

Women of Europe

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THE CHANGING EUROPEAN
COMMUNITY

Second Generation Europe

On several occasions during the last few months, Mr Gaston Thorn, President of the Commission of the European Communities, has urged that sometime in 1983 or soon after a new Messina Conference should be held to define the basis for a new contract totally consistent with a second generation Europe (*It was at the first Messina Conference in June 1955 that the Foreign Ministers of the Six (Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg and the Netherlands) expressed their political will to create the Common Market and Euratom*).

Among the main sources of difficulty currently affecting the Community's construction, Gaston Thorn points to the non-application of large areas in the present treaties, the weakening of the spirit of solidarity, and finally the withdrawal of public support from the European idea. He is therefore pleading for a return to the concept of Community solidarity in its true and original sense. In addition, policies must be developed which will stand up to the challenges being faced by the Community. Lastly, the deadlocks should be removed by "institutional means", in other words through a re-definition of the purpose and operating methods of the Community institutions.

Cultural Affairs

On President Thorn's initiative, the European Commission has addressed a Communication to the European Parliament and to the Council of Ministers on "Stronger Community Action in the Cultural Sector".

The Commission is not intending either to introduce European policy on culture or to coordinate Member States' policy in the matter. However, while taking care not to duplicate anything that the Council of Europe may be doing in this field, it wants to organize its own activities along the following four lines:

- freedom of trade in cultural goods;
- improving the living and working conditions of cultural workers;
- enlarging the audience
- conserving Europe's architectural heritage.

Where the movement of works of art is concerned, the Commission proposes a series of measures to simplify formalities at borders and to remove barriers to freedom of trade.

As for those working in the arts, the Commission intends to do what it can to combat the unemployment which affects them particularly. It will do this through the European Social Fund. It also proposes giving artists, etc., better social security benefits by spreading the idea of the "collective employer" community-wide. Another of its proposals is the amendment of income tax laws as current ones are unrealistic for people in the arts. The Commission is suggesting that all the Member States should introduce the concept of "collective authors' rights" and "resale rights" for those working in the plastic arts.

Concerning the enlargement of audiences, the Commission believes that, side-by-side with television - an important instrument for spreading culture, which progress in transmission and reproduction has rendered even more effective - special support should be given to performances which embody "live" culture and to the cinema. It also urges Member States to examine jointly the effects of the most recent technical progress on various national cultures.

Finally, the Commission is hoping to encourage the protection of Europe's architectural heritage, by suggesting a reduction in taxes on buildings worth preserving and by offering financial aid from Community funds.

Europe - United States relations

Speaking in New York to the Women's Economic Round Table, President Thorn dwelt on some of the problems currently affecting Europe's relations with the United States. It would be desirable, Mr Thorn believed, for us to take the time for a calm discussion of the great problems threatening our prosperity and survival at the present time. What draws us close is more important than what divides us, he went on, and we need to get together more often so that we can find out where we agree and avoid misunderstanding.

The European Social Fund in 1981

The Council of Ministers has received the Commission's Review of the European Social Fund for 1981. One of the points to emerge from the document is that, among the actions taken to assist youth, programmes for the vocational training of young women have involved about 18,000 people, representing a 41% increase over 1980.

Requests for grants specifically designed to assist women totalled 103 million ECU in 1981 - a 45% increase over 1980.

This increase has been brought about in two ways: firstly through the Commission's efforts to conduct a campaign telling women of the benefits obtainable through the European Social Fund and secondly through the Member States launching a greater number of operations which qualify under one of the Fund's criteria, namely the promotion of equal access to new types of employment for women or to jobs where women are under-represented at present.

It has been possible to finance all the requests considered as top priority, for a total figure of 17 million ECU, out of a budget of 22.5 million ECU allocated to women.

A UK scheme regarded as top priority included a new feature - a salary for a nursery teacher to run a day-care centre for the children of women on the course. The novelty of this move to meet the more and more pressing demands of women faced with the double task of family responsibility and work outside the home needs to be stressed.

In Italy, most of the requests came from private bodies or regional authorities. They focused on training women as storekeepers, industrial accountants, technicians in the hotel sector or for administrative and managerial posts. In Sardinia, Campania and the Abruzzi, fifty women or so were trained in various crafts or for management posts in small local firms. Confirming a trend which was started in 1980, this training was made possible through cooperatives specially created for the purpose.

In Belgium, a training scheme for management and other senior posts was carried out in certain small and medium-sized firms. This training involved a period of motivation and the development of individual skills followed by theoretical and practical training rounded off by preparation for working independently.

Also in Belgium, "pre-training" schemes were launched along the same lines as some French schemes which have already proved useful. These courses consist of three stages: assessment of individual abilities and development of basic knowledge, information about the job market and finally, gaining practical experience in the factory or workshop of the particular occupation chosen.

The two Belgian promoters of these schemes include psychological support and individual follow-up in their training schemes.

About lead

Adopted by the Council of Ministers on 28 July 1982, the Directive on "the protection of workers from the risks related to exposure to metallic lead and its ionic compounds at work" is worth special attention. It proposes a form of compromise between those who wish to see women being given special protection and those advocating the same protection for men and women.

In its original form, the Commission's proposal had included the concept of "women of child-bearing age", recommending for them a specific minimum level of 45 millionths of a gram per 100 ml of blood.

There were reactions to this concept from the European Parliament, which, in its opinion delivered on 24 September 1980, believed that the limits for women of child-bearing age should be seen as the first step towards equal and maximum protection of men and women.

The Advisory Committee on Equal Opportunities also expressed concern: it felt that the proposed text did not take into account the possible risk to the foetus brought about by potential fathers being exposed to lead. (Recent studies in America and Finland had brought this risk to light).

