Denmark.

As chairman of the Kvindeligt Arbejderforbund, Ruth Løjbert stated these reasons for its application:

"On 3 March, Kvindeligt Arbejderforbund i Danmark celebrated its 80th anniversary. The Danish National Women's Council dates back a little further. It is amazing, then, that these two major women's organizations should not have been cooperating long ago.

"The reason is that in both groups we have long seen ourselves as holding views that were too far away from each other. As an organization made up solely of unskilled, low paid women workers, clearly the first battle facing KAD was to improve our wages and working conditions.

"This is still our objective, of course, but as the need to fight for equal rights for women becomes more urgent it is clear to every one of us - whatever the step on the social ladder on which we stand - that we shall never succeed in making our voice heard unless all our parties cooperate. This is why the executive committee of the Danish women workers' federation has decided to apply for membership of the National Women's Council.

"Under its statutes, one of KAD's objectives is to work for full equality for unskilled women, both in their working conditions and in their wages. We feel that DKN has demonstrated by its day-to-day efforts and by the way it makes its presence felt in numerous international bodies that it is inspired by the same ideals as those defined in KAD's statutes. There is real hope of establishing sound and fruitful cooperation between us in the interests of all women, starting with the hundred thousand or so unskilled members of our own organization.

"Naturally we hope that our application for membership will be approved, for we are persuaded that it is more necessary than ever before not only to hold on to what has been achieved but also to continue to work for full equality of rights in every field."

Karen Ytting, the chairman of the Danish National Women's Council, declared that KAD's membership of DKN was a historic event. "For many years the women's associations have dearly wished to establish closer links with the women's union bodies. Today I can state my belief that all those bodies share the views expressed by Ruth Løjbert today in explaining the reasons for her federation's application. It is with great warmth that we, the members of the executive committee of DKN, recommend that Kvindeligt Arbejderforbund be admitted to membership."

Useful address: Danske Kvinders Nationalrad
Niels Hemmingsensgade 10
1153 København K

F R A N C E

Unmarried mothers

"Mères célibataires", published by the Association Nationale des Mères Célibataires de France, is packed with practical advice and information for the members of this national association of unmarried mothers. In a direct, straightforward style, it gives details of legal proceedings, the way the law is changing, etc.

One problem noted by the magazine is due to computerization. When the computer processes a form in which the word "célibataire" ("single") is entered against "marital status", it translates the initial "c" as implying that the person is "mademoiselle". In reply to a question raised in Parliament, the Minister of Justice explained that there is no legal objection to a woman calling herself "madame" rather than "mademoiselle". Instructions to this effect are being sent out to the authorities.

Useful address: Mères célibataires
135 Boulevard de Sébastopol
75002 Paris

The right to choose

"Choisir", the magazine published by the movement "Choisir - la Cause des Femmes" (The Right to Choose - Women's Cause), has conducted an outline survey of its readers to find out more about what they share in common, their feminism. It appears that the majority of those replying to the questionnaire were university graduates (54%) or had completed their secondary education (33%). The best represented occupations were teaching (25%), followed by the civil service (22%) and health (12%). Women without an occupation - and this included students and retired women - accounted for no more than 14% of the sample.

Married women with two children are the largest group in the readership of "Choisir", followed by single women without children (about 29%), divorcees (19%) and cohabiting women (8%).

In many cases what first sparked off the readers' feminist attitude was their observation of discrimination between their parents; originating factors were also the relationships between boys and girls at school, and finally hostility to women at work. In 60% of the cases, it was the mother's behaviour which was the reason for the daughter's feminism - a mother who rebelled or who was too submissive, a feminist mother or an unmarried mother.

Useful address: Choisir
102 Rue St Dominique
75007 Paris

Self-awareness through surveys

"Dialoguer", the Union Féminine Civique et Sociale's publication, has set out this civic and social women's union plan of action for the forthcoming year. A special feature is a major survey on the purchasing habits of women in different fields: food, health, the home, clothing, leisure, the arts.

The purpose of this survey is not to compile statistics. It does not try to find out whether the average French housewife prefers to buy in small shops or supermarkets. The aim of U.F.C.S., a lifelong education movement, is to help each woman who answers the questionnaire to become more aware of herself and her attitudes to money, etc. This "participation survey", for which each individual section is responsible, will throw light on many instances of inequality, inconsistency and anomaly to which a women's movement such as this cannot be indifferent.

Useful address: Union Féminine Civique et Sociale
6 Rue Béranger
75003 Paris

G E R M A N Y

Women and science

Women must have greater access to research bodies and university posts; they must have more facilities for scientific research in the fields with which they are concerned; and they must be better represented in the bodies that take the decisions on research. This, in short, is the view upheld by "Actionsring Frau und Welt" (woman and the world action group) at a seminar on the theme of "woman and science".

One of the action group's objectives is to narrow the gap between women's lives and science. It hopes to promote collective thought and also individual development. The universities and research are worlds in which inequality of opportunity weighs heavily upon women in their search for betterment.

