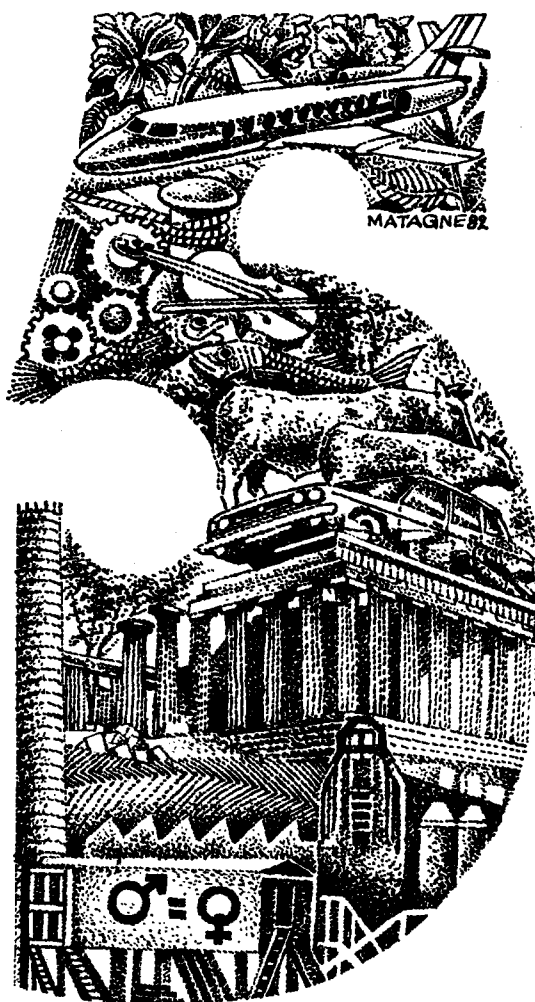
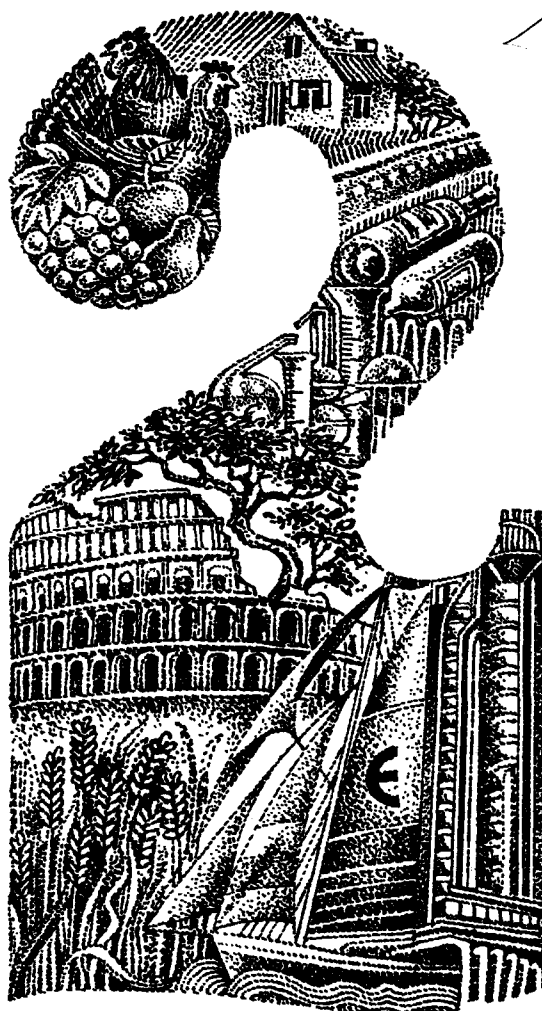


Women of Europe

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Towards Equal Opportunities

The "equal opportunities" action programme being launched by the European Community in 1982-85 is described in "Women of Europe" Supplement n° 9. For a copy, please write to the "Women of Europe" editorial office.

THE CHANGING EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

THE FIRST TWENTY FIVE YEARS

25 March 1957: the date of signing the treaties that set up the European Economic Community (EEC) and the European Atomic Energy Community (commonly known as Euratom).

Twenty five years: so many years, but how fast they have flown!

A quarter of a century is not very long in the annals of a people, but this has been a quarter century of peace and solidarity for countries that have so often faced each other armed with weapons.

Peace is not everything: it has to be put to good use. Not without travail but with an abundance of good will, Europeans have created a solidarity of a kind unprecedented in the recent or the distant past. And although the solidarity was generated by the treaties it has extended far beyond them.

Some of the merit for the women of Europe having come to know each other better today, helping each other and moving forward together, lies in those treaties.

Today we need to go further. The economies of our countries and our Community has been hard hit by the crisis. With this in mind a new "mandate" has been given to the European Commission: to propose fresh measures ensuring that our Europe, built up in a period of fair weather, will be able to weather the storm.

Talking to European Parliament, Gaston Thorn - President of the European Commission - gave an uncompromising account of what is happening. "The Community is under threat. Within the Community, internal cohesion is affected by the economic crisis. The old demons of protectionism are awakening and trying to instill the delusion that health can be achieved by looking inward. Outside, the Community has to withstand the aggressive efforts of its trade partners; it also has to safeguard the opportunities of its traditional industries and at the same time encourage the rise of new industries which will determine the future of industrial development."

The European Community has launched a debate on the three-part programme designed to revitalize and reinstate Community cohesion:

- first of all, bring fresh impetus to European integration - in other words, to achieve a new economic and monetary solidarity and work out Community-wide policies that will help us to respond to the challenges of the 1980s;
- reform common agricultural policy and adapt it where needed, with due respect for its basic principles;
- make any temporary adjustments to budgetary matters that may be needed until new common policies are developed that will bring a more lasting solution to the problems.

The European Commission is calling for more solidarity and more integration. This is the lesson that each one of us has learned from the 25 years of the Community's existence.

European aid to the Polish people

For many months now, the Polish people have faced the painful realities of irregular and inadequate supplies of vital necessities. The shortages have been particularly dramatic for the more vulnerable - the sick, large families, small children and others. They have now become worse as a result of the events that have occurred since 12 and 13 December 1981.

Large consignments of foodstuffs have been sent by the Soviet Union but, in view of its internal supply difficulties, this aid can undoubtedly be only temporary. The lifting of price control in Poland early this year has done nothing to improve the lot of a people already so sorely tested: prices have risen by as much as 400%.

On three occasions in the course of 1981, the European Community supplied Poland with agricultural products at prices 15% lower than those charged on the world market. In December 1981, it donated 8,000 tons of meat, first obtaining an assurance from the Polish authorities that the meat would in fact be distributed to ordinary members of the public. The arrangements for transporting the meat, which was made available in the form of carcasses to be cut up locally, are to be made by the Polish authorities themselves.

All this has cost the European Community nearly £59,000,000, as of the time of writing these words. A decision on further aid was reached late in December 1981. Amounting to 2 million ECU (over £1,000,000), it will take the form of medical drugs, whole milk powder, flour, oil, baby foods, soap, etc. It will be forwarded through the agencies that specialize in humanitarian work such as the European organizations Caritas, the Red Cross and "Médicins sans frontières".

Charitable organizations are encouraged in their efforts in two ways: those sending certain farm products to Poland are granted special terms if they furnish a certificate from the Church authorities in Poland proving that the products have in fact been delivered; and farm products sent out in this way are exempted from all export taxes as part of the monetary compensation arrangements.

Early in January 1982, the foreign ministers of the Ten meeting in Brussels declared that they "will consider what can be done to relieve the lot of Poles outside Poland who do not wish to return to their country under present conditions".

According to the European Commission, there are 6 or 7 million needy people in Poland. The charitable organizations say that urgent needs from March to May 1982 represent a cost of about 30 million ECU. Humanitarian agencies and West Germany are putting up 20 million ECU to meet these needs and most of the balance of about 10 million ECU is covered by a second grant of 8 million ECU decided by the European Community at the end of January. All this aid will be distributed through the humanitarian agencies, which will give proper guarantees that it is in fact distributed to people in need. Credit will be released in phases, each one depending on the outcome of previous phases.

The social integration of the handicapped

The Ministers of Social Affairs meeting in Brussels have been looking at the social integration of the handicapped from two complementary angles: the work being done in individual countries and action by the Community.

The resolution passed on the occasion asked Member States to pursue and intensify their efforts to bring about this economic and social integration. The aims are to:

- do away with the obstacles that prevent the handicapped taking a full part in the life of their society;
- promote the coordination of services for the handicapped and cooperation with the social partners;
- encourage handicapped people to participate in the planning of measures that will concern them directly;
- ensure that handicapped people live as independent lives as possible;
- integrate the handicapped into education and training systems;
- ensure that the effects of the economic crisis do not weigh unfairly on handicapped people;
- take measures relating to housing and mobility (access to buildings, public transport, etc.);
- inform the public at large about ways of helping the handicapped to integrate into society.

As part of the Community's own efforts, the European Commission has been asked to set up a "development action network", drawing on the financial resources available to the European Social Fund. This network would provide a model of how activities at local level can be coordinated. It would involve 15 to 20 local authority areas with a population of 150,000 to 30,000 each and come into being at the start of 1983, to continue for four years. The Council of Ministers has asked the European Commission to produce an interim report at the end of 1984 and a final report by 31 December 1986.

In the meanwhile, the Commission will continue to promote pilot schemes for the housing of handicapped people. It already has a new administrative unit: the Bureau for Action in favour of the Handicapped, attached to the Directorate General for Social Affairs, Employment and Education. The Bureau will keep in constant contact with the representatives of handicapped people, voluntary organizations and professional bodies with direct concern.

Useful address Bureau for Action in Favour of the Handicapped
 Commission of the European Communities
 200 Rue de la Loi
 1049 Brussels

The origins of Europe

Historians from all the European Community countries have attended a meeting in Luxembourg devoted to the early days of the construction of a new Europe, in particular to the sources and archives dating back to 1946-1952.

It quickly became apparent that there is still much to do in the European archives world. Every country has its own traditions regarding access to public archives. In general, a period of 50 years has to elapse before official records are made publicly available. This condition is strictly enforced in Denmark, for example, whereas other countries allow researchers to look at the archives after 30 years. Not all authorities are prepared to let historians consult the documents of the time. All too often, the response is frustrating: "yes, our documents are there but they have not been catalogued; come back and see us again in three or four years' time".

Private archives are rarely kept secret for so long, but it is hard to find out where they are kept and what they are about. It was a coup de théâtre, then, when Professor Rieben, the president of the Jean Monnet Foundation, revealed to the historians in Luxembourg the existence of secret correspondence between Winston Churchill and Jean Monnet.

Professor Schwarz of the University of Cologne introduced his preliminary analytical inventory of research relating to European integration, pointing out how national in spirit the early historical research in this field could be. He said that from now on we should adopt a transnational stance if we are to grasp the realities of Europeanization, its overall political goals, its impact and the component factors at individual Member State level.

The Luxembourg meeting was exceptionally fruitful in that the organizers had the good idea of bringing together the historians, those who had worked for the construction of Europe and the keepers of archives. The meeting was the occasion for an announcement that François Fontaine, adviser to the European Commission, had undertaken to interview everyone who had known Jean Monnet one by one.

At the end of the meeting, those present called for a permanent group for liaison among European historians. Its tasks would be to promote the dissemination of information on work being done by historians on the history of Europe after the second world war, advise the Community on scientific work deserving its support, help researchers make better use of the resources (such as archives) at their disposal and, finally, arrange or encourage scientific gatherings of historians concerned with the European adventure.

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

Part-time employment

In the European Community as a whole 9% of the total working population is employed part-time, although the percentage in individual countries ranges from 2% to 15%. By far the greatest majority of part-time workers consists of women, who will be particularly alert to the contents of the directive drafted by the European Commission and forwarded to the Council of Ministers.

The aim of this draft directive insofar as voluntary part-time work is concerned is to remedy shortcomings in national legislations on the social and working rights of part-timers who - according to the Commission - are entitled to just as favourable terms as full-time workers.

To establish the principle and make part-time employment more attractive, the directive would introduce:

- the principle of equal rights for part- and full-time workers;
- the principle that part-time employees have proportional rights to pay, paid holidays, redundancy payments and retirement benefits;
- a written contract between the employer and the employee;
- priority for part-time workers wishing to take up full-time employment and vice versa;
- the inclusion of part-time manpower in the figures for a company's work force;
- procedures for informing and consulting work force representatives regarding the introduction of part-time working.

During its preparatory work, the European Commission encountered many forms of discrimination against part-time workers. A part-time job tends to be an unskilled job. In several EEC Member States, part-time employment is - in fact if not in law - seen as non-permanent, being associated with temporary, short-term or specified-term contracts, etc.

In addition, the inadequacy of protection against unemployment became apparent to the Commission; it found that there are far too few opportunities to join pension schemes and that there is little scope for promotion and training. Discrimination is also obvious in pay, perks and bonuses.

Since most part-time workers are women, the Commission feels that its proposal will supplement the three directives that have already been adopted on equal treatment for men and women. Part-time work may also be a good solution for those approaching retirement age, under flexible schemes.

Useful address Commission of the European Communities
Directorate General - Social Affairs, Employment and
Education
200 Rue de la Loi
1049 Brussels

Women and development aid

Mr Pisani, the Member of the European Commission responsible for development aid, has told Parliament that the Commission would like to see women more fully involved in development efforts.

To clarify the picture, the Commission has been questioning its delegates in developing nations on major issues such as the choice, preparation, implementation and running of projects and the physical, economic and social effects of those projects on women.