When the issue reached the Council of Ministers, several Governments brought out the same arguments with the result that, finally, the text of the Directive makes no direct reference to women. It does however leave each Government the clear possibility of affording greater protection to workers or to "a special category of workers" (Article 1.3).

Care must now be taken that if this option is exercised in order to protect the reproductive function, the Directive on equal treatment of men and women in employment and working conditions is not infringed.

Women and development

Mr Edgard Pisani, Member of the European Commission responsible for development cooperation has announced his intention of starting a dialogue with women's organizations in developing countries. He feels that this dialogue is necessary so that women can put forward their own views, their priority needs and their ideas on the best way of trying to solve their problems.

Mr Pisani warns against the European Community taking a "Eurocentric" view. The way in which women in Third World communities participate in the social, economic and political life of their countries is not the same as in an industrialized society.

Moreover, it would be a mistake to consider the condition of women in all developing countries in the same way. It is in order to understand the concrete realities of individual societies that a dialogue is now desirable.

Vocational training in the Eighties

At the initiative of Mr Ivor Richard, Social Affairs Commissioner, the European Commission has just approved a communication to the Council of Ministers covering a five-year vocational training programme. It focuses on three priority areas of common concern:

- the social and vocational preparation of young people for adult working life;
- training programmes aimed at ensuring greater equality of opportunity for women in the Community job market;
- training measures to support social and economic change, in particular the problem of job creation.

According to the Commission's report, there has been a "disproportionate increase" in the young unemployed (4 million under-25s are without work). These people, the report continues "now face several years of bewildering uncertainty about the future prospects of securing a job". The basic causes of youth unemployment must be tackled by an overall job creation strategy and by paying special attention to young people's training needs.

The European Commission is proposing that a Social Guarantee should be developed on a Community-wide basis, ensuring that "no young person at the age of 15 or 16 should be faced with no alternative to unemployment on leaving school", and entitling all young people to "at least two years further education, training or work experience after leaving full-time compulsory schooling".

All young people who so wish should therefore have access to:

- a full-time programme of social and vocational preparation for working life during an initial one-year period immediately their compulsory schooling ends, and
- entitlement to the equivalent of a further one-year vocational training period before the age of 25.

For the Member States to set up an effective Social Guarantee, the Commission proposes the prospective expansion and improvement of the range of training opportunities available for young persons up to age 18. For the 18-25 group, the accent should be placed on linked work and training (where study periods alternate with practical work in the enterprise) through strengthening the existing provisions and extending over a five-year period the demonstration projects supported by the European Social Fund. In addition, the Commission is proposing the establishment of a second group of projects to assist in the development of training/production workshops. Such workshops could themselves develop into self-supporting small enterprises or cooperatives, thus enabling an investment in training to make a direct contribution to local economic development.

Special training programmes are also needed, in the Commission's view, to help groups most affected by the recession. The Commission identifies two priority areas:

- (i) the need to develop the basic skills of many adults who can scarcely read or write or who cannot perform other basic skills necessary for adult working life. Here the Commission proposes Social Fund assistance to help unskilled, long-term unemployed;

- (ii) the training needs of women. Given the fresh impetus to EEC efforts in this field provided by the Council Resolution on Equal Opportunities and building on the experience of the Social Fund, the Commission is proposing that a substantial investment be made by Member States in training programmes for women. In addition, the Commission proposes to support a set of small-scale innovatory projects designed to examine how training programmes can be organized at local level to cater for particular groups of women (e.g. the home-bound or those isolated in rural areas)

The Commission believes that training policies in Member States should be re-oriented towards the needs of economic and social development at local and regional levels, and stresses the important link between these policy guidelines and the future application of the Social Fund. In particular, the Commission intends that the Social Fund should continue its action in support of experimental pilot schemes for assisting those responsible in local communities to design and carry out projects introducing new economic activities or revitalising existing activities.

Cooperation in Higher Education

93 new grants - a record number - have just been awarded by the European Commission for "joint study programmes" for the 1982/83 academic year. These programmes encourage and increase the mobility of students, teachers and scientific staff among the Community countries.

52 out of the 93 have gone to entirely new programmes which have never before obtained funding from the Commission. This clearly shows that the need to cooperate among the European partners continues to grow and that there is fiercer competition today than ever before to obtain Community aid: the Commission received a total of 220 requests, 20% more than last year.

One encouraging sign is the way in which cooperation is developing among establishments situated on the periphery of the Community. Universities which are as far away from each other as Cork in Ireland and Thessaloniki in Greece will be collaborating next year in a course on European law, Arhus, Denmark and Cosenza, Italy on an informatics course, Montpellier, France and Copenhagen, Denmark on a course in agricultural economics; Dublin in Ireland and Padua in Italy will work together in a chemistry programme.

Single-parent families

The two countries with the largest number of single-parent families are Germany and the UK (Germany 3.4%, UK 3.1%). The criterion used in the survey was "families headed by a single person - man or woman - living with one or more children under 14 or still studying if over that age".

In France and the Netherlands, 2.7% of all households fall into this category. Figures for the other countries are Italy 2.4%; Belgium and Ireland 2.3%; and Luxembourg 2.0%. Figures for Denmark and Greece are not known.

Advisory Committee for Equal Opportunities

The Advisory Committee for Equal Opportunities between Women and Men has held its second meeting. Betty Lockwood was in the chair.