Useful address: Actionsring Frau und Welt
Bastionstrasse 4-6
4000 Düsseldorf

Women and craft trades

In 1980, girls accounted for 23% of the apprentices in craft trades. The growing interest displayed by girls in creative manual labour has been acknowledged by the "Haus des Deutschen Handwerks" (the German craftsmen's centre), one of whose objects is to change the attitudes of both women and employers towards skilled craftsmanship. It has also been pointed out that girls still tend to be interested in only a few crafts, whereas every type of skilled trade should be open to them.

Useful address: Haus des Deutschen Handwerk
Johanniterstrasse 1
53 Bonn 1

Learning together

A group of self-employed women, with substantial aid from the Hamburg local authority, has arranged a week's gathering for about 4,000 women under the title of "Frauen lernen gemeinsam" - "women learning together" - on the campus of Hamburg University.

The University's faculty of social and political science was off bounds to men during the week, when it was the forum for discussions, lectures, debates and events relating to all the topical problems, ranging from violence to peace, from work to the arts, from women artists to pottery and painting workshops. This is the third time that such a week has been arranged in a major German city.

Useful address: Frauen lernen gemeinsam e.V.
c/o Edda Armbruster
Loehrsweg 5
2000 Hamburg 20

Women and the housing problem

An extraordinary number of women are involved in squatting as a protest against property speculation and the housing problem. In the Federal Republic, about one million homes are needed.

In Berlin in particular, various houses have been taken over solely by women and their children. Since 5 January, for instance, a dozen or so women have been squatting in a building at 5 Liegnitzerstrasse. The place was immediately dubbed the "Hexenhouse" (witches' house) and was also used as a meeting place and a forum. It is a centre for female solidarity - for the giving of money, advice and a helping hand - as has already been the case in Copenhagen. A health centre is soon to be established in the building.

Useful address: Frauen des "Hexenhouse"
Liegnitzerstrasse 5
1000 Berlin

S.O.S. - Women

In several German towns, groups of women have set up emergency aid centres called "Notrufgruppen", where women victims of violence can find help, shelter and succour. In many cases, so many calls are received that the organizers have very great difficulty in replying to all the questions.

In Mainz, an aid centre has obtained a grant from the Federal Ministry for the Family, Youth and Health, on an experimental basis.

Useful address: Bundesministerium für Jugend, Familie und Gesundheit
Kennedyallee 105-107
5300 Bonn 2

Women and music

There are few women conductors and even rarer are acknowledged women composers whose music is actually played. Even so, a festival was held in November 1980 at which all the works were composed and played by women.

A working group, with Barbara Heller as one of its leading lights, has been set up in Darmstadt to study the role of women in music today and the reasons for their being so poorly represented in the history of music.

Useful address: Barbara Heller
Müllerstrasse 12
61 Darmstadt

Single fathers and single mothers: an appeal

Sophie Behr, the chairman of the "Verband Alleinstehender Mütter und Väter - Bundesverband e.V." (the Federal organization of single mothers' and fathers' associations), would like to contact other groups with the same aims in European Community countries.

The object is to pool information and the benefit of their experience, to compare problems and working methods. A European-level meeting might be arranged. All those women (and men) concerned with this issue, please take note!

Useful address: V.A.M.V.
Kasernenstrasse 7b
5300 Bonn 1

G R E E C E

As promised, "Women of Europe" is introducing the leading women's organizations in Greece, starting in this issue. The "useful address" at the end will enable our readers and the groups concerned to make their own contacts so that they can find out more and strike up friendship.

Syndesmos gia ta dikeomata tis gynekas (S.D.G.)
(Association for Women's Rights)

Founded in 1920, the Association for Women's Rights has as its aim complete equality of political, economic and social rights for men and women. The Association belongs to no specific party or political movement and it rejects all forms of violence. Each member may retain his or her own political opinions and belong to any legal political party.

The Association numbers 900 members, including a few men, who subscribe to its objectives and principles. Applications for membership must be sponsored by two members of the executive committee and be approved by the committee as a whole.

Some of the older members of the International Alliance of Women are members of S.D.G. The first objective of the association, equal political rights, was achieved in 1952 after a good deal of struggle.

By systematic action, by direct contact with the Government, by arousing public opinion and by taking immediate practical steps. S.D.G. has made a special effort to improve the position of women in the family, in the workplace, in the school and in the political world, based on the principle of equality of rights and duties.

Part of its very down-to-earth action has been to found the first evening course providing training in business skills, as long ago as forty years back. After the second world war, the Association set up centres for illiterate adult women. In 1935, it started arranging holidays for working women. With the help of funds from the Greek Agricultural Bank, in 1975-1976 the Association greatly increased the number of automatic wash houses in rural communities.

Today, in this Decade of Women, the Association has two priorities: to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women in Greek legislation (in particular by amendments to family law); and to change attitudes and fight prejudice against women.

In support of its efforts, the Association publishes a quarterly journal entitled "Women's Struggle" (it has been in existence since 1923). It arranges press conferences and public debates and seminars on the subject of the equality of the sexes. Discussions are arranged for students so that boys and girls can exchange their views on the relations between the sexes in the family, in the workplace and in society.