In Africa in particular women play a very important economic role. Any development scheme inevitably has an effect - direct or indirect - on women's status. To take a simple example, if a track road is built and vehicles can be used to transport goods, it will be the women who take their produce to the market and sell it. This may be a loss of income but it may also increase the return on production in that produce can be marketed in larger quantities.

It is a particularly delicate matter, since allowance must be made for the cultural aspects of women's place in her own society.

Women and unemployment

At the end of 1981, the figure for unemployment in the European Community topped the ten million mark, increasing the rate of unemployment to 9.2%.

One trend seems to be continuing: female unemployment has been unchanged for several months at about 4.2 million in the European Member States as a whole. There is a general rise in the number of men out of work, which means that the relative proportion of women without a job is falling in every country.

Flexible retirement

The European Commission has drafted a recommendation on flexible retirement and presented it to the Council of Ministers. The two-fold aim is to give individuals more freedom to decide on the age of retirement and to relieve the pressure on what is clearly a shrinking labour market.

The European Commission is asking Member States for a long-term commitment to the gradual introduction of flexible retirement, i.e. the right to decide freely on the point at which one retires after a certain age. It is also calling for a short-term commitment, with the Member States reviewing their retirement arrangements in the light of the stated objective over the next two years.

Thirty million poor

According to the European Commission's final report on its 1975-1980 anti-poverty programme, EEC Member States (not including Greece) had no fewer than 30 million poor in the mid-1970s.

By "the poor" are meant individuals or families whose resources - earnings, property and the services available to them in the public and private sectors - are so small that they cannot reach the minimal standards of life acceptable in the Member State in which they live.

The Commission report states that despite the development of social services since the war resources have not been redistributed and the poor have not benefited from the economic growth of the past thirty years.

The lower rate of economic growth since 1974 has meant that the traditional group of poor has been inflated by a growing number of "new poor" who have no prospects of employment. The burden of the economic crisis weighs more heavily on young people, those without occupational skills, immigrants and the mentally and physically handicapped. The legal entitlement to a minimum wage is not universal in the Community, and social welfare services do not always reach the people for whom they are intended. Very often, the poor fail to apply for help for the very reason that they are poor. "The gaps in the welfare state are enormously wide and deep," states the Commission report.

The programme of action launched by the Community included pilot schemes, research and national reports. Major conclusions may be drawn on the nature of the poor, the circumstances causing poverty, traditional policies of counter-acting poverty and the role of social workers and charitable organizations.

The main innovation in the programme of action has undoubtedly been the use of a two-fold strategy in the fight against poverty: the aim is both to make poor people better able to cope with their own problems so that they need not rely on public aid and to modify relations between the social services and their "clients", often leading to a change in the way that services are provided.

In conclusion, Member States must quickly introduce measures to combat poverty in Europe. As stressed in the report, "to delay measures might lead to a risk of deterioration in the social fabric which could last for a generation. The current economic crisis has already had disproportionate social consequences for the poor."

The report concludes with these words: "the need to take resolute action against poverty rests not on a sordid calculation of the relative costs and benefits but on equity, compassion and solidarity and on the manifest need to give further aid to the 30 million people who are at present being denied social justice in our Community."

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

December 1981 Session

There were four highlights in this session of European Parliament: voting on the 1982 budget, Lord Carrington's statement now that the Council of Ministers had been chaired by the U.K. for four months, a debate on Poland and British Premier Margaret Thatcher's statement on the outcome of the latest meeting of the European Council of Heads of State.

Mrs Thatcher's address to Parliament was a "first": no head of government had previously come to report to European Parliament on the outcome of a European Council meeting. Despite this, MEPs speaking in the debate regretted that the Council had not produced results. It is true that it had to tackle a very complex set of problems linked with the "restructuring" of the Community. Margaret Thatcher emphasised the difficulties but expressed the hope that the Community would show that it could face up to the problems. She pointed out the progress that had been made in the field of political cooperation in the six months since a British minister had chaired the Council.

The December session started on the day after the events that had occurred in Poland. As soon as it opened the Parliamentary President, Simone Veil, described on behalf of Parliament her emotion and concern at these events. Recalling that European Parliament had, back in May 1981, delivered a solemn warning against any attempt to interfere in Polish internal affairs, Simone Veil expressed European Parliament's solidarity with the Polish people in its tribulations and asked the Council of Ministers and the European Commission to confirm their resolve to take practical steps to help Poland overcome its current difficulties.

To a House that had risen to its feet, Simone Veil concluded "in the name of the citizens of the ten Community countries, all of which have been expressing their emotion since yesterday, we trust that Poland may, in full independence, find the path of freedom and that the rights of its workers and all its citizens may be respected".

In a resolution passed during the same session, Parliament deplored the violation of human rights in the form of the state of emergency introduced in Poland. The resolution also called for a return to civil and union liberties, and continuance of food aid.

Among the MEPs who spoke, the Italian Radical Maria Antonietta Macciocchi declared that she would nonetheless vote against the resolution on the grounds that it was hypocritical, especially in its statement of the principle of non-interference. She hoped that large demonstrations in support of Poland would be arranged in Europe and that they would be attended by as many people as had recently taken part in the demonstrations in favour of peace. Lady Elles, a British Conservative, voted for the resolution but stressed the need to help the Poles to cope with a whole series of immediate and dramatic problems: shortages of food, fuel and medical drugs.

SIMONE VEIL AS PRESIDENT OF EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

Emanuele Gazzo, for many years a hawk-eyed observer of the European scene, has paid a moving homage to Simone Veil. This editorial by a man not known for the lavishness of his praise merits reprinting:

. . . . Simone Veil has proved to be a president of great vision, a worthy inheritor of the highest tradition established by the presidency of Paul-Henri Spaak in 1952. With her strong personality, there could have been no doubt that she would have done otherwise, but she quickly dispelled any doubts that might have been harboured in view of the source of her candidacy. She immediately struck the right note of full independence in interpreting her role as president of the first Parliament elected by direct suffrage.

We recall her address on 18 July when she declared that "one must always opt for the European solutions, because they are the best". And above all what she said on the issue of the budget, pointing out that "when drawing up a budget a responsible Parliament must not merely state what is to be spent; it must also pay due account to the levying of revenue . . . We know that historically it is by authorizing the levy of revenue that the first parliaments in the world came into being". Reminding her listeners that in the course of the legislature the Community budget would reach a peak of 1% of value added tax, Madame Veil continued: "in the years to come, the problem of income will be the main problem to be taken into account and our Parliament, which represents all our citizens, in other words every taxpayer in the Community, will necessarily play a leading role in the solution of that problem".

Nothing could be more topical than those words, spoken in July of 1979.

Simone Veil has carried out her duties with great dignity and has represented European Parliament in its relations with other institutions and the world in the noblest manner, justly interpreting the will of the peoples who, in electing their European representatives, have cast an explicit vote for Europe.

Gaston Thorn pays tribute to Simone Veil

Members of European Parliament gave a lengthy standing ovation to Simone Veil, to whom Gaston Thorn, the President of the European Commission, paid tribute in the following words:

"Much, Madame Veil, will have depended on you. And everything, or almost everything, of what exists today is due to you. Two and a half years ago, to a great extent it depended on you - almost on you alone - whether this assembly became an enclosed forum for in-fighting or whether it could become what, happily, it is today: a responsible institution, one that is listened to and truly respected.

"It depended on you, Madame Veil, and almost on you alone, that a personality should have been forged for this Parliament and that its voice should be heard in Europe and in the world.

"In this you have succeeded to the full. It is true that people come and go but institutions survive, but those institutions bear the imprint placed on them by certain people. I am sure that the European Parliament, the European Community as a whole, bears to its honour the imprint of the very great president that you have been in such difficult times."

January 1982 Session

On 19 January, European Parliament elected Dutch Socialist Piet Dankert as its new President. After four ballots, he emerged as the victor with 191 votes against the 175 votes for the Christian Democrat Group's candidate, Egon Klepsch. Simone Veil, President of the first elected Parliament, had not stood for office; she would have stood again only if Mr Klepsch had withdrawn in the course of the balloting.

Among the twelve new vice-presidents elected on 20 January are two women: Danielle de March (French Communist) and Lady Elles (British Conservative).

No report had been included in the agenda for this first session. In his inaugural address, Mr Dankert promised to do everything in his power to be the representative of all Members. He paid tribute to his predecessor, Madame Simone Veil, who had shown that this could be achieved at a difficult juncture in the history of the Community.

Louise Weiss, French Gaullist and Parliament's oldest member, opened Parliament with a speech lasting almost an hour. With all the verve for which she is famous, she declared herself in favour of an altruistic Europe capable of seeking the good of others. In such a Europe, the President of Parliament must be both "an ambassador and an apostle".

European Parliament must find its own solution to the contradictions and uncertainties by which it is beset: legal uncertainties arising from its statute (Parliament has no decision-making powers although it has no qualms about tackling political problems arising anywhere in the world); uncertainty as a result of a steadily deteriorating economic situation; doubts as to the continuance of certain EEC policies, especially the common agricultural policy. In this context Louise Weiss cited specific problems such as unemployment, which creates an attitude of dependence on social support that then becomes difficult to discard, and Japanese exports to the European market.

Another issue mentioned by Parliament's senior member arose from the full membership of a tenth country, Greece. We had perhaps been a little over-hasty in welcoming Greece to an enlarged Community at a time when Greek unity still lacked strength, she said, but she assured Greece, a country that is still impoverished, that it would receive help from its partners in pursuance of their fundamental principles of solidarity.

Describing the position of even poorer countries in the "immense Third World", Madame Weiss called for a clear-cut definition of an EEC policy which would be supportive but avoid waste and not cause us to fall short of our duty to the citizens of the Community.

Turning to political problems, Madame Weiss expressed her profound concern for Poland, now reduced to a state of hunger. She deplored the pacifist movements now growing up in a "confused and spontaneous way" only to be immediately exploited by certain parties and ideologies.

As for the immediate future of European Parliament, Madame Weiss would have liked to suggest its conversion into a constituent assembly with a common defence but saw this as a pipe-dream that could not become reality because of legislation and treaties; she declared that these had had their day. She pointed out with satisfaction the progress that had been made towards the "protection" of Europe, if not to a common defence. It would be unrealistic to talk about defence, but one might go so far as to speak of security.

In conclusion, she thought that, "having realised their domestic difficulties", Europeans would be able to build a united Europe, especially if they become aware of their spiritual identity as Europeans.

Alphonsine Phlix in Parliament

On becoming Foreign Minister in the Belgian Government after the recent national elections Leo Tindeman gave up his seat in European Parliament; this has now been taken by Alphonsine Phlix from the same party, the Dutch-speaking Social-Christians.

Formerly a member of the executive committee and later the national bureau of that party, Alphonsine Phlix is a senior official of the Union of European Christian Democrat Women and vice president of the Women's Union of the European People's Party.

Marijke van Hemeldonck - a new MEP

The Flemish Socialist Marcel Colla, who has been elected to Belgian Parliament, has been succeeded by 49-year-old Marijke van Hemeldonck. A unionist and a senior official of the Women's Committee of the Dutch-speaking branch of AVBB (Belgium's trade union council), Marijke van Hemeldonck is a member of the Belgian Council of the European Movement where she has taken an active share in the work of the women's committee and has acted as expert adviser to OECD, ILO and UNO.

Education

At a meeting chaired by Mario Pedini, the Parliamentary Committee on Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport adopted a report by Paola Gaiotti de Biase (Italy, EPP) on an EEC programme for education.

It is essential, the report declares, that there should be systematic coordination of Member States' education policies so that European unity will lead to greater mutual understanding among peoples, the circulation of ideas and a more dynamic European society. The resolution - to be debated in a forthcoming session of European Parliament - calls on the European Commission to formulate an overall cooperation strategy covering vocational training and guidance as well as lifelong training and education for adults.

Cooperation along these lines, it is suggested in the draft resolution, would not conflict with the direct authority of national Governments over education policy; such authority is necessary because of the diversity of cultures and the pluralism of educational systems. The Parliamentary Committee feels that treaties constitute a legal basis and are an appropriate political incentive for the strengthening of such cooperation. Even so, the Committee stresses that far too few funds have been allocated under the budget so far and that the Council of Education Ministers meet all too rarely.

Paola Gaiotti's report urges the Education Ministers to continue to recognize diplomas of all kinds and at all levels. It also contains a reminder of the commitment into which the Council entered in 1976 to introduce a European school record card; action on this should be speeded up.

The Committee considers that special attention should be devoted to experiments in multinational schooling, such as the system of European schools and the international baccalaureate. The resolution confirms the priorities set out in the "programme of education", which include language teaching, pupil exchange, school attendance for the children of migrant workers and guarantees of equal opportunities for girls.

The report drawn up by Paola Gaiotti emphasises the vital need in any effective education policy for close cooperation between school authorities, parents and teachers. The European Commission has been asked to draw up a report on parent and teacher participation in the management of schools in the Member States.

On Parliamentary Committees

On reaching the half-way point in the legislative session, European Parliament has been reshuffling its committees. Each of them has elected its own officers (a chairman and three vice-chairmen). The Committee of Enquiry on Women's Rights, for instance, has a new chairman, Maria Lisa Cinciari-Rodano (Italy, Communist), its vice-chairmen being Marie-Claude Vayssade (France, Socialist), Shelagh Roberts (ED, UK), Marlene Lenz (PPE, Germany) and Mechtild von Alemann (Lib, Germany).

Two of the 17 other Parliamentary Committees are chaired by women: Hanna Walz (PPE, Germany) for the Committee on Energy and Research, and Simone Veil (Lib, France), for the Legal Affairs Committee.