Discussion of the Commission's Action Programme on the Promotion of Equal Opportunities which had been held with the European Parliament, in the Council of Ministers, and other concerned circles, formed one of the items on the Advisory Committee's agenda. The difficulties which the various national equality bodies were up against when trying to influence their respective governments emerged during the meeting, and in this connection, it seemed that the approach adopted by Parliament's Committee of Inquiry on the situation of women provided backing for the Advisory Committee's own efforts. This type of support constitutes a major political element and points to the need for closer links with the European Parliament and national parliaments.

Concerning women's particular problems during the present economic crisis, members of the Committee had received a questionnaire, the replies to which would enable an assessment to be made of any possible ways in which women's rights to equal treatment were being threatened. Declarations of intent, employment, social security, unemployment benefits, part-time work, return of women to the home will all be examined in detail once the facts are collected.

A preliminary account of a study being undertaken on Protective Legislation was submitted to the Committee. Should an exhaustive list of professions and occupations from which women were excluded be drawn up? Some members of the Committee were afraid that such a list could represent a danger and lead in some cases to more exemptions than there already were. Where laws providing for specific working conditions for women were concerned, there was a movement towards "cleaning out" all the obsolete measures and replacing them, perhaps, with new ones applicable to both sexes.

The Committee also received various information relating to the gradual implementation of the Directive on Equal Treatment in matters of social security, to a regime for self-employed women or women farmers, to the review of the European Social Fund, to the setting up of an information network responsible for following closely the application of the Directives, etc.

Concerning the pilot schemes for vocational training that the European Commission is planning, especially in the new technologies field, members of the Advisory Committee recommended that the Commission engage in positive discrimination to remove the differences between the sexes which already existed. It also recommended that the social effects of the new technologies on women's lives be looked into, that care be taken to stop information given out by schools from encouraging job segregation, and that women themselves be represented at the level where the pilot schemes were conceived and carried out.

Turning to the European Commission's projects for the employment of young people, members of the Advisory Committee had various ideas on the need to take different measures for different categories, when assisting young women. For example, traditional occupations - where their situation could be improved - and new forms of employment - to which they still had to gain access - should be distinguished. The Committee called for measures to avoid young women being concentrated in a limited number of types of training or jobs. It was agreed that this subject would be placed on the next agenda of the Advisory Committee, for further discussion.

EUROPEAN COURT OF JUSTICE

The European Court of Justice has passed judgement against the United Kingdom for failing to provide all British workers with measures by which they can invoke the principle of equal pay, as required by Council Directive 75/117, laid down in application of Article 119 of the Treaty of Rome.

The Court handed down its judgement following infringement proceedings introduced by the Commission of the European Communities.

The case was centred on the reference to "work to which equal value is attributed". Under the Equal Pay Act 1970, as amended by the Sex Discrimination Act 1975: "A woman is to be regarded as employed on work rated as equivalent with that of any men if, but only if, her job and their job have been given an equal value, in terms of the demand made on a worker under various headings (for instance, effort, skill, decision), on a study undertaken with a view to evaluating in those terms the job to be done by all or any of the employees in an undertaking or group of undertakings, or would have been given an equal value but for the evaluation being made on a system setting different values for women and men on the same demand under any heading".

According to the Council Directive, the job classification system applied in the UK is only one of the possible ways for deciding the payment for work to which an equal value is attributed, whereas according to the Equal Pay Act, the creation of such a system is the only means of achieving this result.

UK legislation requires the employer's approval for setting up a job classification system. This amounts to a virtual denial of the right to equal pay for work of equal value whenever such a classification has not been undertaken.

The European Court of Justice's ruling in the matter is as follows:

"By failing to introduce into its national legal system in implementation of the provisions of Council Directive 75/117 of 10 February 1975 such measures as are necessary to enable all employees who consider themselves wronged by failure to apply the principle of equal pay for men and women for work to which equal value is attributed and for which no system of job classification exists to obtain recognition of such equivalence, the United Kingdom has failed to fulfil its obligations under the Treaty".

Useful address: Information Office of the
 Court of Justice of the European Communities
 Plateau du Kirchberg
 L-Luxembourg

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

September 1982 Session

An important anniversary marked the September session of the European Parliament. It was thirty years ago that the Common Assembly of the European Coal and Steel Community met for the first time in Strasbourg. "This Assembly is the first that can rightly be called a European Parliament" the Belgian Théo Lefèvre remarked, at the time.

Surrounded by past presidents of the European Parliament - Alain Poher (now President of the French Senate), Simone Veil (the first President of the directly elected Parliament), Walter Behrendt of Germany, and Cornelis Berkhouwer of the Netherlands - Mr Piet Dankert, current President of the European Parliament, opened the official sitting devoted to this 30th Anniversary.

Assembled for the first time on 10 September 1952, the Common Assembly of the European Coal and Steel Community was immediately mandated by the Ministers of the Six to prepare, in the space of six months, a draft proposal for a political Community. The 78 members started working on this and, in 1953, the Assembly, in the form of an "ad hoc Assembly", adopted a real European Constitution which provided for a two-tier Parliament, a European Executive Council, a Council of Ministers and a Court of Justice.

The breakdown of the EDC (European Defence Community) resulted in the disappearance of the ad hoc Assembly and the failure of the original constitution.

The central theme of the September Session was what has come to be known as the "Vredeling Directive", after the ex-Commissioner, a Dutch Socialist, of that name who was responsible for drafting it. This text was adopted by the European Commission in September 1980. Its aim is to ensure that workers in multinational companies have access to information on the Company for which they work. The notion of "multinational company" originally covered only transnational companies but was later extended to include "companies with complex structure" which are only established in one member state.