Useful address: Syndesmos gia ta dikeomata tis gynekas
Asklepioy, 26
Athens

I R E L A N D

A progress report and a budget

The Council for the Status of Women, which represents over thirty women's organizations in Ireland, has recently appointed a new organizing secretary, Clara Clarke, an expert on family law. She is taking over from the former administrator, Monica Barnes, whose efficiency, energy and enthusiasm have often been mentioned by "Women of Europe". As explained in the magazine "Status", Monica Barnes resigned in protest against the amount of financial aid offered by the Government (£30,000), which fell far short of the £120,000 Government aid needed by the Council for its efforts to make an impact.

The Council has had to reconsider its programme of work for the year, but its members are confident that they will meet many of the targets set themselves, with good planning on the part of the administration and commitment on the part of the members.

Introduced in September 1980, associate membership of the Council is making steady progress, attracting women from all over Ireland representing a wide variety of interests and backgrounds.

It will be remembered that a National Forum was held in November 1980 along the same lines as the forum at the U.N. Copenhagen conference. The report that emerged is about to go to press; the amount of womanpower and energy spent on both the Forum and on the subsequent report is incalculable.

"Who Makes the Decisions" - a major report published by the Council last year, detailing the under-representation of Irishwomen on state and semi-state bodies - will be updated by the Women's Studies Unit at one of our universities.

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

Improving maternity services

The Association for Improvements in Maternity Services has held a seminar in Dublin in conjunction with Britain's National Childbirth Trust.

Overcrowding in maternity hospitals in Ireland is so serious that one famous teaching hospital has admitted that one of its 107 foetal deaths in a year occurred because an emergency caesarian section could not take place, the hospital operating theatre being already in use. Elsewhere, women are being discharged from hospital just two days after delivery.

A survey conducted by the Association last year revealed many problems. Commonest were complaints by women about the long delays in waiting to see a doctor for routine antenatal checks, the use of induction methods and drugs without being told the reason why, the virtually automatic use of episiotomies, fathers not being allowed to remain for the birth and the widespread practice of having access to babies only at feeding times.

Useful address: Association for Improvement in Maternity Services
48 Wyvern, Killiney
Dublin

Status

When "Status", a new Irish feminist monthly magazine, decided that, instead of a conventional champagne reception to launch publication, it would hold a day-long seminar called "Canvassing for Change", the results outshone its brightest hopes. Hundreds of Irishwomen poured into the conference centre. To start the ball rolling, a number of conference demands were drafted by women prominent in different areas of the women's movement, and a great many amendments were added to the issues suggested.

Written in a very lively style, "Status" is edited by Marian Finucane and Pat Brennan. One feature to keep an eye on: the column produced by Nell McCafferty who walks the corridors of power, keeping a critical eye on current affairs.

Useful address: Status
14 Merrion Row
Dublin 2

Schools agree to trade union lectures

A number of girls' schools run by religious orders in Ireland are to include lectures on trade unionism in a bid to increase the level of female participation in the trade union movement. In response to an approach from the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, the lectures have been given the go-ahead by the Conference of Convent Secondary Schools.

Useful address: Irish Congress of Trade Unions
Congress House, 19 Raglan Road
Dublin 4

Battered women: a fresh approach

Women's Aid, the Dublin-based charity which opened Ireland's first refuge for battered wives and their children, has been reviewing its successes and failures.

Short-term shelters will, it believes, always be needed, but its recent review points out that many women return again and again, reaching no long-term solution and becoming increasingly dependent on the organization.

Women's Aid has therefore opened a new crisis centre where eight families can be accommodated in comfort and undergo a four-week counselling programme devised specifically to help the victims of family violence to deal with their situation. This is in contrast to the refuge's existing open-door, stay-as-long-as-you-like policy.

The idea of a second centre was warmly supported by Erin Pizzey, whose outstanding work with battered women in Chiswick, London, inspired the creation of the original centre.

Useful address: Women's Aid Dublin
7-8 Harcourt Terrace
Dublin 2

I T A L Y

European Social Fund: two projects

Women's organizations have been quick to grasp the helping hand extended by the European Social Fund. Two recent examples in the field of women's vocational training show how women in Italy are helping their fellow women.

In Rome, ANAPIA and CRODI are the abbreviations for two groups working on a vocational training pilot project: Associazione nazionale addestramento professionale industria e agricoltura (national association for vocational training in industry and agriculture); and Centro per la riqualificazione e l'occupazione della donna italiana (centre for Italian women's retraining and employment), set up by a group of women from the Lega delle donne per il socialismo (league of women for socialism).

In the course of a programme spread out over a period of two years, the pilot scheme will involve the thirty or so women trainees in finding the job opportunities that both satisfy their occupational ambitions and also are compatible with their family needs.

The original feature of this scheme will be that it rounds out traditional sociological research by "participatory research" carried out by the women trainees themselves. This will be done in three phases:

- (1) the research objective will be defined and the "social fabric" analysed through the interview method;
- (2) two working groups will be set up and will make a preliminary audit of the possible courses of action;
- (3) vocational training courses will start, linked with plans of what can be achieved outside the traditional supply of jobs on the labour market.