Women have been elected vice-chairmen to six other committees:

Environment:	Gloria Hooper (ED, UK) and Beate Weber (Soc, Germany);
Regional policy:	Yvette Füllet (Soc, France);
External economic relations:	Heidemarie Wiczorek-Zeul (Soc, Germany);
Budgetary control:	Bodil Boserup (Com, Denmark);
Transport:	Dame Shelagh Roberts (ED, UK);
Budgets:	Carla Barbarella (Com, Italy).

Old age in the Community

On behalf of the Committee on Social Affairs and Employment, Vera Squarcialupi has drawn up a well documented report on the status and problems of the elderly in the European Community.

It is a matter of concern that the population of Europe is getting older. In most EEC countries except the British Isles, the percentage of people over 65 has risen from 11% in 1960 to 14% in 1977, whereas the proportion of under-15s has fallen from 24% in 1950 to 22.6% in 1977. From the figures for Western Europe as a whole, it seems that old age pensioners will be equivalent to 46% of the working population by the year 2000.

"Being old in Europe is another way of saying that one is on the fringes of society, isolated and often poor as well, all this combined with natural physical decline and dependence on others." There is an urgent need for the problem of the ageing population to be tackled at the political level, the report notes.

The disintegration of family life, loneliness in large towns, housing, the difficulty of budgeting and psychological unpreparedness for retirement are some of the factors discussed by Vera Squarcialupi, although she also mentions positive schemes in various countries: the meals-on-wheels and laundry service in Great Britain, university for the elderly in France, a social housing programme in Denmark, telephone connection facilities in Belgium, etc.

Vera Squarcialupi's report places emphasis on older women. In every other age group an average of half the population is female, but women far outnumber men among the over-65s: 154 compared with 100. The life expectation of European women is closer to 75 - even higher in the Netherlands, Great Britain and France - whereas the average life expectancy of men is 68 to 70.

The problems faced by an elderly woman are far from minor: she labours under the two-fold handicap of her sex and her age. Old age is very much governed by the individual's previous experience: the years she has spent in the home, whether she has had a job as well, social and cultural isolation, the role of motherhood which is lost once the children leave home. For women, living longer often means more years of loneliness.

In France, there are 4.2 million women aged over 65, compared with 2.3 million men in the same age group; there are also 3 million widows, with 175,000 wives losing their husbands every year. A quarter of these women are under 55. According to the 1971 census in Italy, there were 2.9 million widows and only 700,000 widowers, a ratio of four to one.

Widowhood has many consequences for women, who lose not just their husbands but their main source of financial support and the role they have previously played as wives.

These are some of the aspects deplored by many widows' groups in European countries. In Great Britain, records Vera Squarcialupi, the National Association of Widows has been in existence since 1971 and has many local sections trying to cope with the moral crisis and financial position of widows, who number 3 million or so in that country. A "1980 Widows' Charter" urges an end to the taxation of widows' reversionary pensions.

In the draft resolution that has been adopted, the Social Affairs Committee recommends several measures, including:

- fixing a minimum retirement pension based on average earnings;
- introducing a flexible retirement system in the whole European Community;
- ending unequal treatment for men and women in matters of retirement;
- providing quotas of flats for the elderly;
- introducing professional training for those caring for older people.

When asked for its views, the Parliamentary Committee for Youth, Culture, Education, Information and Sport pointed out that policy on the old has become more enlightened over the past ten years and progress is still being made. The growing number of old people's associations has helped to combat social isolation. In France, for instance, there were 500 such groups in 1973; by 1980, there were 15,000.

A few more figures show how women are affected by the situation. In the working population, the average disparity between the lowest and highest incomes are 1:9 in the European Community; in the over-65 age group, the disparity is 1:20. At the same time, 80% of those receiving the minimum pensions are women.

Committee of enquiry on the position of women in Europe

At a meeting in Brussels on 28-29 January 1981, the Parliamentary Committee of Enquiry on the Position of Women in Europe discussed its views with Mr Pisani, the European Commissioner responsible for development cooperation.

In reply to questions on the problems of Third World women, Mr Pisani recalled that the question of women's role in development efforts had been discussed at the latest Council of Ministers meeting on development aid, at which it was decided that the European Commission would draw up a communication in collaboration with experts from Member States, to be supplemented by information gathered by Commission delegates in developing nations.

In his address Mr Pisani made two important points: the need to consider the effects on women's daily lives when examining development aid projects; and the importance of analysing the social system in schools. As in Europe, girls can be taught in school how to take a greater share of responsibility in their community.

Mr Pisani said that due allowance should be made for the position of women when drawing up an overall model of development, although the way of life we lead in an industrialized society should not necessarily be transferred to the Third World.

Replying to questions put to him by members of the Committee of Enquiry, Mr Pisani said that a working group had been set up within the Directorate General which he headed, with the task of keeping a watching brief on the "women's" aspects of development aid. He outlined the very positive impact that could be made by non-governmental agencies through their numerous "micro-projects" in the field, working in direct contact with the local community.

Winding up, Mr. Pisani declared that the problem of women in developing nations should be viewed in its general context, although this new dimension should be incorporated in all our work.

The Committee then expressed various views on the Community Action Programme on the promotion of Equal Opportunities for Women, including the lack of financial commitment, the absence of plans for training in new technologies, the very loose links between the programme and the "Maij-Weggen resolution" which had been passed by European Parliament in February 1981 and the omission of health from the programme.

In reply, the official representing the Commission explained the criteria for the choice of themes in the action programme. At that very time, several Parliamentary committees were being consulted on the Community action programme with a view to its discussion during a plenary session of European Parliament.

The members of the Committee then had a preliminary discussion on the drafting of reports on the 17 selected themes, and on the questions to be put to individual European Community institutions.

On the subject of "information for women" being dealt with by Gloria Hooper (UK, ED), several speakers mentioned the "information" chapter in the Maij-Weggen resolution. The Committee is to invite Mr Natali, the member of the European Commission with responsibility for information, to one of its next meetings.

The right to vote

In response to questions by Maria Luisa Cassanmagnago-Cerretti and Roberto Costanzo on the right of foreigners to vote in local elections, the European Commission has given the following information.

According to the information at the Commission's disposal, citizens residing in a Member State other than the State of which they are nationals are entitled to vote in local elections only in two countries: Denmark and Ireland.

A law was introduced in Denmark on 30 March 1981 giving the national of any other Member State the right to vote or stand as a candidate at local elections providing that he is 18 or over and has been living in Denmark for at least three years.

In Ireland, any person over 18 living in the country may vote in local elections, whatever his nationality (Electoral Act 1973) and may stand for election in the constituency in which he is domiciled (Electoral Act 1974).

In the United Kingdom, Irish citizens may vote and be candidates at local elections on the same conditions regarding age, residence and so on as British citizens.

In the Netherlands, the two Houses of Parliament passed a bill on its first reading that amended the Constitution and granted the right to vote in local elections to nationals of other States. The amendment cannot come into effect, however, until after the second reading of the bill.

The Commission has not been notified of any legislative reform along these lines in other Member States. The difficulties that arise are often constitutional: in France, Germany and Italy, for example, the Constitution restricts voting rights to the country's own citizens.

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United Nations

Leila Doss of Egypt has been appointed as the new head of the personnel department at the UN Headquarters in New York. She is the only woman to have reached such high office in the organization. Before her appointment, she was in charge of economic and social affairs in the Department of Information.

Useful address United Nations Organization
 United Nations Plaza
 New York, NY 10017

B E L G I U M

In the new Government

The Government formed by Wilfried Martens following last autumn's general elections has no woman of ministerial rank, although four of the ten secretaries of state are women.

These are: Cécile Goor-Eyben and Anne-Marie Neyts-Uyttebroeck, who share responsibility for the Brussels region, Paula D'Hondt-Van Opdenbosch, responsible for postal services and Jacqueline Mayence-Goosens whose special responsibility is development cooperation.

Abortion and the Law

Since 1969 no fewer than 19 bills designed to reform the law on abortion have been tabled in the Lower House, 15 in the Senate, but the issue has never been debated in Parliament.

As things now stand, the atmosphere for reform is far from serene because of the various court cases pending, but it would be intolerable to delay a parliamentary debate further. A new bill has been drawn up in an attempt to reach a solution: it would suspend the legislation that makes abortion a criminal act for two years. No proceedings would be taken if the pregnancy were terminated by a doctor with the agreement of the pregnant woman, who must be properly informed.

According to the all-party group of MPs who are sponsoring the bill, it would help pregnant women and the doctors in whom they confide their distress to avoid the "hazards and the anguish of a trial that stirs up public controversy and brings deep-rooted passions to the surface".

Belgium and the Third World

The authority responsible for development cooperation has drawn up a report on activities in 1981 and plans for 1982. One of the major objectives is a new approach to aid for women in the developing nations.

The concerns are many: greater involvement in the country's economy, more integration in rural development projects and progress with the kind of technology that will relieve women of the burdens of their traditional tasks. There are to be more research fellowships as well as training courses for women only.

Belgium has signed cooperation agreements with a total of 32 developing nations. Although allowance should be made for each country's cultural background, there should be no exception to the general principles adopted by Belgium in the light of the guidelines formulated at the Copenhagen conference.

Useful address Secrétariat d'Etat à la Coopération au Développement
2 Rue des Quatre-Bras
1000 Brussels

Useful address Administration générale de la Coopération au Développement
5 Place du Champs de Mars, boîte 57
1050 Brussels

Women migrants and refugees

The Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration was set up in Brussels in 1951 to improve the lot of both expatriate Europeans and people seeking refuge in Europe.

The Committee has held a high-level seminar on the problems of migrant and refugee women, such as social and economic integration, finding employment and regularizing their unofficial position. Its conclusions and recommendations have now been published by the journal "International Migrations" (produced in English, French and Spanish).

Useful address Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration
9 Rue Brederode
1000 Brussels

Women's work

The "Commission du Travail des Femmes" - committee for women's employment - has brought out its sixth annual report, describing what it has achieved in 1981 in more than 150 pages.

Useful address Commission du Travail des Femmes
Rue Belliard 51-53
1040 Brussels

D E N M A R K

National elections

The number of women candidates in the Danish national elections in December 1981 who successfully competed for the 179 seats in Parliament was 42. This makes the Folketing the Parliament with the highest proportion of women members in the European Community: 23%.

Even so, this is the same number and the same percentage as in the 1979 elections. It seems that the remarkable progress made in that election, when the proportion rose from 16% to 23%, has come to a temporary halt.

The votes have not yet been analysed in detail. A breakdown of voting patterns in 1979 revealed that women received more preference votes than men: 1,723 on an average, compared with 1,272 for male candidates.

In the Government

The government formed by Anker Jørgensen after the election numbers three women: Dorte Bennedsen, Education Minister, Lise Oestergaard, Minister for Culture, and Tove Lindpo-Larsen, who combines the posts of Minister for the Church and Minister for Greenland.

Women in official agencies

The Danish Premier has written to all ministries to urge more equality for men and women on committees, boards and commissions set up by the authorities.

Mr Jørgensen's cabinet has asked the ministries to bring the government circular on the subject issued back in 1976 to the attention of the bodies that deal with appointments to such agencies.

Useful address Ligestillingsrådet
Frederiksgade 21,1
1265 Copenhagen

Questioning the value of part-time working

"Part-time work represents progress for women - but has it really ushered in equality?" This is the question raised in a white paper recently brought out by the Ligestillingsrådet (Equal Rights Council).

As things now stand, it is women - especially married women - who work part-time, rarely men. Part-time employment has grown up with the arrival of women on the labour market. More than half a million women now have part-time jobs in Denmark, 43.6% of all women who work outside the home. It seems that it has become a solution for women who want to find a niche in the world of work and acquire a little financial independence.

This would all be ideal were it not for the threat to equal rights brought about by the rising trend. If part-time working were to take the place of full-time jobs for women, efforts to promote equal rights might be at risk. Women are not equal if they merely have access to the labour market; they must be able to work on the same terms as men. The different conditions that govern the finding of part-time jobs in specifically male or female occupations, for example, are factors that lead to sex segregation on the labour market.

A few facts and figures are revealing: 80% of women working part-time are employed in no more than 20 occupations. These occupations may be divided into five groups: the social sector, health, education, services, clerical work and the retail trade. In addition, there is domestic service or free-lance work.

A breakdown of the two main categories of part-time workers is of interest: under one heading come the people who have had theoretical and practical training, while people with no specific vocational skills come under the other heading. The former group consists of people who opt for full-time jobs, whereas the latter consists of those who are offered part-time employment.

In many instances part-time employment seems to be equated with routine jobs, even when those who do them have received more comprehensive training. Such routine jobs entail less responsibility, fewer opportunities for promotion and less chance of improving skills.

There is another problem: women still bear the main responsibility for their home and children and can take on paid employment only if their domestic duties permit. Whether or not women can take up a career is affected, for instance, by the long waiting lists for day care units, inadequate maternity leave and the problems of looking after children when they are ill.

In conclusion, the Equal Rights Council notes that the general reduction in the working week will help to bring about equality between men and women in the sharing of responsibility at work and in the home.

Useful address Ligestillingsrådet
 Frederiksgade, 21,1
 1265 Copenhagen

The Equal Rights Council

Helle Degn, a member of the Folketing (Danish Parliament), has been appointed chairman of the Equal Rights Council, the Ligestillingsrådet, taking over from Karen Dahlerup who has chaired this advisory body since it came into being in 1975.

Like Karen Dahlerup, Helle Degn is a member of the National Danish Women's Council, Danske Kvinders Nationalråd. She has made firm international friendships since she was a member of the official Danish delegation to the UN conferences on women in Mexico and Copenhagen.