Divergent opinions were voiced on the appropriateness of having a directive at all, as well as on its contents, and after some debate the Parliament finally decided to postpone the vote till the next session. Ms Maij-Weggen, speaking on behalf of the Christian Democrats (one of the groups wanting the vote postponed), defended the Directive. Ms Cassanmagnago-Cerreti, of the same group, emphasized that the Directive's objective was to harmonize national legislation without damaging companies. In her opinion, anything which opened up access to information should be encouraged.

A very different position was taken by the Danish Liberal Ms Nielsen, who was afraid that the Directive would drive American and Japanese capital away from Europe; in her opinion, Mr Ivor Richard, the present Commissioner for Social Affairs, should start on the Directive again from scratch. When his turn came to speak in the debate, Mr Richard insisted on the need to adopt an instrument which would really place constraints on companies, as "codes of good conduct" had proved to be ineffective.

The European Parliament gave an ultimatum as well as a very serious warning to the Council of Ministers responsible for Transport. The Treaty of the European Economic Community lays down that the Community must set up a common policy in the field of transport, but what, Parliament asked, has the Council of Ministers done about it? It has passed a certain number of regulations and other acts which do not, however, constitute a real common policy, despite the proposals made by the European Commission and the European Parliament. Twenty-five years of reflection is too long according to the Parliament which, by 157 votes to 12 with 12 abstentions, gave the Council "an invitation to act". If the Council does not give a satisfactory follow-up within two months, President Dankert will bring "proceedings for failure to act" against the Council in the European Court of Justice.

"Transport represents 6% of the Community's gross domestic product, in other words, more than agriculture", remarked Mr Moorhouse, a British Conservative. Ms Veil, speaking on behalf of the Liberal Group, considered that the procedure adopted by the European Parliament would really show whether the Treaty was just a declaration of intent or whether it entails an obligation to act.

Readers of Women of Europe who would like to know more about the European Parliament's activities or would like to have a copy of a report or a resolution can write to the European Parliament's offices in the various capitals:

*2, avenue Vassilissis Sophias
Athens*

tel.: 72.70.76

*In der Raste, 12
5300 Bonn 1*

tel.: 23.10.01

*97-113, rue Belliard
1040 Brussels*

tel.: 234.21.11

*Lange Voorhout 27a
2514 EB Den Haag*

tel.: 62.49.41

*Molesworth Street 43
Dublin 2*

tel.: 71.91.00

*Børsen
1217 Copenhagen K*

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*2, Queen Anne's Gate
London SW 1H 9AA*

tel.: 222.04.11

*288, Bld St Germain
75007 Paris*

tel.: 550.34.11

*Via Poli 29
00186 Rome*

tel.: 679.05.07

The European Parliament also treated some political questions arising from current international affairs, in particular the situation in Lebanon (at a point in time when news of the massacres in West Beirut was not yet public) and the situation in Poland.

Concerning Poland, the majority of European Parliamentarians were in favour of giving humanitarian aid. However, it also decided that all economic aid should be held back until the Polish government clearly demonstrated intentions of returning to free trade-unionism and of freeing trade union leaders and political prisoners.

During the same session, the European Parliament discussed at length three themes which are of a political as well as an economic nature, and are therefore closely interlinked: the usefulness of economic sanctions (boycotting), East-West trade relations and the Siberian gas pipeline. The vote on the first two reports was postponed to the next session, but the Parliament adopted a resolution on the gas pipeline asking Washington to reverse its decision on the embargo and asking the Community to define together with other OECD countries a framework for economic relations between the West and state-trading countries.

The European Parliament also wished to see European cooperation strengthened in the fight against terrorism. Ms Veil, (France, Lib.), Chairperson of the Legal Affairs Committee, spoke in favour of establishing a "European judicial area". A European dimension on this issue would certainly not mean an infringement of personal liberty, she stated. On the other hand, Ms Veil was against the creation of a European Court which would be an emergency court.

In anticipation of the special European Parliament session on the 1983 budget to be held in October, a first discussion took place, and Parliamentarians expressed their views on the very restrictive attitude taken by the Council of Ministers which had refused to adopt the 1982 supplementary budget.

Ms Barbarella (Italy Comm.), rapporteur on the supplementary budget, emphasized that this refusal was in obvious contradiction to the priorities fixed not only by the Parliament and the Commission, but also by the Council itself. This refusal will no doubt influence the discussions on the 1983 budget which must be adopted before the end of December, and indicates, in the Parliamentarians' opinion, that the Council has a budgetary strategy which is totally at odds with the Community's development.

Ms Scrivener (France Lib.), said that the Council was confirming her fears. Legally, the Council had every right to reject the budget, but its attitude could still have shown an interest in proper dialogue between the institutions.

The European Parliament also considered various problems related to the health and everyday life of Europe's citizens. By adopting the recommendations contained in the report prepared by Ms Beate Weber (German, Soc.) the Parliament asked the countries which dump radioactive waste in the Atlantic Ocean (that is, Belgium, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom) to stop doing so at once. The rapporteur underlined that unless action was taken immediately, future generations would inherit a real "marine cemetery". Ms Schleicher (Germany, Chr. Dem.) was not at all in agreement with Ms Weber, and considered her report to be a real declaration of war against the nuclear industry.

The French Liberal, Ms Pruvot, presented a resolution on war toys which was amended by the Dutch Socialist Ms Viehoff and the German Socialist Ms Hoff to become even more restrictive. The text which was finally adopted by the European Parliament asks the governments of the Member States to forbid (rather than limit) advertising for war toys. By adopting an amendment tabled by Vera Squarzialupi (It. Comm.), Parliament noted with concern the role played by the media in society in creating "a culture of war and violence", which in turn created a demand for toy guns.