Wives and mothers in search of employment will be given preference for this pilot project. It is not just a question of helping them to find a job; they will be expected to take a direct part in the changing society around them, even within their own district.

Despite its share of "all the usual difficulties", in the good-natured words of Luciana Gasbarro who, together with Elena Marinucci, heads the scheme, the project is making good progress. It has obtained a grant from the Ministry of Employment and Social Security and enjoys the support of the city of Rome and the Lazio regional authority, as well as scientific help from the social research institute in Rome University.

Useful addresses: A N A P I A

Via Antonio Toscani 78
00152 Rome

C R O D I

Viale Lucina 10
00186 Rome

In the Abruzzi, a vocational refresher course for women - better known by the name of "progetto donna" (project: woman) - has just ended in Pe. Designed for middle-rank employees living in the Abruzzi, the course was attended by employees who had been forced to give up work for a variety of reasons but wished to return to employment.

Organized by AIDDA, the association of women managers, the course was financed by the European Community's Social Fund. This year, 200 women from nine Italian regions - particularly the Abruzzi - benefited from the scheme, which was handled by CESA, the European centre for management research based in Bologna.

The course in Pescara lasted a total of six months and was entirely free, with the cost of attendance being reimbursed. It was taken by 25 women, whose qualifications and working experience were such that two groups could be formed, one for vocational retraining for "general secretariat" duties, the other for "administration and accounting".

Here again, the course was broken down into four main phases.

The first phase was designed to help the trainees to overcome the human and personal difficulties inevitably encountered by those wishing to return to the world of work after an absence. A psychologist and sociologist were on hand to give help.

The second phase consisted of courses given by instructors seconded by the European centre for management research, using its teaching materials. The aim was to clarify or at least review the basic concepts underlying a company. The means by which those concepts are put into practice were then introduced by experts in the two sectors mentioned above.

In the third stage, the women trainees went on an on-the-job course, mainly on their own, in small and medium-sized firms in the region of Pescara. The purpose of this experience was to help them regain contact with the world of work and to rediscover what many of them had left a long time before.

In the fourth phase, the two groups received specialized training in their chosen sphere of duties. At the same time, they worked together to assess what they had done and to think of ways in which the structure and content of the training courses could be improved in future projects.

Finally, seminars were inserted in the course on matters relating to the Community institutions, in particular the European Social Fund and women's employment.

Women in rural areas

"Donne rurali" is the magazine published by the Confederazione nazionale coltivatori diretti (national farmers' federation); in one of its issues, it prints a long article on farmers' wives who live in mountain and hill areas. "Loneliness: a problem to be solved together": the title hints at the special challenges these women have to face.

The magazine also sets out the 1981 programme for the farmers' federation women's movement, in which stress is laid on changes in the life of the family on farms and in the countryside. A national congress is to be devoted to the subject and study travel will be arranged so that rural women from Italy can exchange views and share their experience with their counterparts from France and Austria.

Useful address: Donne rurali
Via XXIV Maggio 43
00187 Rome

"La Libra"

Taking its name from the sign of the zodiac - the scales - under which it was born, a "pocket handkerchief-sized" library-cum-meeting place has been founded in Turin. It is a place for reading, thinking, discussing and planning for the future. A seed has been sown; the harvest will depend on the women with whom this venture is concerned.

Useful address: La libra
c/o Benso
Via XX Settembre 64
10100 Turin

An unusual "mini-university"

Colf (the household workers' association) has started up a "little university" in Milan offering fourteen vocational training courses for domestic workers, housekeepers, etc. Its aim is to teach special skills to women who have to cope with specific problems in their work, such as families in times of crisis, old people or the handicapped. The courses tackle such issues as diet, household management, health and psychology.

Useful address: Centro Aurelio Boschini
Piazza San Marco 2
Milan

The other half of the avant-garde

"L'altra metà dell'avanguardia", an exhibition that met with great success in Milan, has been equally well received in Stockholm, whose vernissage was graded by the actress, Bibi Anderson, reading extracts from the works of women writers.

Brought together by the art critic, Lea Vergine, on behalf of the Milan local authority, the many works in the exhibition are by women artists who may not be as famous as their male colleagues but who have made an active contribution to the evolution of art.

Useful address: Lea Vergine
c/o Assessore alla Cultura
Commune di Milano
Milan

Municipal representatives

The Italian association of the Council of European Municipalities has held its eighth national congress, at which it elected the 160 members of the Italian national council, 16 of whom are now women. The previous council, consisting of 140 members, had only 6 women in its ranks.

Useful address: A.I.C.C.E.
Piazza di Trevi 86
00187 Rome

L U X E M B O U R G

Immigrant women

At a seminar arranged under the auspices of A.I.C.S. - the Italian Association of Culture and Sport - it was made clear that immigrant women suffer from two-fold discrimination, both as women and as foreigners.

It is always these women who do the worst jobs and are paid the lowest wages. Their position is more and more difficult, incapable as they are of standing up for their rights with their employers or voicing their complaints within the unions.