The Ligestillingsrådet has a chairman appointed by the Premier and seven members, three of whom are from the Danske Kvinders Nationalråd. The four remaining members are nominated by the federation of women's associations in Greenland, the Danish trade union federation, the Danish employers' federation and the organization of civil servants and white-collar workers.

Useful address Ligestillingsrådet
 Frederiksgade 21,1
 1265 Copenhagen

Equality of treatment for men and women

In reply to a written question from Mechtild von Alemann, MEP, Commissioner Ivor Richard listed the infringement proceedings being taken by the Commission against Member States for failing to comply with the EEC directive on equal treatment for men and women with regard to access to employment, training and advancement at work.

The European Commission has served notice on **Denmark** on the grounds that Danish law restricts the theoretical scope of equal treatment to those employed in the same workplace. It has also sent reasoned opinions to:

Belgium, which has failed to amend its legislation by bringing in measures to implement equality of access to vocational guidance and training;

France, because the contract of employment for civil servants makes exceptions that infringe the directive;

Ireland, because the law implementing the directive makes departures that are not in the list of authorized exceptions;

Italy, whose law does not apply the principle of equal treatment to all types of working conditions, with adoption leave not being the same for the father and mother;

Great Britain, because the law enforcing the directive does not nullify any agreements between management and unions that conflict with the principle of equal treatment and also makes unauthorized exceptions.

F R A N C E

The National Assembly

In response to pressure from several women Deputies, a "study group against sexism and for women's freedoms" has been set up in the National Assembly. Gisèle Halimi has been appointed to chair the group, whose aim is to "review the forms of discrimination that affect women in particular and to seek the legal and cultural means of ending that discrimination".

Women and the civil service

The Senate has passed an amendment to the general contract of employment for civil servants that will bring French law in line with the European Community directive on equality for men and women in access to employment, training and vocational advancement.

Now that the amendment has been passed, the 16 civil service staffs will still be empowered to recruit men and women separately in certain cases, although for a transitional period only. Any authorised departures will be for no more than two or three years, "the time it takes to make certain adjustments and the time for attitudes to change as well" in the words of Yvette Roudy, Minister for Women's Rights.

The midwife's profession

The French Council of Ministers has passed a bill amending the Public Health Code as it relates to the profession of midwife. According to the EEC directive, men should now have the opportunity of working for State registration as midwives and of practising the profession.

Maternity allowance for independent workers

Nicole Questiaux, Minister for National Solidarity, has announced that she intends to introduce a maternity allowance for self-employed women workers and the wives of the self-employed.

The French Communist Party

The 24th congress of the French Communist Party has elected its executive bodies. On the central committee, 30 of the 145 members are women. The political bureau has four women among its 22 members: Mireille Bertrand, Francette Lazard, Gisèle Moreau and Madeleine Vincent. Gisèle Moreau is also in the six-member secretariat.

Useful address Parti Communiste Français
Place du Colonel Fabien 2
Paris

Providing information on women's rights

By the end of 1982, women should have at least one information centre in every geographical department of France. With this in mind, Yvette Roudy has launched new "women's rights information centres" - to be known as CIDF for short - in addition to the "women's information centres" that have already come into being.

There has been close cooperation with women's groups in establishing women's rights information centres; priority has been given to regions and large towns that still have no information facilities specifically for women.

These centres have a three-fold role. First of all, they must offer women free and useful information on their rights in matters that affect their everyday lives: training, employment, health, contraception, social matters, education, legal questions, etc. Next, they must guide women to the appropriate associations and public bodies and not try to do their work for them. Finally, they should highlight women's needs and urge the associations and public bodies to take them into due account; where necessary, they should stimulate the creation of local facilities and enlighten regional women delegates and the Ministry for Women's Rights on grass roots problems.

The fifty or so centres that will have been set up by the end of 1982 will eventually become focal points for obtaining information at local level as well as the optimum channel of communication between women and the bodies that can help them to uphold their rights.

Useful address Ministère des Droits de la Femme
 25 Avenue Charles Floquet
 75700 Paris

French television

"Quotidiennement vôtre" - "yours daily" - is a new women's programme produced by Eliane Victor on television channel TF 1. Every evening at 6.45, the five-minute spot will inform and advise women viewers.

Another programme on France's second TV channel is put on by Louis Bériot at the odd time of 4.40 p.m. During the hour-long programme, films made by special interest associations will show what they are doing. Culture, youth, environmental conservation and helping the Third World. Any association has a right to say its piece, and about a thousand groups have already been contacted. In Italy, a similar programme has been put to admirable use by women's organizations to popularize their ideas and tell people what they do.

Who's Who

This invaluable little book gives the names and biographical details of the 20,000 people who count most in France. In the 1981 edition, only 3% of the entries were on women. In the edition due to come out at the end of the 1982, only 45 new women's names will appear.

G E R M A N Y

An anti-discrimination law?

Should there be a specific law against discrimination? This was the central issue in a public hearing arranged by the Federal Ministry for the Interior and the Federal Ministry for Social Affairs, the Family and Health.

Both the experts and representatives of women's bodies stressed the importance and urgency of change. Government help was demanded in the fight against inequality in the vocational training of women, information, employment, advertising and sexual violence.

Society should be asked to change both its attitude and its mentality. It is in its cultural life that women's image should be altered - ranging from school textbooks to advertisements - to ensure that women's rights are respected on a par with men's.

Although those attending the hearing were unanimous on this overall view, there was not such general agreement as to the value of anti-discrimination legislation. Women on the Christian Democrat side preferred to put their trust in changing attitudes rather than the law. On the union side, women militants felt they could achieve more through direct negotiations between unions and employers. The Liberal women preferred to supplement the law by a committee whose terms of reference would be both to monitor and to arbitrate - a solution that did not meet the approval of the Social Democrats.

The Federal Government must now reach a decision which will both allay the concerns of women and win broad-based support so that the hoped-for change can become reality.

In the meanwhile, there is growing criticism of the law to counter discrimination against women in the world of work designed to implement the EEC directive. According to some observers, the law is being flouted because it has no teeth. Its effects are to be reviewed after a trial period ending on 31 December 1982.

Useful address Bundesinnenministerium
 53 Bonn 1

Bundesministerium für Jugend, Familie und Gesundheit
53 Bonn 1

Paid parental leave

In Lower Saxony, the Regional Ministry for Social Affairs has been experimenting: when a baby is born, the father or mother will be paid an allowance if he or she stays at home to care for the child.

The experiment is to be reviewed at a seminar arranged jointly by the Regional Ministry for Social Affairs and the University of Hanover. According to those promoting the venture, paid parental leave encourages parents to behave as "partners in their family and working lives".

Useful address Niedersächsischer Sozialministerium
 Pressestelle
 4000 Hanover

Going back to work

In Rhineland-Palatinate, the Regional Ministry for Social Affairs is offering a subsidy of DM.3,000 to firms hiring women who meet specified conditions. The aim is to help mothers who have brought up a family to return to work by training them specifically to cope with work outside the home.

Once women have been offered a job, they also have supplementary training to help them to face up to the new situation whatever the circumstances. It seems that the problem facing women is not just to find a job and obtain adequate training: much more is demanded of them on returning to work. They have to adapt to new working hours and relations with colleagues, fit in with the hierarchy at work and cope with the social life of a company, contact with unions, etc.

Useful address Ministerium für Soziales, Gesundheit und Umwelt
 Pressestelle
 65 Mainz

Electoral reform

Under the Federal electoral system, lists of candidates are drawn up by the political parties and then presented to the voters, who then merely choose between the various political groups, not individual candidates.

In Bavaria and Bad-Württemberg, however, votes can be "spread" - in other words, a number of candidates can be chosen from different party lists. Annemarie Renger, a member of the German Social Democrat Party and vice president of the Bundestag (the Federal Parliament) would like this arrangement to be extended to all elections in the Federal Republic.

She argues that a reform of the electoral code along these lines is the only way of giving women candidates a real chance; the parties are accused of putting women very low on their lists of candidates.

Annemarie Renger's proposal embodies an idea that has already been aired by the Arbeitsgemeinschaft sozialdemokratischer Frauen (Social Democrat women's working group) and by the Deutscher Frauenring (German women's association).

Useful address Annemarie Renger
 Bundestag, Bundeshaus
 53 Bonn 1

The value of domestic work

A father whose wife was killed in a car accident has won compensation of DM.4,067.49 a month until his three children come of age. The court in Kaiserslautern based this figure on the wage that he would have to pay a housekeeper working a 57.1 hour week.

Useful address Landgericht Kaiserslautern
 Pressestelle
 675 Kaiserslautern

The rights of mother and child

When an unmarried mother has a child in Germany, there is a special service to take responsibility for the child, seek out the father and safeguard its rights.

In a recent case, an unmarried mother refused to state the name of her child's father and the official service refused to give up its right of tutelage to the mother. It argued that the mother was not defending her child's rights properly, especially in view of the fact that an illegitimate child nonetheless has a claim over its father's estate.

Although the young woman lodged a statement of the father's name with a notary, the supreme constitutional court upheld the decision reached by the supervisory body.

Useful address Bundesverfassungsgericht
 Pressestelle
 7500 Karlsruhe

Discrimination by private insurance schemes

Women who contribute to a private insurance scheme are being asked to pay a higher premium than men in the same age group on the grounds that they might have a child, which is seen as a "risk".

Although the "risk" of having a child is common to both father and mother and insurance companies define themselves as "risk communities", this discrimination persists. Various women's groups are campaigning against the injustice.

G R E E C E

The Civil Code: the debate rages on

As promised during the election campaign, Mr Alexandris, now the Minister of Justice, has announced his intention of reforming the Civil Code and setting up an advisory committee with this in mind.

In reply to a question raised by Maria Damanaki (Communist), Mr Alexandris said that the committee would consist of 13 members, the majority being women who would represent women's organizations.

The reforms being considered by the Government include the introduction of civil marriage, divorce by mutual consent or on specific grounds, and an end to adultery being a criminal offence in the eyes of the law. At present the Government is exchanging views on the issues with all the parties concerned, including the Church.

Greece and European Parliament

At a meeting arranged by European Parliament's information bureau in Athens, women's organizations and the press were briefed on the workings of European Parliament and the status of women in Europe. Ms T. Pantazi, MEP and an alternate member of the Committee of Enquiry on the position of women in Europe, called on the groups to make their views known and furnish specific information on the lot of women in Greece.

The representatives of the women's organizations expressed their interest in the Committee's work; they wanted to help but were hampered by the lack of facts and figures and sound research on the problems being tackled by the Committee.

I R E L A N D

"Equal value"

Equality is a difficult concept to define. The Employment Equality Agency has published a report that illustrates just how difficult.

In an American-owned factory, Medeering Ltd., men and women were traditionally assigned different tasks. The women made an equal pay claim based on the "equal value" clause and won a favourable recommendation from the equality officer. The company appealed against the decision in the Labour Court and subsequently negotiated a compromise settlement with the workers. It then withdrew its appeal and the court ruled that the appeal be struck out.

There the matter might have rested had the Agency not been concerned enough about the general implications for equal pay legislation to press on, undertaking a formal job evaluation in the company on its own behalf. In the end, it failed to find grounds for upholding an equal pay claim. The report of the formal investigation, describing the background and the job evaluation procedure which followed, is now available.

The case, which dragged on for four years, attracted some criticism - not least from the employers' newspaper "Bulletin", which complained of the waste of funds of the "hard-pressed taxpayer". Indeed, the Federated Union of Employers threatened to withdraw its members from the Agency.

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

Funds for battered wives

The Irish Minister for Health, Eileen Desmond, has pledged Government help for projects to provide accommodation for battered wives and their children in Dublin, Cork and Limerick. Meanwhile, the junior minister at the Department of Social Welfare, Mary Flaherty, has gone a step further with a promise to put up the money for a house in Dublin to accommodate women and children made homeless when the Women's Aid headquarters at Harcourt Terrace, Dublin, went on fire last year. Women's Aid have suggested a number of likely locations which the regional health authority is considering.

Useful address Women's Aid
 P.O. Box 791
 Dublin 2

Wages for housewives: lukewarm response

The Irish Government's "personal tax credit transfer", as the wages-for-housewives scheme is officially known, has received a lukewarm response from Irish women entitled to claim: only 37,000 out of an estimated total of 350,000 eligible women have asked to be included in the scheme, due to start in April. In late 1981, advertisements appeared in newspapers inviting the wives of pay-as-you-earn taxpayers to apply, quoting their husband's tax number. In return they get a £9.60 weekly payment. Slightly more is deducted from their husband's earnings to pay for the scheme.

Widows, single mothers and the wives of self-employed or unemployed men cannot claim, even though the scheme has been devised in recognition of the work performed by women in the home.

Useful address The Revenue Commissioners
 Dublin Castle
 Dublin 2

More married women at work

According to Sylvia Meehand, chairwoman of the Employment Equality Agency, the number of married women under 45 at work has trebled in the past ten years. The latest figures are notable since Ireland has had the lowest married women's work participation rate in the European Communities.

In her introduction to the current review of EEA activities, Sylvia Meehand points to another fact unlikely to enhance working mothers' chances: "Right through all paid employment, work arrangements have been designed to suit adult males who are not allowed to take time off to integrate their family and vocational responsibilities".

Woman leads Upper House for the first time

The Upper House in the Irish Parliament, the Senate, has had a new leader since October 1981. She is Senator Gemma Hussey of the Fine Gael Party, the first woman leader of the Government in the Senate.