Retirement Age and Part-time Work were two major themes debated at length. On the first issue, Sile de Valera's resolution welcomed the initiatives taken by the European Commission but warned against the over-optimistic forecasts concerning the number of jobs to be saved through early retirement. The European Parliament also underlined the need to have the freedom of choice between retirement and a gradual reduction of working time before retirement age. One of the changes proposed to the Commission's draft by Parliament was to ensure that the number of years under national insurance or in active working life giving right to a pension should be the same for men and women. The European Parliament also considered that combining a pension with an income from paid employment should be subject to a ceiling on earnings to be fixed by the Member States.

In presenting his report on part-time work, Mr Corentin Calvez (France Lib.) outlined many differences existing between the Community countries. In Denmark, 18% of the workforce have part-time jobs, a proportion falling to 6% in Belgium, the Netherlands and Italy. One of the rapporteur's suggestions was to fix 12 hours per week as the threshold for recognizing part-time work, in all the Member States.

Ms Desouches, the Economic Affairs Committee's rapporteur on the Calvez report, considered that part-time work could contribute in the fight against unemployment, but could not be considered as its remedy. Speaking on behalf of the Socialist Group, she reaffirmed that people should be able to opt for part-time work if they wanted to, and that trade unions should have the right to have a say in the organization of part-time work.

Heidemarie Wieczorek-Zeul, German Socialist, speaking on behalf of Parliament's Committee of Inquiry on the situation of women, mentioned that 90% of part-time workers are women, and did not wish to see this type of work misused and reserved for women. She disagreed with Mr Calvez's proposal for a 12-hour threshold, as this would exclude 20% of the women working part-time from the Directive's scope. Ms Wieczorek-Zeul insisted that the working conditions for part-time workers should be subject to negotiation between all the parties involved, and that, for example, the social partners should fix the percentage of part-time workers and full-time workers in the various sectors.

Marlene Lenz (German, P.P.E.) emphasized the importance of greater flexibility and the possibility of creating new patterns for work, and Shelagh Roberts (U.K. Cons.) pointed out the significant role of part-time work in the United Kingdom, representing as it does 40% of all part-time work in the Community. Marijke van Hemeldonck (Belgian Soc.), on the contrary, denounced part-time work as a "trap" for women.

October 1982 Session

During the October session, the European Parliament was visited by two Foreign Affairs Ministers, Mr Genscher (Germany) and Mr Colombo (Italy), joint signatories of the European Act which bears their name, and which was put forward in November 1981. The two ministers explained that the objective of this Act - European revival - was not contradictory to the institutional initiatives currently undertaken within the European Parliament itself. They had, however, not been able to make any significant progress since the last Council meeting which had toned down the scope of their recommendations.

The main focal point of the October session was the vote on the "Vredeling Directive" (see report on September session), concerning information and consultation of employees in transnational companies. There was a long vote during which Parliament again amended the text which had already been changed by the competent committee. The European Commission was not in a position to indicate immediately which of the changes it would be prepared to accept and as a result, Parliament decided to comment on the text of the Resolution (which, in legal terms, constitutes an "opinion" on the European Commission's texts for which it is consulted) at its November session, thus giving the Commission time to examine the changes requested by Parliament and see which it could accept. A large number of Parliamentarians were present for this important debate on a subject of wide concern.

Parliament also discussed questions related to the Community's external policy and heard Mr Pisani, member of the European Commission responsible for aid to the developing world. Mr Pisani unveiled the European Commission's development cooperation strategy for the coming decade to Parliament. Compared to previous policies, this strategy is geared to people - and therefore emphasises food strategy - rather than to large prestige projects. Mr Pisani proposed a regional and a world strategy rolled into one, which, in order to succeed, assumed that the Community and the Member States will agree to make the necessary changes in their internal policies.

The Community's relations with third world countries were also brought up during the discussion of a report drawn up by the German Socialist Heidi Wieczorek-Zeul. She requested a special Community contribution of 65 million units of account for Central American countries, a sum the European Commission agreed to. Parliament also felt that consideration should be given to setting up a system for stabilizing earnings for these countries, which very often survive on a single-crop economy. The system envisaged would be modelled on "Stabex", which already operates for the countries linked to the Community through the Lomé Convention.

For its part, the European Commission clarified that it was not trying to supplant the United States in Central America. Europe was not wishing to carry out power policies, only development policies. This view was shared by several Parliamentarians during the debate.

Relations with the United States, a question preoccupying Europeans for some months, was the subject of a long debate, during which Mr Davignon, speaking in the name of the European Commission, gave encouraging news on the contentious steel issue.

He emphasized the need to examine thoroughly the problems which are arising, especially in the energy sector. During the debate, several MPs underlined the importance of political relations with the United States, which could not be separated, according to Simone Veil, from discussions of relations with countries characterized by oppression and a power elite. Ms Veil also wished to see an end to the "anti-American bludgeoning" practised by some sections of the media.

Ms Veil also spoke on another political problem, concerning a meeting between a European Parliament delegation and the Knesset (the Israeli Parliament). Following the announcement by Parliament's Bureau that it would temporarily postpone the planned visit, several Parliamentarians, including the spokespersons for the Christian-Democrat and Communist groups, asked for the matter to be brought up in plenary, given the political importance of the issue. Ms Veil made the point that the refusal to meet the Knesset could be misunderstood by the Israeli people, precisely at the very moment when a considerable section of the population were courageously criticizing the policies of their own government.

The European Parliament adopted a resolution on the situation in the Lebanon, asking for all the facts on the massacres in the camps of West Beirut to be made public, and restating the rights of all countries in the area to recognition. The resolution mentioned a "homeland" for the Palestinian people.