The Grand Duchy's population includes 30% to 35% foreigners, and an enormous number of these are women. Nothing is known of them except that they have long been an essential prop to Luxembourg households.

The Italian Women's Union in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg has submitted a petition to European Parliament calling on the Luxembourg authorities to set up social services which will ease the burden of domestic tasks for these women.

Useful address: Union des Femmes Italiennes
c/o Centro di Ristoro
56 Rue A. Fisher
Luxembourg

N E T H E R L A N D S

Working with young girls

Four women working in this field have brought out a newsletter entitled "Meidenwerk" - working with girls - that appears four times a year. Through this medium, the aim is to provide a channel for the pooling of the experience of women responsible for educating girls in grammar and technical schools and in vocational training courses. The publication may be obtained on payment of Fl.2.50 to Post Office account 4305349 in the name of Nieuwsbrief Meidenwerk p/a Oude Schans 23a, Amsterdam.

Voluntary work

Hundreds of thousands of women give their voluntary work in every field of social life: health care, the care of the elderly, acting as local community leaders, teaching, etc. In most cases, these women do not even receive reimbursement of their expenses in the course of these voluntary efforts. If they took it into their heads to "go on strike", society would be in a state of chaos.

It would be only reasonable for society to draw its own conclusions as to the devotion of these voluntary workers. They are entitled to the same earnings as professional workers at the same level. Experience should count as much as a diploma.

This is the view held by Vrijwilligstersbond - the voluntary work association. Formed by a group of women from women's and other groups, this association does not intend to attach itself to a more powerful union federation. "First of all we want to increase our membership, and then start up local and regional sections," they say.

Useful address: Vrijwilligstersbond
 Amsterdams Vrouwenhuis
 Nieuwe Herengracht 95
 Amsterdam

Higher technical education

HBO stands for Hoger Beroepsonderwijs - higher technical education. The council of higher technical education in the Netherlands is not unaware of the problems raised by emancipation: a special issue of its "HBO - Journaal" is devoted to the theme.

"We worked on it with great pleasure and we also learned a thing or two," acknowledges Adriaan In 't Groen, the editor, who heads an all-male editorial staff.

The special issue opens with a discerning "history of the women's movement in the Netherlands", which places the whole problem of emancipation in historical context.

The position of women in higher technical education is then discussed sector by sector, reviewing the position of teachers as well as students.

Useful address: HBO Journaal
 Postubs 123, Riviervismarkt 2
 2501 CC The Hague

U N I T E D K I N G D O M

TUC: a positive action programme

A programme of positive action for equality was discussed by the Women's Conference of the Trades Union Congress in March. Marie Patterson, chairman of the TUC's Women's Advisory Committee, said that economic recession had undermined the position of working women and, as a result, the need for positive action was never greater.

The Conference demanded full implementation of the Equal Pay and Sex Discrimination Acts but considered that the general segregation of women in low paid jobs was a main impediment to equality of opportunity.

Firms that practised equality in their workforce should advertise themselves as "equal opportunities employers", Marie Patterson suggested.

Useful address: Women's Advisory Committee - TUC
 Congress House
 Great Russell Street
 London WC1

Education through play

The Scottish Pre-School Playgroups Association began by starting groups for young children to learn and grow through playing together. The groups are run mainly by mothers; as they became involved they wanted to know more about how children develop and to compare ideas, experiences and problems.

To meet the demand, informal courses were first developed for mothers and others attending the playgroups. In many cases these led on to proper adult education studies in related fields. Today some 5,600 students from all over Scotland attend 370 courses a year. Introductory courses may last only two or three playgroup meetings, while the more advanced may involve fieldwork courses in college or university lasting up to 30 weeks.

Discussion is the key to learning, and throughout the courses the emphasis is on sharing knowledge and experience among staff and students alike. A booklet entitled "A Contribution to Adult Education" provides full information. Many parents, it notes, learn as much about themselves as their children through these courses, and their personal growth helps their children too.

Useful address: Scottish Pre-School Playgroups Association
Playgroup House, 7 Royal Terrace
Glasgow G3 7NT, Scotland

Broadcasting: new lobby for women

Britain is soon to have a new television channel known as Channel Four. A group of women - the Women's Broadcasting and Film Lobby (WBFL) - is determined that in creating and presenting the new programmes women shall have equal rights to employment and training in all types of work and be properly represented at the highest levels of administration, and that there shall be a reassessment of the way in which women are portrayed on TV.

WBFL is open to women working in film, radio and TV. It has been lobbying government and prospective programme companies hard to ensure that contracts include a clause requiring training schemes to be open to all employees "without discrimination on grounds of sex". In addition, WBFL favours an affirmative action plan for women, geared to help them catch up on training with men. It would also like to see a code of practice for those working in television.

With over 100 members, the Lobby has an active programme of meetings in 1981 and is planning a "Women Live" month in 1982 - a festival of women's work across the media.

Useful address: Women's Broadcasting and Film Lobby
c/o 28 Torbay Road
London NW6

Are you really up to it?