Senator Hussey was Fine Gael's spokesperson on women's affairs when in opposition. At present she is agitating for a ministry for women's affairs to be appointed in Ireland on the same lines as in France.

I T A L Y

In Parliament and in the Government

Camilla Ravera, aged 92, has been appointed life senator by Sandro Pertini, the Italian President. She is the first Communist and the first woman to be honoured in this way; under the Italian Constitution, there may be only five life senators at any one time.

Margherita Boniver (Socialist) is the vice president of the Senate Commission on Foreign Affairs.

Tina Anselmi (Christian Democrat) has been appointed to chair the parliamentary committee of enquiry which it is hoped will shed light on the P2 masonic lodge scandal.

Franca Falcucci (Christian Democrat) is the under-secretary of state in the Education Ministry, and **Maria Magnani Noya** (Socialist) has the same rank in the Health Ministry.

The truth about Southern Italy

"Women and the South of Italy" was the theme of the national convention of the regional advisory bodies for women's affairs - "Consulte femminili" - held in Palermo under the auspices of the regional body for Sicily. Delegates from the advisory agencies as far apart as Sardinia and Piedmont, Calabria and Tuscany, contributed towards the analysis of the situation and joined in the debate attended by members of the political parties and the unions.

Several of the women who spoke argued that the problem of women's employment in Southern Italy should be viewed and tackled in the European context, with due regard for the guidance provided by European Parliament and the specific resources made available by the European Community for promoting women's employment.

The convention ended with resolutions calling for the modernization of social services so that women in Southern Italy could become truly emancipated, broader representation for women on decision-making bodies and more decisive legislative action to end persisting forms of discrimination.

INTERNATIONAL "WOMAN OF THE YEAR" AWARD

The International Saint-Vincent Award for "the Woman of the Year" has gone to the Chinese-American scientist, Chien Shung Wu, an eminent physicist, elected president of the American Physical Society in 1975.

Mrs Chien Shung Wu's name is linked with the discovery in 1956 of "non-conservation of parity". Two of her young assistants in theoretical physics won the Nobel Prize for physics in 1957.

She has broadened her research from applied physics to the medical field in which, together with her team, she has perfected the use of nuclear physics for the treatment of sickle cell anaemia.

Her candidacy for the international award was put forward by the Italian Soroptimists. On receiving the prize, she declared that "women can do a great deal in the field of scientific research. I am more and more convinced that at this time science and technology are essential in solving the problems of resources, the environment and world peace".

Useful address Premio Internazionale S. Vincent
 "La Donna dell'Anno"
 Via Felice Cavallotti 36
 00152 Rome

Natural children

The Italian Council of Ministers has tabled a bill in the Chamber of Deputies establishing legal parity for natural and legitimate children, since the law-makers feel that Italian law should be brought in line with the European Convention adopted in Strasbourg in 1975.

Many of the objectives stated by that Convention have already been embodied in the reform of the Family Code. The next step is to lay down two principles: that giving birth to the child is all that is needed to create the affiliation between the child and his mother and no additional formalities need be gone through after the birth; and that biological evidence will be admissible when attempting to establish paternity.

Officer in the Navy

The administrative court of Tuscany has accepted an argument put forward by a young woman from Trieste, Diadora Bussani, who wanted to become a naval officer. She had applied for competitive entry to the Livorno Naval Academy, which had turned her down. Diadora was not discouraged: she took her case to court, which has now ruled that women must not be prevented from freely choosing any career they wish.

Women dockers

Can women load and unload ships? The question was raised by Tatiana Ceccerini and Tatiana Magagnini who were among the 200 candidates obtaining the highest marks (29 and 27 out of 30 respectively) in a competitive examination for jobs as dockers (40 of the 2,543 applicants were women).

Both are dockers' daughters, one having a diploma in foreign languages and the other being a bookkeeper. They see no reason why they should not work alongside men, and the harbourmaster's office in the port of Livorno agrees with them, confirming that they passed the examination with flying colours. Some of the port workers, however, are protesting, saying that women are not tough enough to cope with heavy unloading jobs.

Two years ago the same situation arose when dockers at La Spezia objected to three women who were qualified crane-operators. Severina Davoli, Elda Marchi and Pinuccia Scalas were accepted in the end, but at one time it seemed as though a general strike would be called on the issue.

L U X E M B O U R G

Maintaining law and order

Following three years' training, a group of about 20 women will be starting on active duty with the Luxembourg police force on 1 April.

The policewomen will be doing exactly the same work as their male counterparts and will be issued with the same equipment and weapons. The only difference in their uniform will be that the women will wear skirts for day-time duties; on night shifts, they will wear trousers like the men.

Useful address Ministère de la Fonction Publique
 Boulevard Roosevelt
 Luxembourg

Part-time working in the Civil Service

Government and local authorities have been the only employers up to now to have encouraged part-time working on a wide scale - a system which is particularly convenient for mothers. The Government has allowed civil servants with children aged under 12 to work half-time, a practice that is uncommon in the private sector.

It now seems that the Luxembourg Government intends to restrict the facility to civil servants with children of 3 or under. Pressure groups are concerned and have asked for clarification as to the reasons for the plan.

N E T H E R L A N D S

Family allowances

Since 1 January, mothers have been entitled to have family allowances paid to them direct. Before then, allowances were paid to the father on the grounds that he was responsible for the maintenance of his child. The principle was applied even when the parents were separated, inevitably leading to trouble when the father wished to be obstructive.

It is now the rule that family allowances will be paid out to whichever parent applies for them and in fact cares for the child. Usually this is the mother, but the decision must be reached by the parents themselves.

Useful address Ministerie van Sociale Zaken
 Zeestraat 73
 The Hague

Pornography

Job de Ruiter, the Christian Democrat Minister of Justice, would like to bring the law on pornography (dating back to 1911) in line with our times. It would, he says, be unrealistic just to prohibit the sale of pornographic items, although steps should be taken to protect young people. The situation in the Netherlands is equivocal: officially everything is banned, but unofficially everything is tolerated. Most of the political parties consulted on the plan by the Minister of Justice agree with him that adults should be allowed to exercise their own discretion in what they see, read and buy, although young people should not be exposed.

Some of the women's groups have raised their voices forcefully in the debate. Through letters, protests and discussions, they have been objecting to the law being made more flexible. The women in question are not prudes, but they feel that the subject should not be disposed of without due thought. In-depth investigations should be made of the effects of pornography.

To those in favour of easing the law who argue that no research exists demonstrating any harmful effects of pornography, the women's groups say that the reasoning is illogical: as in the case of a new drug coming onto the market, there must be evidence that pornography has no pernicious effect. Is very possible, they claim, that pornography leads to male aggressiveness and physical and sexual violence against women. When pornography relates to sadism and masochism, human liberty and discretion no longer exist. The text and pictures of pornographic productions often portray children as the victims and it is not unusual for the models in the pornography industry to be used against their will.

The pressure groups point out that tolerance of pornography conflicts with the national policy of equality for men and women, one vital aspect of which is a change in attitudes and an end to stereotyped images.

Useful address Vrouwen tegen Porno
 Hooigracht 15
 Leiden

Work and sickness

"Landelijke Stichting Ombudsvrouw" is a foundation in the Netherlands which is concerned with the problems of working women. It has brought out a book on the grievances of women who are unable to work because of illness. In the light of the complaints compiled by the Foundation, women are at a legal disadvantage by comparison with men. A married woman who works in her husband's firm, for instance, is not protected by law in this respect.

The Foundation concludes that women who become ill and can no longer work are poorly informed as to their rights, are treated with only minimal courtesy by doctors and institutions, and are at serious risk of not receiving the allowances to which they are entitled, or at best of having far lower benefits. Women doing a part-time job are, it seems, even worse off.

Useful address Landelijke Stichting Ombudsvrouw
 Postbus 18520
 The Hague

UNITED KINGDOM

Shadow Minister for Women's Rights

Joan Lestor, Labour MP for Eton and Slough since 1966, has been appointed by Labour Leader Michael Foot as Opposition spokeswoman for women's rights and welfare, a new development in British political life.

"The position will give me the opportunity to scrutinize the departments where women's rights are affected," she wrote in The Times. "For example, the Treasury on taxation; the Department of Education and Science on general educational assumptions and opportunities and nursery schools; the Department of Health and Social Security on many aspects of women's rights - but in particular, those in the field of social security and child care."

She is particularly keen that more women should enter Parliament and take top positions in the professions, commerce and industry. Too often they are deterred for fear that their families will suffer . . . a fear which society tends to play upon. "Women need to have their confidence boosted, not deflated," she says. "They need to be told what they can achieve, not what are the obstacles to achievement or what others say they believe to be the obstacles."

Equal Rights and the Law

Mrs Valerie Turner, a 40-year old secretary from Sheffield, has won a case against the Prudential, the largest insurance company in Britain. Backed by the Equal Opportunities Commission, she argued against the Prudential's Personal Protection Policy which gave £6 a week benefit for each £1,000 of income insured for women, but £10 for men for the same premium.

The Prudential agreed to pay damages and amend its scheme to offer all employees the men's rate, benefiting about 1,000 women policy holders. Even so, the EOC believes that Mrs Turner's case is only a partial victory for women. It would like to challenge in the courts the whole issue of the discriminatory insurance which still operates to the disadvantage of women: higher premiums are demanded "because women seem to spend more time away from their work".

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

Equalizing the Pension Age

Under Britain's national insurance scheme, women normally retire at 60 and men at 65. Since it was set up in 1975 the Equal Opportunities Commission has received many complaints about this inequality and has now submitted evidence to the House of Commons Select Committee on Social Services urging a flexible retirement scheme built around a common age.

While the Commission has found little support for raising women's retiring age from 60, there is a good deal of support for bringing down the men's. It believes that arguments against this move on grounds of costs are greatly exaggerated, particularly as today more and more men are taking early retirement.

It has asked the Select Committee to look at the question of equalization in the light of a prospective Community directive on occupational pension schemes and to ask the Government to give the matter top priority.

Behind closed doors

"Behind Closed Doors" is the title of a booklet in which the Equal Opportunities Commission has sought to highlight the difficult problem of disabled women.

Under the British social security system, men and single women can obtain an Invalid Care Allowance (ICA) towards the cost of caring for a relative at home, but a married woman does not qualify. If she is disabled herself she may be eligible for the Housewives' Non-Contributory Invalid Pension (HNCIP) but first she has to undergo a rigorous and humiliating test to see if she is capable of doing any housework.

The EOC ran advertisements in four of Britain's largest circulation women's magazines asking readers to send in reports of their own experience in this field and nearly 10,000 women replied. Their harrowing stories show only too clearly that although the State is saved millions of pounds because of married women's devoted care they can expect no financial relief in their own right even when they have had to give up their jobs, while women who can barely work are being refused the HNCIP.

The EOC hopes that the booklet will galvanize the Government into action by November 1984, when the EEC directive on equal treatment in social security matters comes into force. While other benefits have been brought into line, the ICA and HNCIP have been excluded.

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

THE COURT OF JUSTICE OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

The Court of Justice has upheld a case brought by Mrs Garland and found against British Railways: men and women must be given the same perks.

British Rail allows special fares for the families of its former male employees, but not those of female employees. BR's argument in essence was that it was an additional benefit and that it was under no legal obligation to give it. Even so, said the judges, this is discrimination.

In its judgement, the Court recalled the principle laid down in the famous Defrenne case (brought by a Belgian air hostess who emerged victorious from a lengthy case against Sabena): any individual who feels that he or she has been the victim of discrimination may go before a national court and directly invoke the non-discrimination rule in article 119 of the Treaty of Rome.

Retirement Age

The Court of Justice in Luxembourg has also reached a decision on the discriminatory nature of the different retirement ages for men and women; this, it says, is not in itself a form of discrimination prohibited by the Treaty setting up the European Economic Community.

What brought this to a head was a special retirement scheme introduced by British Railways in sectors of its activities that were being radically overhauled. Employees were offered an option of early retirement - five years before the normal age laid down by British law, i.e. 65 for men and 60 for women.

When Mr Arthur Burton asked to be retired at the age of 58, BR refused on the grounds that he had not yet reached the minimum age. He felt this was discriminatory, since a woman of the same age could have benefited from the early retirement arrangement. He decided to take action against his employers but, before reaching a decision, the court to which he made the claim put the following question to the Court of Justice of the European Communities: is it discriminatory to oblige a man to wait until the age of 60 before he applies for early retirement whereas a woman qualified at the age of 55, and does this conflict with Community legislation?

The European judges replied that the directive of 9 February 1976 does indeed require equal treatment for men and women. Nevertheless, the fact that the benefit of early retirement can be obtained only in the five years preceding the official retirement age, and the fact that this age differs for men and women, cannot be seen as a form of discrimination banned by the 1976 directive.

In reaching this decision, the Court explained in its judgement, it bore in mind another Community directive (19798) on equal treatment in matters of social security which says that Member States are entitled to determine the age of retirement themselves.

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

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

Women's Page Journalists

The International Association of Women's and Home Page Journalists will be holding its tenth congress in Hungary from 15 to 19 May 1982, taking as its theme "the press and changing ways of life". The Association's members are putting this question to themselves: "we, as women's and home page journalists, certainly have a share in the changes affecting the family, society and environment. What role does the press play in these changes? How does it bring them about and how does it help the people living through them?".

Useful address A.I.J.P.F.
 c/o I.P.C., Boulevard Charlemagne 1, Boîte 54
 1040 Brussels

Women artists

The "Union Féminine Artistique et Culturelle - Salons Internationaux" (UFACSI) is an international union of women artists. It has decided to promote its members' work by organizing events off its own bat.