A resolution on events in Poland and the outlawing of "Solidarity" condemning the human rights violations in that country was adopted by practically the whole assembly. Mr Gawronski (Ital. Lib.), who had asked for the Nobel Peace Prize to be awarded to Lech Walesa, paid homage to the handful of Polish Parliamentarians who had either voted against or abstained from the vote on banning Solidarity. In a Communist country, it was proof of political courage.

The European Parliament elected Ms Maria Luisa Cassanmagnago-Cerretti a Vice-President of Parliament to replace Guido Gonella who died last August. A member of the Christian Democrat group, Maria Luisa Cassanmagnago-Cerretti comes from Bergamo, entered the Italian Parliament in 1972 and the European Parliament in 1976. She is also vice-President of the European Peoples' Party group.

During the last week in October, Parliament devoted a special session to the Community's 1983 budget. Members of Parliament insisted that larger sums should be allocated to social policy in general, and to the fight against unemployment in particular, as well as to energy and to aid to the Third World.

Parliament approved the amendments (presented by the Committee of Inquiry on the situation of women) concerning the necessary funds for the application of the Action Programme for Equal Opportunities, as well as a sum of 450 000 ECU earmarked specifically for information for women. The decision now rests with the Council of Ministers; Parliament will vote on the budget's second reading during the December session.

THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMITTEE

The European Council of Ministers has appointed 156 members to sit on the Communities' Economic and Social Committee during this body's next four-year term. They have been chosen from among those on the lists presented by the ten governments of the Member States. François Ceyrac, a Frenchman, has been elected as the Committee's President.

The members of the Economic and Social Committee are drawn from all walks of social and economic life in each of the countries: employees, unions, agricultural activities, transport, trade, the professions and consumers.

The Economic and Social Committee is divided into three groups: employers make up Group 1, workers Group 2 and people from all other sectors, Group 3. As is customary, the Committee's Secretariat has asked all new members to which of the groups they wish to belong; their choice has then to be approved by the group concerned.

The Committee's plenary meetings are held in Brussels and its business is to express opinions to the European Council of Ministers and Commission on European legislation currently on the drawing boards.

Out of the 156 members on the Committee, 98 have served before. This means that just over a third are new. How many women members are there? Only eleven, in other words just under 7.05%.

Belgium	12 members, 2 new	- no women
Denmark	9 members, all confirmed	- 2 women
France	24 members, 10 new	- no women
Germany	24 members, 8 new	- 4 women among the 16 so far confirmed.
Greece	12 members, 10 new	- one woman
Ireland	9 members, 2 new	- no women
Italy	24 members, 8 new	- one woman among new appointments
Luxembourg	6 members, 2 new	- no women
Netherlands	12 members, 3 new	- no women
United Kingdom	24 members, 13 new	- 3 women, one of whom is a new appointment.

The two women newly appointed to the Economic and Social Committee are Beatrice Rangoni Machiavelli from Italy and Ms M. Quigley from the United Kingdom.

Useful address: Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities,
rue Ravenstein 2
1000 Brussels

GREEK WOMEN MEET THE REST OF EUROPE

Two important meetings were organised in Athens in September.

On 20 and 21 September, Greek women were invited by the Athens Office of the European Commission to a seminar on "The New Community Action Programme on the Promotion of Equal Opportunities for Women". On 22, 23 and 24 September, the European Parliament's Committee of Inquiry on the situation of women in Europe held a "public hearing".

There was a large turnout for this double gathering: representatives from women's organizations, ministers, members of parliament, top civil servants, journalists, etc.

It was the first time that so many women's organizations from such diverse backgrounds met to work together. It therefore provided an opportunity for a better overview of the situation of women in Greece and the action being undertaken by the Community.

Following the opening of the seminar by Professor Siotis, head of the European Commission's Athens Office, Ms Maria Kypriotaki-Perraki, Secretary of State for Public Health and Social Security, spoke of family planning and of the measures the government was intending to take. Her contribution immediately set the mood for the meeting, as she confirmed the government's political will to take specific measures in areas where previous action had only been taken by women's organizations.

This approach was confirmed by Ms C. Antoniou-Laiou, Special Advisor to the Prime Minister on Women's Affairs, who spoke of "the woman's role in Greece". In her speech, Ms Antoniou-Laiou announced the creation of a Consultative Council for Equality between Men and Women, scheduled to come into operation before the end of 1982. It will have nine members appointed by the Prime Minister and a secretariat to handle technical matters. It will thus be able to ensure the collaboration of all women's organizations.

Ms Antoniou-Laiou first spoke of the inequality and injustice still present in the legislation, and then went on to explain that the competent civil servants were examining the legal texts in order to remove the inequalities and conform scrupulously with the Community Directives. According to the agreed schedule, this process would be finished by the end of the year. Ms Antoniou-Laiou also mentioned the recent decree making possible the entry of women into certain "elite" colleges, previously reserved for men.

The acute problem of women's employment was dealt with at length by Ms G. Kravaritou-Manitaki, from the University of Salonica. She referred to supporting evidence, such as the fact that 85% of the women working in industry are unskilled. Numerous contributions from representatives of women's organizations painted a picture of Greek women's lives - the influence of tradition, women's dependence on their husbands' income, the resistance shown by a society which is patriarchal even in the workplace.

The Action Programme on Equal Opportunities, the role of the Advisory Committee on Equality, the information policy of the European Commission, the role

of the European Social Fund, the activities of CEDEFOP (European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training), inequalities in vocational training and education: these were the themes treated by women who are responsible for these fields in the European Commission.