How many women have had that question put to them openly or in camouflaged form when applying for promotion or supervisory jobs? Sometimes male interviewers do not even realise that their questions are discriminatory.

This situation is wittily revealed in a bright little film, "A Question of Attitudes", produced for the Equal Opportunities Commission as part of a training package for trades unions and managers. In the film, a woman in the assembly line applies for a job as foreman in another part of the factory. Both her shop steward and the manager react uneasily. Could she supervise men? What about her domestic life? Questions they would never think of asking a man!

"A Question of Attitudes" is part of a package of four films for use in industry and elsewhere to try to convey that attitudes to women at work must change. It is available from the Central Film Library.

Women and Manual Trades have also produced a 30 minute colour video programme for young women about working in the building industry. "Building your Future" shows four young women apprentices - a plumber, a carpenter, a painter/decorator and an electrician - talking with skilled tradeswomen about their work and what it is like for a woman to be doing it.

"Since young women are often presented with an image of themselves as sex objects or some variation of domestic servant, we want to challenge that and offer them an alternative, positive picture of women building and taking control of their environment," say the film's producers.

"Building your Future" is distributed by the Concord Educational Films Council.

Useful addresses: Central Film Library	Concord Educational Films Council
Bromyard Avenue	Nacton
<u>London W3 7JB</u>	<u>Ipswich, Suffolk</u>

Housewives need not be lonely

In 1960 a young housewife with her first baby wrote to a British national newspaper, The Guardian, suggesting that houseboundwives with liberal interests and a desire to remain individuals could form a national register so that "whenever one moves one can contact like-minded friends". The response to Maureen Nicol's letter was so great that she founded the National Housewives' Register which, by January 1980, had 1,056 groups in the British Isles catering for 20,000 members.

A general rule of the groups is to forbid discussion of domestic problems; they usually meet in each others' homes and there is a loose, mainly volunteer central organization which offers help and advice.

The organization produces a lively national newsletter which reflects the wide-ranging activities and interests of (mainly young) housewives. The joy of the Register is that anyone moving into a new area can almost always find kindred spirits.

Useful address: National Housewives Register
National Organizer, Mrs. Alison Shingler
Gants Mill
Bruton, Somerset BA10 OD3

Appeal for £50,000

The Mary Macarthur Educational Trust, which provides educational opportunities for working women, has launched an appeal for £50,000 so that it can extend its work.

The Trust has helped many women who might otherwise have never had the chance to take up scholarships and attend university courses. More recently it has concentrated on offering places on short courses and summer schools; it would like to increase the number of opportunities in this field.

The appeal has been launched to coincide with the centenary of the birth of Mary Macarthur who, in a short life, devoted her time to fighting for the rights of the lowest paid women workers.

Useful address: Mary Macarthur Educational Trust
Thorne House, Ruxley Ridge
Claygate
Esher, Surrey

Poverty trap for single parent families in Wales

To mark International Women's Day, a report has been produced by Welsh Women's Aid highlighting the difficulties faced by thousands of women in Wales. Among an estimated 40,000 single parent families in 1981, seven out of eight lone parents were women, mainly dependent on state supplementary benefits.

Even when in work, however, they are among the lowest paid. Sharon, for instance, earns £68 a week (compared with average male earnings of £90 to £100). "She regularly goes without breakfast and only has a snack for lunch...she rarely buys fresh fruit, cheese or new toys for her children... Jumble sales and cast-offs from neighbours are her main source of clothing" the report says.

Welsh Women's Aid sees many such women in its home for battered wives. Together with Women's Aid in Scotland and Wales, it has protested to the Government about proposed changes in the payment of child benefit from a weekly to a monthly basis in 1982. Monthly payments, they say, could cause severe financial problems to those who are already finding it hard to make ends meet.

Useful address: Welsh Women's Aid
Incentive House, Adam Street
Cardiff, Wales

The Handicapped, an image of ourselves

"Images of ourselves" is the grave and beautiful title of a book in which 25 disabled women, ranging in age from 17 to 70, tell their personal stories. Collected by Jo Campling and published by Routledge & Keagan Paul, their accounts reflect the difficulties encountered by the handicapped in winning recognition as intelligent human beings wanting to lead full lives.

All the women have stories to tell of condescension and humiliation from the able-bodied. "Can you have sex?" is a question often asked. "Yes, can you?" replied one angry contributor, adding that in no other circumstances would a stranger dare to put such a question.

Having an emotional life and a job, visiting a theatre or a restaurant: all these are things that the handicapped are capable of doing, but it is still made difficult for them because of the lack of facilities or the reaction from non-disabled people.

There are plans to make the book into a film. Many of the women have founded or belong to a variety of organizations for the disabled, listed at the end of the book.

Useful address: Jo Campling
Hillcroft College
Surbiton, Surrey

Disarmament: what women can do

Bertha Bradby, the chairman of the Women's Advisory Council of the United Nations Association of Great Britain, has launched an appeal to women's organizations to join forces with a view to the special session of the U.N. General Assembly on disarmament due to take place in 1982.