In January, for instance, an international exhibition of contemporary art was held in Budel in the Netherlands, followed by a similar event in Neerpelt (Belgium) in February. On each occasion, the exhibition was complemented by a chamber music concert and a poetry reading, the performers being drawn from the Union's membership.

Useful address U.F.A.C.S.I.
 c/o Hélène Deguel
 3-84 Avenue G. De Greef, Boîte 203
 1090 Brussels

The Travel Trade

At a general assembly, the "Fédération Universelle des Associations d'Agences de Voyage" (travel agents' federation) has decided that "women in the travel trade, represented by the women who work in the offices of travel agents and tour operators, must be on an equal footing with their male colleagues both in career opportunities and in pay".

Useful address F.U.A.A.V.
 89-93 Rue Froissart
 1040 Brussels

The European Movement and Peace

Margherita Barnabei, the chairman of the European Movement's International Women's Committee, has attended a meeting of the Movement's Federal Council at which the stress was on European security and peace.

After the meeting, she announced that the international women's commission would be embarking upon a programme of activities devoted to peace and security in Europe. The world of women should be persuaded that talking about peace is not enough; we must also be prepared to fight for European unity, a vital factor in achieving world equilibrium.

Useful address Margherita Barnabei
 Movimento Europeo - Viale Guido Bacelli 10
 00153 Rome

How do American Women manage?

Daniela Colombo, Elaine Donnelly, Heide Hering, Jutta Kneissel, Patricia O'Donovan, Edmee Ollagnier and Birgitta Thellman-Gustavson will be spending 6-8 weeks in the United States to take a personal look at the way American women combat sex discrimination in the world of work.

The seven young women, who are concerned with equality of rights for men and women in their everyday work, have been awarded fellowships by the "German Marshall Fund of the United States".

Useful address The German Marshall Fund - Christina Graf
 11 Dupont Circle, N.W.
 Washington D.C. 20036

Women in local office

"Amicale Internationale des Elues Municipales et des Collectivités Locales" - AIEM for short - is an international association of women holders of elected office in local authorities founded in 1957 by Irène de Lipkowski and Marcelle Devaud, both mayors of their towns. Its aim is to bring such women together and create close ties that will help them to perform their duties better.

In Irène de Lipkowski's words, "the guiding thought in setting up this group was essentially to enable elected women officials to overcome isolation and lack of contact and come to know each other without regard for ideological differences or political barriers, combining in a realistic spirit to tackle the issues in a way that will improve the life of our towns".

AIEM is a member of the International Alliance of Women and the International Women's Associations Liaison Committee.

Useful address Amicale Internationale des Elues Municipales
 Secretary General: Germaine Le Savouroux
 10 Rue J. Pène
 92700 Colombes

B E L G I U M

A fresh start

For six years now an association called "Repartir" - "making a fresh start" - has been helping women to find their feet in the world of work. In the light of the experience it has acquired, it feels that women's preparation for work should be divided into two stages: first of all their self-confidence must be restored, and only then should they take the plunge and start learning practical subjects.

In view of the number and high calibre of organizations concerned with helping women return to work, it might be desirable for contact to be arranged between the countries in the European Community. It is surprising how similar are the views of most of these bodies on optimum methods and teaching techniques.

Useful address Repartir
 Avenue Albert 242
 1180 Brussels

Job advertisements: a black book

The women's committee of ABVV - the Dutch-speaking section of Belgium's general trades union council - has brought out a publication entitled "Zwartboek - Wat schort eraan?" (black book - where are things going wrong?), on the way in which the law against sexism in job advertisements is being implemented.

Employers in the public sector itself are not setting a good example: 13 out of 25 advertisements fail to comply with the law. Even in public employment agencies, distinctions are still being made between men and women.

The book quotes specific examples, but goes much further than compiling small ads. It analyses in detail the distribution of men and women in different sectors of working life and takes a close look at the obstacles placed in the way of hiring women in everyday life.

The union federation has made a forceful plea for positive discrimination and flexible working hours.

Useful address Vrouwenkommissie ABVV
 Hoogstraat 42
 1000 Brussels

Feminist publishing

The "Groupe de Recherche et d'Information Féministe" (GRIF) - a feminist research and information group - has already set up a "women's university" in Brussels; it is now launching into book publishing in association with the Paris publishers, Editions de Minuit.

The high quality of the articles appearing in GRIF's "Cahiers" has already been mentioned in "Women of Europe". The periodical dossiers came to an end not because of lack of money but because the group's leaders realised they needed a "pause for thought".

On the incentive of publishing house's founder and director, Jérôme Lindon, Editions de Minuit has already been publishing a series of books on women's issues, the "Collection Femmes", under the guidance of Luce Irigaray. GRIF feels that Editions de Minuit has for many years enjoyed a broad-based readership and has won an outstanding reputation for itself.

The first books to come out in the Editions de Minuit/GRIF series are "Avant-Garde" in which the author, Marieluise Fleisser, recounts her memories of Brecht and Alice Toklas's cookery book - in fact a biography of Gertrude Stein. Françoise Collin, director of GRIF, says of these two books that "they have been written by women for whom the act of writing is a conquest of life and their relationship with the creative genius in whose vicinity they have lived."

Useful address GRIF
 Place Quételet 1
 1030 Brussels

Lonely Sundays

What does one do on Sunday when one is alone, without friends or children? Loneliness is something with which women are all too familiar. To break this invisible chain "Sunday lunches" are being arranged, usually in mid-month. For about £3 a head, women meet for an aperitif, a meal and then perhaps a talk or a walk.

Useful address Accueil et Prévoyance
 58 Rue de la Prévoyance
 1000 Brussels

Belgian Femina Film Award

The Belgian "Prix Femina du Cinéma" was founded in 1953 by Anne-Marie Kritchovski-Haegeman, the wife of a feature film producer and director. The aim was to "encourage film-makers to create works of value that might raise the intellectual and moral values of the people, entertain them and contribute towards bringing peoples closer together".

The jury consists of women who "in theory have no link with film reviewing but who have far-seeing ideas and the same general viewpoint based on the beauty of life and nobility of feeling".

In view of the measure of success it has achieved, Prix Femina now gives three awards: the City of Brussels prize, the jury's special prize and the Anne-Marie Haegeman "gold laurel crown" for film-making.

Useful address Prix Fémina Belge du Cinéma
 133 Rue de la Cambre
 1150 Brussels

Voluntary workers' association

Large posters have appeared in Belgium whose wording sums up clearly the views of the "Association pour le Volontariat" - the association for voluntary work. It could be translated roughly as:

IF YOU FEEL THAT
 SOMETHING SHOULD BE DONE
 TO HELP NEGLECTED CHILDREN
 TO IMPROVE LIFE IN OUR TOWNS
TO BRIGHTEN THE LIVES OF THE ELDERLY
 TO INTEGRATE THE HANDICAPPED
 DO IT!

An exhibition, a round-table meeting and a stand in a public gallery in Brussels for three weeks have helped to publicize the contribution being made by voluntary bodies to the common welfare. At the meetings it became apparent that although the voluntary bodies are still fired by the same enthusiasm and charitable dedication they are becoming ever more professional. Despite a deplorable lack of funds, they are managing to bring what society can offer closer and closer to what society needs.

Useful address Association pour le Volontariat
 Place Brugmann 29
 1060 Brussels

Giving up prostitution

"Mouvement du Nid", a well known French organization that helps prostitutes, now has a Belgian section in Brussels. A small team of about 20 people are trying to bring hope to prostitutes and help them to leave the life they lead. It will provide a home where women can live during the period of transition; it will lend a sympathetic ear for their problems, give them financial help and arrange for health care and training for a job. It may also create the international contacts that are needed in view of the fact that the men who exploit prostitutes are so well organized - also on an international scale.

Useful address Mouvement du Nid
 45 Rue Van Schoor
 1030 Brussels

DISCRIMINATION IN THE ADVERTISING OF VACANCIES

A European-level colloquium in the Belgian Ministry of Labour has been arranged by the association known as "Solidarité - Femmes - Emploi", with the support of the Bureau for questions concerning employment and equal treatment for women and of the Service providing information for women's organizations and press in the European Commission.

"Sex-based discrimination in job advertisements", the theme of the meeting, has been a constant concern of a large number of women's groups in Europe. In the light of their experience, it is apparent that:

- Legal measures exist but in most countries they need to be improved. To be effective, a law must be stringent and allow very few exceptions. It is important that there should be a body with official powers to track down offenders and take legal action against them.
- Newspaper advertising is not the only channel for recruitment: a watchful eye should also be kept on circulars and memos in the public sector, notice boards, etc. All too often, too, an advertisement is properly worded but is belied by the accompanying illustration.
- Information must be comprehensive and reach the employers, advertisers and public in general. Women themselves are still too reluctant to react to what they see as natural and inevitable.
- The action taken against infringements of the law may be stepped up gradually. A letter to an advertiser or employer drawing his attention to an infringement will sometimes be all that is needed. He will also be sensitive to bad publicity: an effective weapon in many cases is to give an "award to the most sexist advertiser".
- Women's pressure groups have a role that complements what can be done by official bodies: they can urge the unions and parties to take action in fields which might otherwise be overlooked.

In conclusion, the colloquium was unanimous in its wish to see the European Community promoting other meetings to tackle specific points. For instance, it called on the Commission to sponsor a simultaneous survey in the ten Member States on discrimination in job advertising, taking the research conducted at national level as a basis.

Useful address Solidarité - Femmes - Emploi
 Place Quételet 1a
 1030 Brussels

D E N M A R K

Micro-projects under the Lomé Convention

The least developed regions in the poorest countries in the world are inevitably rural and it significant that it should be women who bear the full brunt of the burden of work in such regions. One of the best ways of developing these areas is to introduce aid such as the "micro-project". To get the best out of a micro-project all that is needed is for social groups in the developing nations - particularly the women - to know how it works. But could European women's groups not help their sisters in other nations in this respect?

Micro-projects: a good way of promoting women's integration

Chapter 12, Articles 145 to 149, of the Lomé Convention describe the conditions under which local communities can obtain this form of aid. Up to the present, development aid of this type has been used mainly by Gambia, Madagascar, Malawi, Tchad, the Solomon Islands, Upper Volta and Kenya.

In essence, micro-projects are designed for backward rural regions. They include ventures such as the building of a dam, wells or waterways, silos, warehouses to store food and harvests, roads serving local communities, schools and community centres.

Applications for funding of projects must originate from the local authorities. Micro-projects provide a particularly good opportunity for women to participate on a par with men in every phase of implementation, thus promoting more balanced development if men and women are trained in the same way and if their working hours are fairly shared.

The beneficiary countries may tackle micro-projects in their own way, depending on their wishes and experience. The new capital equipment they produce will then reflect their traditional culture.

Finance may be applied for through the European Community's delegates in each of the 61 developing nations that have signed the Lomé Convention. The maximum aid for a project is 150,000 ECU, while the region applying for funds usually contributes its work and services in implementing the project.

I believe that this kind of project will help to improve the lot of women: since their working day is now far longer than men's, any improvement in health and sanitation and the fairer distribution of labour must help them.

Edele Kruchow
former chairman of DKN

Useful address Danske Kvinders Nationalrad
Niels Hemmingsensgade10
1153 Copenhagen

FRANCE

A thousand addresses for women

The "Centre d'Orientation, de Documentation et d'Information pour les Femmes" - CODIF - is a women's guidance and information centre set up in 1974 with the help of the City of Marseilles. It has just published a remarkable booklet entitled "1,000 adresses pour les femmes".

Covering 300 French towns and 37 foreign countries, it lists the names and addresses of associations, movements, meeting and information centres, journals and magazines. Addresses that will help women uphold their rights, get to know each other better, live better.

The pages are scattered with notes and jottings. For example, it tells us that married women in France are entitled to ask tax authorities for a copy of any documents supplied by their husbands, something that may be useful in a separation, divorce or dispute as to contributions towards household expenses.

Useful address CODIF
 81 Rue Sénac
 13001 Marseilles

A new women's centre in Paris

A women's centre - the first in the capital - has recently opened its doors in Paris. At the end of a cul-de-sac, a little two-floor building provides a home for the fifteen or so groups who are pooling their efforts.

A management cooperative group meets every Thursday to plan the centre's activities. It provides a home base for exhibitions, discussions, reception, meetings of the member associations, although it will also hire out one of its rooms to other organizations. With the help of a subsidy from the Ministry for Women's Rights, the centre can now afford a part-time staff member for a few months.

Useful address Maison de Femmes
 8 Cité Prost
 75011 Paris

Women and the balance of power

A new feminist association has come into being in France: "Femmes et Pouvoirs", based in Lyons. Its aim is to think more deeply about the philosophical and political aspects of power and to determine how it can respond to the need for change for which feminism is the mouthpiece: the elimination of male domination, the promotion of new social relationships and a different pattern of power.

The association will not just be theorizing, however; its activities will include drawing up and publicizing practical proposals and contacts with the authorities to ensure that those proposals can be implemented.

Useful address Femme et Pouvoirs
Le Castellard n° 41, 23 Route de Champagne
69370 Saint-Didier

A telephone number for women

In Paris, a telephone call is all that is needed to contact the women's and family information centre, CIFF, set up in 1972 to provide information to women and families.

CIFF has divided the information at its disposal into five main sectors, in the light of the types of enquiry it receives: working life, legal matters, employment legislation, practical life and sex and family problems.

Replies are given free of charge, both by telephone and by letter.

Useful address CIFF
BP 400
75327 Paris Cedex 07

Women and culture

The movement known as "Choisir" it is to arrange an international colloquium on the theme of "women and culture".