The serious issue of how attitudes can be changed was at the core of all the questions asked and contributions made by seminar participants. Some of the comments were courageous and clear: "Of course", one young woman remarked, "it would be very good if men took over a bigger part of family responsibility; but are we ourselves always prepared to hand over some of our responsibilities some of our power in the home?"

At the end of the discussion it was clear that nothing is simple. The question of dowry, for instance, poses many problems. Very often, the dowry consists of a home for the young couple. It is very useful and welcome at the start of a marriage, and becomes valuable when as often happens one of the parents dies and the surviving one moves in with the young married couple, sharing the household tasks and the children's education, with all the obvious advantages and disadvantages that result. It is therefore not enough simply to turn one's back on the dowry system and make unpleasant comments about this "old-fashioned tradition"; the problem is further complicated by the fact that in Greece there is lack of space in primary schools. This is so acute that children go to school for half the day only - either in the morning or the afternoon, on a fairly worked-out rota system.

The contribution made by Lady Lockwood, Chairperson of the Committee for Equal Opportunities between men and women which advises the European Commission, was backed up by Ms S. Alexopoulos's comments. She is an expert on women's issues at the Ministry of Labour, and also a member of the Committee chaired by Lady Lockwood. Ms Alexopoulos indicated that the government was well disposed towards giving extremely wide powers to the body ensuring equality between the sexes. This body will not only be responsible for drawing up the broad guidelines for action, but it will also examine the texts and draft regulations in preparation, collect data and figures on equality, inform the social partners and the Labour Inspectorates, and, perhaps even help women to take cases to court if necessary.

At the close of the seminar, Ms Anna Haritou presented a summary of the seminar's work and then expressed a widely-shared feeling: she paraphrased the slogan used during the European Parliament election campaign ("Europe, a chance for women") saying "Women and Europe, a chance for Greece".

A public hearing, chaired by Ms Cinciari-Rodano, was organized by the Parliament's Committee of Inquiry into the Situation of Women in Europe, on 22 and 23 September. The proceedings were animated by the presence of several Greek women politicians: amongst them, the Minister for Culture, Melina Mercouri, the Secretaries of State for the Ministry for Social Security, Ms Kypriotaki-Peraki and Ms Kaklamanaki-Rigou, and the heads of the regional authorities of Attica and Zakynthos Ms Stafila and Ms Mitoai, and a number of women Parliamentarians. Ms Papan-dreou, wife of the Prime Minister and President of the Union of Greek Women (EGE) was also present, amongst more than 150 representatives from political, trade-union, economic, social and cultural circles.

A lengthy questionnaire, containing more than 100 questions, had been sent to the organizations invited, reflecting the concern of the members of the Parliamentary Committee of Inquiry. The speakers tried to answer some of these questions and promised to give more detailed written replies on others.

"The situation of women in Greece" is the title of a 100-odd page document prepared by Ms Konstantina Pantazi, member of the European Parliament, for the benefit of her colleagues. Apart from the useful information it contains, the so-called "Pantazi report" is interesting for what it omits as much as for what it contains. Ms Pantazi pointed out with regret that "there are no official figures on the participation of Greek women workers in the trade union movement". This example illustrates how much information work is still needed.

A participant observed that the lack of information was at the same time both the cause and the consequence of a very weak collective conscience. Problems faced by women are resolved on an individual basis. Abortion was a case cited to illustrate this point: in Greece it has never been the theme of large public demonstrations as has happened in other countries.

Several speakers underlined the fact that great progress has been made in the last few years in education, in legislation and in the political representation of women. However, much remains to be done, in particular with regard to social infrastructure, if Greek women are to have a real choice for their future.

Despite the important role played by Greek women in the Resistance during the last World war, their role remains minimal in contemporary Greek society. Various speakers resented the resistance shown by the structures in the different political parties. Women find themselves excluded from political activity, just as they are from the rest of society. As a result, Greek women feel "united" by a feeling of uselessness, since they are excluded from the decision-making process.

Is Greece's accession to the European Community a positive event? For several speakers, the reply was not self-evident. It was argued that the economic situation became still more serious after Greece's accession to the Common Market, and someone asked how Greek women could expect any improvement in a Community where so many women were unemployed.

Several delegates took a very clear stand against violence and the arms race. They argued that women's organizations had to campaign for peace and for everybody's well-being. The audience was particularly sensitive to such concerns, as news of the massacres in the Palestinian camps in West Beirut had just come through. As soon as the session opened, it was decided, on the proposal of Ms Le Roux (France Comm.) to send telegrams expressing the horror and grief of those attending the public hearing at the news of these massacres.

Speaking in a personal capacity and not as the Chairperson of the Committee of Inquiry, Ms Cinciari-Rodano touched on a delicate point brought up by various speakers: does Greece's membership of the Community entail advantages or disadvantages for women? "It is clear that this problem causes deep divisions in political camps, and not only in Greece" Ms Cinciari-Rodano remarked.

"It would be a mistake for the women's movement to confuse two issues: the crisis and membership of the Community", she continued. Economic problems existed before the Community: they are common to countries in the Community and those outside, she explained. The crisis makes women's emancipation more difficult and it is imperative to defend the rights already obtained. According to Ms Cinciari-Rodano, the fact that questions on women's issues had been taken up by a multinational body and that proposals for similar solutions in ten countries had been made was in itself a good thing. "This situation gives the women's movement great power and the possibility to fight in ten countries at the same time for common objectives."

In response to a concern voiced several times, Ms Cinciari-Rodano emphasized that it was not incompatible to be both politically committed and to act with determination in favour of women. Even within a political party with a male majority, a woman acts according to her own sensitivities and concerns. Similarly, women with different political outlooks can act in common in favour of women without abandoning their own political convictions. The Parliament's Committee of Inquiry on the Situation of Women in Europe was an example illustrating this point.