The aim is to collect a billion signatures from people all over the world to be presented to the Assembly. It reads as follows:

"We, the Peoples of the World, demand:

1. The Abolition of Nuclear Weapons and all Weapons of Mass Destruction;
2. The Abolition, by agreed stages, of Conventional Arms, leading to
3. General and Complete Disarmament
4. Transfer of Military Expenditure to end World Poverty."

Useful address: Women's Advisory Council
United Nations Association
3 Whitehall Court
London SW1A 2EL

THE CHANGING EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

The Social and Economic Committee

Under the Treaty of Accession, the Social and Economic Committee of the European Communities now has twelve more members (making a total of 156) from the different sectors of economic and social life in Greece. One of the Greek members is a woman: Anne Bredimas, special member for the Greek shipowners' union.

Congratulations to ...

Inger Nielsen, the first woman to become a deputy director general in the European Commission hierarchy, succeeding Fernand Spaak as the head of the Delegation for Enlargement.

Jaqueline Nonon, the first woman to hold the position of head of an information office for the European Communities. She has taken over from François Fontaine, who set up the Paris information office in 1955 and has headed it since that time. During that period, he was one of the first to place the fullest stress on women's information.

Jacqueline Nonon comes from the bureau for questions concerning employment and equal treatment for women set up in 1976 and headed by her since its inception.

Third World: the non-governmental organizations

The NGOs - non-governmental organizations - are voluntary bodies, mainly working in the social field and especially in the development cooperation sector.

Early in April, 80 delegates from NGOs specializing in aid to the Third World reviewed the past five years, with the cooperation of the European Commission and in the presence of Simone Veil, the president of European Parliament, and Claude Cheysson, member of the European Commission with responsibility for development policy.

Today, cooperation with the NGOs is seen as an integral part of the European Community's development policy. Over the five year period, 693 micro-projects have been funded by 124 NGOs, the investment totalling 125 million ECUs (1 European Currency Unit = approximately U.S.\$1.15), one third of which was paid out by the Community.

In 1976, the Community's average contribution was 31,000 ECUs per project; by 1980, this had risen to 81,000 ECUs. Since the volume of applications received by the Commission in 1980 was well over the 14 million ECUs available, the Commission's report proposed that the allocation be increased.

Africa heads the list of the beneficiary regions, receiving 55% of the funds available, followed by Asia with 25% and Latin America with 20%. The breakdown of sectors to which funds are channelled shows that about 30% goes towards integrated rural development, 25% to education and training and 20% to health.

Under the heading of emergency and food aid, there were 33 emergency projects in 1980 to a total value of 10 million ECUs, notably in Cambodia and, following the earthquake, in Algeria, which received medical drugs, food, clothing, shelter and building materials.

Under the food aid programme, 25,000 tons of powdered milk and 1,000 tons of butter-oil were made available to the NGOs, which also played an active role in the Community's emergency programmes in the African countries suffering from drought and in efforts to help displaced persons. In Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, the Sudan and Uganda, teams went everywhere they could be of service.

The NGOs and the European Commission are concerned with arousing public opinion; there is a growing need to inform the public on the interdependence of the European economy and the economies of developing nations. The work of providing information and making people aware of the issues that is being done by the women's associations is of special value.

To find out more about the position and role of women in a developing society, readers will find the special issue of the journal "Construire ensemble" of great value. Published by the Centre d'études économiques et sociales d'Afrique occidentale, B.P. 305, Bobo-Dioulasso, Upper Volta, the journal lets rural women speak for themselves. In this packed and invaluable publication, there are two articles of outstanding interest: one on the economic activities of women, by Odette Snoy, and the other on traditional ways in which women associate, by Bernard Lédéa Ouédraogo.

The European Community and the Handicapped

For many years now, the European Community has been acting on behalf of the handicapped, especially their training and retraining for jobs, under its European Social Fund.

To mark the International Year of Disabled Persons, the European Commission is drawing up a communication to the Council of Ministers on the social integration of handicapped people, which will contain proposals for action in specific sectors, in particular education and training.

The European Commission will also be arranging two technical seminars, one on the problems of housing and the other on training for work. Specific problems arise with young handicapped people, and the European Commission will also be holding a conference focussing on their training for working life.

(Women of Europe will be discussing in detail the efforts and pilot projects designed to help the handicapped, for which the European Social Fund has granted aid.)

Eurydice

Under the pretty name of "Eurydice", an EEC education information network has been in operation since September 1980. With its central unit in Brussels linked to national units, the information needed by those called upon to make political decisions on education can be passed on without delay.

Ms Gaiotti de Biase, a member of European Parliament, put the following question to the European Commission: Eurydice's programme does not include the subject of equal opportunities for girls in education; what is the Commission going to do about it?

In its reply, the European Commission lists the four issues to which priority has been given because of their interest to all:

- transition from school to working life;
- the teaching and practice of foreign languages;
- the education of migrant workers and their families;
- policies and terms of enrolment of students in higher education.

The Commission points out: "The theme of the transition from school to working life embraces a good deal of important information on equality of educational opportunity for girls and it may be expected that the problem will be treated as it deserves.