The occasion on which it announced its intention was a general assembly at which it elected its national officers. Gisèle Halimi, a lawyer, and Michèle Chevalier, who is employed in public transport, were re-elected as joint presidents.

Much of the discussion time at the general assembly was devoted to the election of Gisèle Halimi, who had been elected as MP for the Isère in June 1981 and is allied to the Socialist group. Some militant members of "Choisir" who had objected to Gisèle Halimi's candidacy in the national elections, expressed their concern: how can one remain independent, they argued, when one stands under the banner of a political party?

Madame Halimi replied that she had campaigned as a feminist and is acting as a feminist in the National Assembly, where the feminist voice is being heard for the first time.

Useful address Choisir - La cause des femmes
102 Rue St-Dominique
75007 Paris

A new magazine from the ashes of an old

The magazine "L'Echo Madame" has been closed down, but some members of the staff are trying to keep up the close contact it has always enjoyed with its women readers. They have decided to set up a new magazine, to be known as "Femmes Echo" and published as a supplement to the monthly magazine, "Clair Foyer".

The intention is that the new magazine will follow in its predecessor's footsteps in focussing on the Christian woman's angle.

Useful address Femmes Echo
 21 Rue du Faubourg St-Antoine
 75550 Paris Cedex 11

G E R M A N Y

Bringing families together

German women married to foreign men have been protesting against various Government decisions which they see as contrary to the wellbeing of their families. The measures in question restrict the right of children aged over 16 to join parents working in Germany. In the same way, limits have been placed on the periods during which a person working in Germany may be joined by his or her spouse living in another country.

The protesters are launching a petition to the Federal and Regional Governments, asking them to change their policy. The campaign is being conducted by the "Interessengemeinschaft der mit Ausländern verheirateter deutscher Frauen", a group defending the interests of German women married to foreigners, led by Mrs R. Wolf-Almanaerah.

Useful address Interessengemeinschaft der mit Ausländern
 verheirateter deutscher Frauen
 Mainzer Landstr. 239-241
 6000 Frankfurt

Women in the Third World

"Terre des Hommes" is an association well known for its aid to the Third World. Organized along the same lines, "Terre des Femmes" has now been set up with the specific aim of helping women in developing nations. It is especially concerned with the lot of women refugees who no longer enjoy the protection of the law of the country they have left and know nothing about the law in the country where they have taken refuge.

Useful address Terre des Femmes
 Dillstr. 8t-Dominique
 2000 Hamburg 13

Women at home

Three years ago, Dr Gerhild Heuer founded the "Deutsche Hausfrauengewerkschaft" (the German housewives' union), is referred to as DHG.

The association - 10% of whose members are now men - feels that work in the home makes a major contribution to the gross national product. DHG does not want to add to the number of strictly feminist groups; indeed, it thinks that men and women should work closely together for the full recognition of housework.

Now chaired by Ute Alt, DHG is conducting a campaign for the recognition of household work as an occupation. People running a home should, it says, enjoy all the conventional protection given to workers such as sickness and accident insurance. DHG would also like to see specific help for those who have worked in the home and wish to take up a career again.

Useful address Deutsche Hausfrauengewerkschaft e.v.
 Radaustr. 7
 8900 Augsburg 22

Starting afresh at 35

The Fribourg local branch of the "Deutsche Frauenring" (German women's association) has successfully organized courses to prepare women for a return to work after they have spent many years bringing up their children.

The focus is not just on training for paid employment; what the organizers aim to do is to help each woman review her own life up to that time and then to embark upon a new course of action based on self-understanding.

None of the 57 women who have taken the courses so far has dropped out midway.

The Baden-Württemberg Ministry for Social Affairs has agreed to subsidize a third course, which will be scientifically monitored. By close investigation of the methods and achievements of the first two courses and detailed research on the third course, a comprehensive model may be formulated that can then be used by other organizations.

It is of interest that the objectives of the training offered in Fribourg is two-fold: to help 35-year-old women to achieve mental and physical harmony, and also to find out about and assume new responsibilities in society, including voluntary work.

Useful address Ellen Sessar-Karpp
 Gottenheimerstr. 8
 7800 Umkirch

Breast milk: a warning

In certain cases, mother's milk would not pass the trials to which medical drugs must be submitted before they can be marketed. According to some doctors, a woman's breast milk may contain far too high a proportion of the chemicals she has absorbed.

In towns such as Berlin and Hamburg, a detailed analysis of a mother's milk can be carried out before she offers it to her baby. The Öko Institute in Fribourg thought it vital to publish a booklet setting out the advantages of breast-feeding a baby but also warning as to the precautions that must be taken to ensure that the baby does not take in unwanted substances when he or she is put to the breast.

Useful address Öko-Institut
 Radaustr. 7
 900 Augsburg 22

Women and the home environment

In Rhineland-Palatinate, Christian Democrat Union women have stressed the importance of a sound housing policy in the general context of policy for the family. They point out that family life depends to a great extent on housing conditions. Every member of the family must be able to develop freely in the shared home environment.

Priority in the buying and renting of reasonably priced housing must be given to young families and large families

Useful address CDU Frauenvereinigung
 Konrad-Adenauer-Haus
 53 Bonn 2

Women for peace

Women are taking a growing share in demonstrations for peace and disarmament. Some are advocating a tax strike, deducting the percentage spent on the defence budget, while others are sending statements to the Government that they will refuse to enlist in the armed forces (although there is no law on the mobilization of women). Other women are pleading for nuclear disarmament in Europe and collecting signatures to be sent to the United Nations at the time of the disarmament debate next June.

What is striking about this surge of energy among women is that it is so extensive. Alfred Mechterheimer, a researcher specializing in peace issues, wonders whether the peace movement is not above all a women's movement. Other observers have pointed out that women are using the theme as an opportunity to protest against a policy laid down by men and to demonstrate their solidarity with men in a field from which they have long been excluded.

G R E E C E

Working women's rights

In a letter to Mr Apostolos Kaklamanis, Minister of Labour, the Democratic Women's Movement has called for a committee to be set up to ensure that the principle of equal pay, treatment and promotion for women workers is being properly applied.

The letter reminds the Minister that women still earn an average of only 57% of men's monthly wages and 58% of their daily wages. One example of discrimination is that despite the textile industry agreement signed on 18 December, which formally guarantees equal pay for men and women, the minimum and maximum daily rates of pay for male dyers under this agreement have been set at 594 and 750 drachmas, whereas the rates for women are 574 and 660 drachmas.

In the same letter, the Movement expresses the hope that the law protecting mothers will be passed in the very near future. The law would put maternity leave on a par with sick leave, ensure that it is taken into account when calculating pensions, forbid the dismissal of a mother for a period of a year after childbirth, etc.

Useful address Christian Democrat Women's Movement
 Gennadiou 5
 Athens

I R E L A N D

Keeping women informed

The Council for the Status of Women has launched a newsletter which aims to keep its 250,000 members of the 32 organizations it represents in touch with its efforts.

According to chairwoman Dr Hasel Boland, the main task for the Eighties is "as much in the field of changing attitudes as in changing laws". The newsletter initiative is part of the Council's policy to reach women throughout Ireland.

Useful address The Council for the Status of Women
 54 Merrion Square
 Dublin 14

Reaching for Recovery

A section of the Irish Cancer Society, "Reach-to-Recovery", has been instrumental in setting up a new mastectomy centre in Dublin.

According to the organization, one in 17 mature Irish women undergo a mastectomy every year.

Now properly trained staff can advise women who might, for instance, shrink from the ordeal of shopping for prostheses in department stores. In general they can give them the practical and moral support they need after surgery.

Useful address Reach-to-Recovery
 5 Northumberland Road
 Dublin 4

Simone Weil addresses Irish women

About 700 women packed a Dublin seminar run by the Women's Political Association, with the help of the European Communities Information Bureau. The meeting was opened by Simone Weil, the outgoing president of European Parliament, who spoke about the nature of equality and asked if women should adapt themselves to a society run according to criteria laid down by men, one in which competitiveness and ambition dominate, the result being that often they have no time to live their own lives.

Reviewing the measures adopted to promote the social and occupational advancement of women, she noted that - in spite of the changes - women are still far from winning their share of power and influence within the Community. She suggested that a quota system might offset this injustice, at least for a temporary period.

The second session was devoted to relations between women and the unions. Janet Hughes of the Federated Workers' Union of Ireland, and Inez McCormack of the National Union of Public Employees in Northern Ireland, pointed out that unions in both parts of Ireland should be taking effective action in favour of women, especially as working conditions, opportunities for promotion and inequality in pay are problems that are still far from a solution.

Useful address Women's Political Association
 40 Pine Valley Avenue, Rathfarnham
 Dublin 14

Social Welfare Code challenged

Although a Community directive banning discrimination against women applying for social welfare payments comes into force in 1984, some women in Ireland have decided not to wait.

The Women's Campaign for a United Social Code has backed a woman, legally separated from her husband and with no dependent children, in her case against the Department of Social Welfare before the High Court. For unemployment benefit purposes the Department has treated her as a married woman although she is not supported by her husband. As a result she gets less money and payments continue for a shorter period than for men and for single women. The case is to be heard in the spring.

Useful address Women's Campaign for a Unified Social Code
 189 Grace Park Heights, Drumcondra
 Dublin 9

I T A L Y

Development Aid

The "Associazione Italiana Donne per lo Sviluppo" is an association to promote development, recently set up by a group of women of different ideologies.

Under the chairmanship of Maria Magnani Noya, A.I.Do.S. hopes to ensure that the three-fold aim of the United Nations - equality, development and peace - does not remain just empty words. It intends to become a focal point in Italy for all women who would like to translate the aim into reality. The association plans to found a research and information centre and a sort of clearing house for facts and figures. It has asked the Italian Government to earmark some of the funds allocated towards development cooperation towards projects of concern to women in rural agriculture, small industry and crafts, schooling, vocational training and health.

It has also called on the Italian Government to review aid projects to see whether they meet the needs of women, evaluating their impact on women's status in the light of their cost/benefit ratio.

At a meeting arranged by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Association's vice-president Daniela Colombo pointed out that women have a part to play in promoting development, although she also stressed how much women are being ignored in current efforts.

In 1982, the Association is organizing seminars and other events to arouse public opinion as to the gravity of problems in developing nations.

Useful address Associazione Italiana Donne per lo Sviluppo (A.I.Do.S.)
Piazza Capranica 95
Rome

Nuclear Disarmament

A committee calling itself "Donne di Sicilia per il Disarmo nucleare" - "Sicilian women for nuclear disarmament" - has been set up in Catania by the women's liberation movement, working with other bodies such as the local editorial staff of the women's newspaper "Quotidiano Donna" and the women's section of the Proletarian Democracy group.

In a leaflet distributed in the city, the committee declares: "Our NO TO WAR coincides with the struggle for our liberation. We feel we are in the forefront of a movement fighting for peace which is (also) fighting for self-determination and against the oppression of one people by another, one class by another, one sex by another".

Useful address Donne di Sicilia per il Disarmo nucleare
Comitato di Catania, Via S. Orsola 30
Catania

A tangible tribute

The association of Jewish women in Italy - Associazione Donne Ebreo d'Italia - decided to pay a more tangible tribute to Iolanda Torraca for her practical devotion to civic activities than the customary lengthy speeches: her friends have presented her with a scholarship bearing her name that offers education and training of a Jewish girl. The association was founded in 1927 and its 20 or so local branches have about 3,000 members.

Useful address A.D.E.I.
 Piazza della Repubblica 6
 Milan

Soroptimists

The national union of Soroptimist Clubs in Italy has often been mentioned in "Women in Europe". Its precise address is:

Unione Nazionale dei Soroptimist - International Clubs d'Italia
President Ada Cammeo Verona
Via A. Filipetti 28
20122 Milan

Those who have disappeared in the Argentine

The Italian committee for solidarity with the families of political prisoners and missing persons in the Argentine - Co.So.FamI - is continuing its efforts, which are being imitated in other countries. The Italian group would like to contact all other organizations concerned with such disappearances so that their efforts can be coordinated at international level; it is particularly concerned at the disappearance of children.

Useful address Co.So.Fam.
 Piazza della Trasfigurazione 2
 00151 Rome

Italian women in Paris

Militant feminism among Italian women has become part of Italy's culture, an acknowledged event in the country's civilization. The Italian cultural centre in Paris and the Pompidou Centre have jointly arranged events devoted to the feminist commitment of Italian women as seen through creative artistic work.

Music, poetry, dance, theatre, an exhibition of photographs at the Georges Pompidou Centre, round table discussions and an exhibition of contemporary art in the Italian cultural centre have, over a whole week, given French women some idea of the awareness of Italian women at the heart of the crisis.

Useful address Centre culturel italien
 50 Rue de Varenne
 75007 Paris

NETHERLANDS

Argentine: where have all the people gone?

Concern about those who have disappeared in the Argentine has been aroused among women's organizations in the Netherlands as well. Peaceful demonstrations are being arranged systematically in conjunction with the Buenos Aires "Folles de la Plaza de Mayo".

The "Vrouw-Kerk-2/3 Wereld" Foundation (women-church-2/3 world) has brought out a booklet describing the background to the disappearances, the steps that have been taken, the prisoners' stories and the fears expressed by families of the missing people, as well as the explanations given by Argentinian officials.

Several organizations are involved in the efforts: backing the VKW Foundation are SAAM-Steun aan Argentijnse Moeders ("support for Argentinian mothers"), CNV-Vrouwenbond (women's branch of the CNV union), COSOFAM (committee for solidarity with the families of missing persons) and SKAN-Solidariteit Komitee Argentinië Nederland (committee for solidarity between the Argentine and the Netherlands). Women in the Dutch Reformed Church are also helping to arrange the events, to be held on 15 April, 17 June, 16 September and 18 November 1982.

Useful address Stichting VKW
Cornelis Houtmanstr. 19
3572 LT Utrecht

SAAM
Voorhoutstr. 4
2012 JD Haarlem

COSOFAM
Haydenstr. 21
Amersfoort

SKAN
Postbus 764
2501 CT The Hague

Prostitution

The A. de Graaf Stichting Foundation has embarked on systematic and impartial research on prostitution with the end objective of giving prostitutes the most effective help possible. The Foundation will be evolving its views only gradually as its findings emerge.

Sidestepping what it sees as a pointless debate (society with or without prostitution), the Foundation pragmatically accepts "conditional" prostitution, at least for the time being.

The Foundation feels it is right to legalize the profession. "The legal void in which a prostitute has to work makes her an easy prey for all forms of exploitation."

In practical terms, the Foundation has come out in favour of "improving aid for prostitutes through the channel of organized social services". A telephone is manned one day a week, on Thursdays (020-24.33.66) for personal counselling; a tape is played on other days summarizing the type of information a prostitute may find useful.

The Foundation has undertaken to make contact with other bodies helping prostitutes in different countries. It already has useful links with the United States, Great Britain and France. In the annual report it has just published, the Foundation notes the growing interest of women's groups in the problem of prostitution over the past two years.

To help them carry through their work, the three active researchers in the Foundation have been granted a subsidy by the Ministry for Culture, Leisure and Social Action.

Useful address Mr. A. de Graaf Stichting
 Westermarkt 2
 1016 DK Amsterdam

Local Elections

Looking forward to the local elections in early June 1982, women in the Liberal Party, VVD, have been thinking about women and their participation in the life of their local community. They have issued a booklet on the question. "Women should take over responsibility for their own affairs at every level of political and social life," they say.

Entitled "Kiezen én Delen" (choose and share), the booklet recounts the experience of women who already hold local office and their advice to other women who would like to take part in the elections and those among them who are elected.

Good advice to anyone who is elected, whatever her party: you have to keep a cool head when you change from relative anonymity to relative celebrity.

Useful address Bureau Vrouwenbelangen
 Rijnsburgerweg 28
 2333 AA Leiden

The triple struggle

Being a woman, a peasant and living in Latin America is a triple handicap: This is the theme of a book published by WOW Campaigns in association with War on Want under the title of "The Triple Struggle - Latin American Peasant Women".

War on Want takes the realistic approach in its campaign against poverty in the world. Terry Lacey, the General Secretary, prefaces the book by Audrey Bronstein as follows: "In their own words, the women explain the triple struggle they face as a result of the oppression and poverty in the under-developed countries of Latin America, their lack of opportunity as members of the peasant class and their exploitation as women in a male-dominated society. It is a powerful book, describing the hopes, the needs, the efforts, the failures and the successes of women as they work for change.

Useful address WOW Campaigns Ltd.
 467a Caledonian Road
 London N7 9BE

Women and the Unions

In 1981, out of a total of 6,022,000 union members there were 2,265,000 women, i.e. 38% of union membership.

Some researchers decided to compare the proportion of women in decision-making bodies in the unions and estimate the number of positions that women should be holding on the basis of their grass roots membership of the unions. They found that only 40 of the 316 seats on executive bodies are held by women, whereas the appropriate number should be 150. Out of the 1,636 permanent union representatives only 90 are women, compared with the appropriate figure of 640. There are 418 TUC delegates in all but only 66 women (compared with 174).

The figures were compiled by Teresa L. Rees and Martin W. Read in preparation for a NALGO conference on equal rights.

Useful address NALGO
 1 Mabledon Place
 London WC1

RESEARCH, MEETINGS AND BOOKS

Living Together is a recent book by Clare Dyer and Marcel Berlins written after a recent radio phone-in revealed how ignorant people are of their legal rights and obligations when it comes to living together.

It is estimated that about 330,000 women under 50 are living with men to whom they are not married. Couples marrying in the late 1970s were three times more likely to have lived together before marriage than couples marrying at the beginning of the decade. The book (£1.50) provides useful information and advice on all aspects of living together, from tax and social security to getting a home and the rights of children.

Useful address Hamlyns
 Astronaut House, Hounslow Road
 Feltham, Middx.

La vie des Polonaises is a full report on the lives of Polish women before and after the events of December 1981, compiled by Agence Femmes Information. Fewer Polish women are in prison than their menfolk, but they suffer greatly from the state of emergency. They get up very early in the morning to queue for food before they go to work and, despite their anguish at members of their families and their friends being in custody, they have to struggle on. (Fr.60)

Useful address Agence Femmes Information
 104 Boulevard St Germain
 75006 Paris

Feminism in Europe - Liberal and Socialist Strategies 1796-1920 is the first volume of a history of the Women's Movement being published by the Institute of Social Studies in The Hague. The basis for this work was the lectures given in 1980 and 1981 by Kumari Jayawardena and Maria Mies and a bibliography compiled by Ettie Baas. (F1.7 plus postage)

Useful address Institute of Social Studies - Women and Development
 Badhuisweg 251
 The Hague

L'épau - mai 1981 is the full text of papers read at the ninth national congress of the French Union Professionnelle féminine and at the French-speaking European meeting that followed. "L'épau" is the name of the abbey where the meetings were held. The themes discussed were "woman and creativity" and "education, training, employment".

Useful address Union Professionnelle Féminine
 27 ter Boulevard Diderot
 75012 Paris

Research, Education and Women

The Simone de Beauvoir Institute of the Montreal Concordia University is preparing for what will be the first international colloquium on research and education as they relate to women, to be held in Montreal on 26 July-4 August 1982.

The idea was aired in the forum during the UN world conference on women in Copenhagen and enthusiastically taken up by all those women seeking ways of exchanging views and setting up a permanent communications network.

The aims of the colloquium are many: to provide a forum for debate and the pooling of information on research, education and associated activities of concern to women, encourage newly created research and education centres throughout the world and recognize and promote the contribution made by such research and education to socio-economic development. Finally, in very practical ways, the aim is to help set up international, regional and inter-regional networks to encourage solidarity among centres and regions and the dissemination of information.

Useful address The Simone de Beauvoir Institute - International Conference
Concordia University
1455 West Boulevard Maisonneuve
Montreal, Quebec H3G 1M8

Genetic Engineering

The Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities ran a genetic engineering colloquium in May 1981 entitled "aspects of security in the field of recombinant deoxyribonucleic acid (ADN)". This event was not just for the specialists: the aim was to open it out to many different economic and social groups, for the issues are of concern to society as a whole.

The colloquium was chaired by Hedda Heuser, who is to report on the recent research by the Economic and Social Committee on the theme. The full proceedings have now been published, plus a report by the Economic and Social Committee and a glossary for readers less familiar with the subject.

The document as a whole is praiseworthy in making a complex scientific subject easy for even the uninitiated to grasp. The Committee sees it as vital for citizens of the European Community to know something about this field, which may have important developments and whose impact on people and their environment is hard to predict. This is far from the last word on the subject: the book ends with at least twenty questions, each one acutely relevant.

Useful address Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities
Press, Information and Publications
Rue Ravenstein 2
1000 Brussels

La parità tra lavoratori e lavoratrici e la tutela della salute. An international seminar arranged by the Italian Institute of Social Medicine took as its theme "equality between men and women workers and the protection of health".

If the principle of equality is taken to its logical conclusion, legislation designed specifically to protect the health of women should be withdrawn; it is, however, almost impossible to take this step for the simple reason that so many women work under extremely unhealthy and unhygienic conditions.

According to the legal experts, doctors and civil servants at the seminar, protective legislation in the European Community countries differs widely and it is doubtful whether any such measures can be "objective" or "scientific". All the Member States are engaged on a wide-ranging review of their protective legislation and at the same time medical research is revealing new factors. Some of the precautions introduced many years ago have now been made obsolete by scientific progress and above all by epidemiological research.

Useful address Istituto Italiano di Medicina Sociale
Via P.S. Mancini 28
00196 Rome

Professional Work and Marriage by Marilyn Rueschemeyer describes the conflict between work and family life. The author questions the idea that one's personal life and a career can be happily reconciled. Through a series of well conducted interviews, she shows how much the ambition to succeed in one's job affects relationships in marriage and friendship.

One particularly important aspect of the book is the comparison it makes between the situation in capitalist and socialist countries. (£15)

Useful address Macmillan Press Ltd.
Little Essex Street
London WC2R 3LF

La Femme au Canada, a research report on Canadian women published by the Department of Labour, has now been supplemented by carefully compiled facts and figures on "the position of women in the working population". To quote some revealing statistics: in 1979, the female working population numbered 4,408,000, i.e. 1,680,000 more than only ten years before. In 1979, women accounted for 38.8% of the working population and 46.1% of the jobless.

Useful address Bureau de la main d'oeuvre féminine
Ministère du Travail, Canada
Ottawa (Ontario) K1A 0J2

Mulherio is a very new feminist publication that has appeared in Sao Paulo. The exchange of information has already borne fruit: 10 October has been declared the "day of combat against violence", and a "women's tribunal" has given its ruling on crimes against women. The editors of **Mulherio** point out that its work has been inspired by the experience of Italian feminists. They would welcome contact with any other women's publications.

Useful address Mulherio - Fundação Carlos Chagas
 Av. Prof. Francisco Morato 1565
 CEP 05513 - Sao Paulo - Brazil

Women against Apartheid

A conference on women and apartheid is to be held in Brussels on 17, 18 and 19 May 1982. Its aim is to shed light on the sufferings and struggles of women in South Africa and Namibia and to work for aid to projects designed to support them.

Following up on recommendations made by the Copenhagen Conference in July 1980 and resolutions passed by the UN General Assembly, the conference has been arranged by the UN Special Committee against Apartheid.

The agenda is to include the following:

- a review of the situation in the southern part of Africa;
- a review of the effects of apartheid on women and children;
- ways of publicizing the sufferings and struggles of South Africa and Namibia;
- action to demonstrate solidarity with women victims of apartheid.

Useful address International Committee of Solidarity with the Struggle
 of Women of South Africa and Namibia
 Centre against Apartheid
 United Nations, New York NY 10017

and

Mrs Edith Ballantyne
1 Rue Varembe
1211 Geneva 20

Mercato del lavoro e professionalità in provincia di Brescia summarized the findings of a 1980 survey on the labour market and working life in the province of Brescia commissioned from a school of management psycho-sociology by local industrialists. Reading between the lines, one sees why women find it so hard to obtain a job in practice. Published by La Scuola.

Vrouw en Politiek - A special issue of "De Nieuwe Maand", a Flemish political discussion journal, is devoted to the subject of "women and politics". The authors of the articles on women and the parties, the unions and press all feel that the issue is and will continue to be political. One of the contributors is Marijke Van Hemeldonck, who has just arrived in European Parliament.

Useful address De Nieuwe Maand
 Steenweg naar Hoeilaart, 376ad
 1900 Overijse

LIGE NU ("equality now") is the name of an information bulletin issued by Ligestillingsrådet (the Danish advisory committee on equality). Sofie Mogensen and Barbara Robin Steenstrup on the editorial staff would like to make the bulletin not just a newsletter but a forum of debate for all those fighting for freedom. In Danish, LIGE NU will be published every quarter.

Useful address LIGE NU
 c/o Ligestillingsrådet
 Frederiksgade 21, 1
 1265 Copenhagen K

Simone Weil, biografia di un pensiero - "Simone Weil, the biography of a thought" - by Gabriella Fiori is based solely on the words and works of this outstanding woman. Incidents and events are seen as less important than retracing the intellectual and spiritual path taken by one of the most extraordinary people of our century: a graduate in philosophy, a worker in the Renault car factory, she enlisted in the international brigade in the Spanish civil war and then laboured on the land. Simone Weil drew on each phase of her life to enrich her intuition and understanding. The 384-book is published by Garzanti, Milan, as part of its series entitled "Memorie Documenti Biografie" (Lit.12,000).

Women and political science

In August 1982, the twelfth world conference of political science is to be held in Rio de Janeiro. Several of the round-table discussions arranged during the event will be specifically concerned with women, for instance the subjects of women's movements and organizations, women and power, women and political systems, the family and citizenship.

Useful address Guillermo O'Donnell - IUPERJ
 Rua da Matriz 82
 CEP 22260 - Rio de Janeiro - Brazil

Donnawomanfemme, an Italian-language quarterly review of international research on women, has a reputation for its unusual articles. Its issue 17/81, for instance, contained a short introductory paper and several pages of reproductions of work by a woman engraver, Maria Sibylla Merian, born in Frankfurt in 1647. Her skilled and confident work earned her a reputation through her contributions to the field of entomology. She died in poverty in Amsterdam in 1717 after taking part in a exploratory expedition to Surinam, where she caught yellow fever.

Useful address **Donnawomanfemme**
 Viale Angelico 301
 00195 Rome

Ingénieur, métier de femme [engineer, a woman's job] by Marie-Annick Roy argues that women should not be excluded from the vital field of engineering at a time when technology is having such a radical influence on world events; inversely, the profession cannot do without women.

An electrical engineer working in telecommunications, the author sets a good example both in her career and in the liveliness of her style.

Useful address **Editions Pierre-Marcel Favre**
 29 Rue de Bourg
 1002 Lausanne

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Calle de Serrano 41
5A Planta-Madrid 1
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35, rua do Sacramento à Lapa
1200 Lisboa
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