Useful address: Eurydice
Bureau 4/9
Square de Meeûs 8
1040 Brussels

The social advancement of farming women

This is the subject of a report drawn up by the Advisory Committee on Social Questions affecting Farmers and their Families, to be submitted to the European Commission.

The outcome of research over a period of several years in each of the countries concerned, the report is intended to lead to a "statute", the legal expression of the day-to-day reality of family-type farms.

The women to whom this statute applies must meet certain conditions. On the one hand, they must play an effective part in the running of the farm by contributing their manual work or by the more administrative contribution of keeping the accounts, although above all they must cooperate in taking decisions and sharing responsibilities, both on the farm and in their farming associations; on the other, they must acquire real vocational skills.

To achieve this standard, a woman farmer must be sufficiently well trained and informed, fully aware of her role and her economic contribution to the formation of the farm income.

A woman can play an even more effective and aware role in the running of the farm if it is the result of agreement with her husband and the other members of the family working on the farm. Even so, family agreement is not enough. There should be legislation to:

sanction the cooperation of husband, wife and members of the family and ensure that they are equal;

create the legal framework best suited to the nature of farming;

provide sufficient flexibility to ensure that the husband, wife and members of the family can achieve free and mutual representation in their trade and farming associations and in performing the legal acts relating to their day-to-day farming needs.

This legal framework - whose format has not yet been defined - should make a distinction between the personal capital of members of the family and that portion of the capital ploughed into the farm. This will make it easier to define how much of the income from the farm arises from the work and the management of each of the people involved.

A new legal formula should be found that approaches the concept of an "agricultural company", in which all members of the family working on the farm are equal partners.

If this can be done, the people who help to run a farm will be able to obtain true occupational recognition.

RESEARCH, MEETINGS AND BOOKS

La Bretagne au féminin (Brittany in the feminine) is a case history file compiled by Raymond Letertre, one of the "Bretagne Expansion" collection. In a hundred or so packed and lively pages, he analyses the position of women in this region. To take one figure at random: of the 120 dockers in Concarneau, 45 are women. Fr.30 from the author, 22 Rue St.-Louis, 35000 Rennes.

The Domestication of Women by Barbara Rogers, is an acute description of the way in which development aid exploits or underestimates the women in the Third World. Pub. Kogan Page, 120 Pentonville Road, London N1.

Il Grattacielo (meaning "the skyscraper") is a magazine written by women, but not specifically on or for women. What it sets out to do is to "look at the world through a woman's eyes". Cooperative Antizarina, Pizza Martini 3, Milan.

Women and Employment is a report issued by OECD following a conference in Paris in April 1980. Facts, figures and specific tables. Published in French and English, it can be obtained from Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, 2 Rue André-Pascal, 75775 Paris - Cedex 16.

Is there a real need for a national agency for the monitoring of the media? What role would it play and how would it work? A subsidy for research on this subject has been earmarked in the Equal Opportunities Commission budget for education and research (which totals £23,589). Equal Opportunities Commission, Overseas House, Quay Street, Manchester M3 3HN.

Des femmes de nulle part by Suzanne Blaise - "women from nowhere" - is a profound and detailed study of what the author calls "the current crisis of the feminist movement", in which she courageously questions the movement's structure and attitudes. Distributed by Presse-Diffusion, 6 Rue Dunois, 75013 Paris.

Die Frau mit der Kamera - woman with a camera - by Renate Möhrmann reminds us that women film-makers are far from rare despite all the inevitable obstacles placed in their way in an industry so long dominated by men. Published by Hanser-Verlag.

Cinema al femminile deals with the same subject - "cinema in the feminine". Lina Mangiacapre, the author, shows how women's emancipation has fostered creative film-making by women. Published by Mastrogiacomo, Via delle Piazze 13, Padua.

Verso una società con la Donna (women and a new society) is a report of almost 400 pages on the work of a study group on the position of women set up by the Italian women's centre - Centro italiano femminile. It embraces a wealth of socio-cultural factors and scientific and biological facts. Published for CIF by Unione Editori Cattolici Italiani, 25 Via Carlo Zucchi, 00165 Rome.

Minimum Wages for Women is a report by Emma MacLennan on the lowest wage levels, usually those received by women. One idea she brings up is a special fund for use by the unions in trying to gain a foothold in non-unionized sectors of industry, to include those employing home-workers. Distributed by the Low Pay Unit, 9 Poland Street, London W1V 3DG.

Les agricultrices aujourd'hui is a special issue of the magazine "Pour" produced entirely by a team of women, on the subject of women on the farm today. Acknowledging that women farmers have a vocational and social role to play, the magazine outlines a new objective: a complete overhaul of the agricultural world. Published by Groupe de Recherche pour l'Education Permanente, 13-15 Rue des Petites Ecuries, 75010 Paris (fr.30).

Lasst uns endlich mitregieren (let's co-manage at last) is a thoughtful book by Christa Randzio-Plath on women's share in power and the way of reaching the places at which decisions are reached - not always where men think they are! Published by Herder-Verlag.

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