At the close of the session, Ms Cinciari-Rodano observed that the reality of the situation of Greek women today was being dynamically and profoundly altered, where the old and the new existed side by side, where there were old discriminations and acute problems, but from which, however, new ideas were emerging and where a process of change both in legislation and attitudes was beginning.

Towards the end of the stay in Greece, a visit was organized for the Parliament's Committee of Inquiry to the village of Psachna. This small 3,000-strong community lives from small and medium-sized farms, small family businesses and craft workshops.

A meeting was organized with a dozen women, and during the lively discussion which followed, these women gave members of the Committee some idea of what it is to be a working woman in this part of Peloponesus, where in fact the majority of women work.

Parliament's Committee of Inquiry and information

At a meeting in Brussels in October, the parliamentary Committee of Inquiry on the situation of women in Europe was addressed by Mr Natali, Vice-President of the European Commission, where he is responsible for information.

Mr Natali described the Commission's policy on information in broad terms then went on to mention specific activities and projects regarding the promotion of equal opportunities for women and men.

In the beginning of his speech, Mr. Natali outlined the two ways in which information could reach women: as European citizens, they would have access to all the information given to the public at large, in the same way as men; but also - and this was the main aim of specific Community action for women - they were the recipients of information specially designed to prompt them to engage in social and political life.

Mr Natali remarked on the rather remarkable success that the Commission's information activities had met with, saying that it met a widely-felt need and filled a gap. He added that experience showed it was easier to convince women - at least the ones who were active in women's organizations and groups, women's committees of political parties and unions, and so on - to rally round the concept of "Europe", for they had been quick to understand that the Community was a new reality and a new hope for overcoming narrow national dimensions and for removing the unfairness inherent in women's situation.

Turning to the Bonn Conference (see "Women of Europe No. 26"), Vice-President Natali felt that it had been a meeting which bore witness to the readiness of women's organizations to commit themselves to Community policies and to their desire to modify the Institution's actions and cooperate with them. But there were still some problems, Mr Natali said, giving as an example the need to extend the dialogue, through the way in which information was given, to other women as yet not touched because of the nature of their jobs or life-style. Another problem was to find a simple way of organizing women's cooperation as mentioned in the Action Programme, something which women's organizations had also talked much about in recent years. Mr Natali declared the European Commission's openness to any suggestions, which would be examined in a constructive spirit to see what help could be given.

As part of the Action Programme for Equal Opportunities (see "Women Of Europe, Supplement No. 9"), Vice-President Natali mentioned activities designed to make the public and the people directly concerned aware of the benefits of new attitudes. This would be done through more effective national information campaigns that national governments had agreed to launch. In addition to conferences, meetings and seminars in the Ten and in the countries that had applied to join them, specific activities would be undertaken with the women's press, radio and television channels and in universities. How much could be done would however depend on the 1983 budget, which was still under discussion, Mr Natali concluded.

Several Members of Parliament [Gloria Hooper (UK, Cons.), Hannah Maij-Weggen (Dutch, Chr. Dem.), Antoinette Spaak (Belg., FDF), Paola Giajotti (Ital., Chr. Dem.), Marlene Lenz (FRG, Chr. Dem.), and the Committee's Chairperson, Maria Lisa Cinciari-Rodano] all made speeches congratulating the Commissioner on the quality and commitment of the activities carried out so far, but calling for more staff to be assigned to the department responsible for women's information.

FACTS, INSTITUTIONS AND LAWS

GERMANY

In the Government

The new government team recently chosen by Helmut Kohl contains two women: Dorothee Wilms, Minister for Education, and Irmgard Karwatzki, Secretary of State at the Ministry for the Family, Health and Sports.

Dorothee Wilms, who is 52, has been a member of parliament since 1976 and has served in the German Parliament's Committee on Education and Sciences.

Useful address: Bundesministerium für Bildung und Wissenschaft
Pressestelle
53000 Bonn 1

On the concert platform

Madeleine Caruzzo, 26-year old solo violonist, is the first woman to join the "Berliner Philharmoniker" orchestra, whose conductor is Herbert von Karajan. Like all who play with the Philharmoniker Madeleine Caruzzo will have to be on trial for a year before she can be accepted as an "ordinary member" of the orchestra.

In local government

The number of women elected to top posts in local government is steadily increasing, recent statistics reveal. In 1982, 12.4% of all mayors are women, and women account for 15% of local council membership. The towns with the best "equality" records are Fribourg, with 29% of its local councillors women, and Munich with 25%.

Before the Tribunal

Questions put to women by employers about pregnancy are an infringement of the Constitution, and constitute sex discrimination. This was the judgment handed down by Frankfurt's Arbeitsgericht (Employment Tribunal). (Ref.: Az 5 A534/81).

Useful address: Arbeitsgericht Frankfurt
Pressestelle
6000 Frankfurt

Pregnancy and unemployment

The Zentrastelle für die Gleichberechtigung der Frau (Women's Equality Bureau) in Bremen is gathering evidence from women who feel they were prevented access to employment because of being pregnant. An unemployed woman lost her rights to a benefit because she had told her employer that she was hoping to have children.

Useful address: Zentralstelle für die Gleichberechtigung der Frau
Rathaus
28000 Bremen

At the wheel

German car producers say that men buy bigger and more expensive cars than women. A survey they carried out also showed that to women, a car represented a "tool" for their work, while for men it was a status symbol. This might explain why men "pamper" their cars. On the same subject, insurance companies have also noticed that women are more careful drivers than men.

In the textile industry

In the textile and garment industry, although women make up 78% of the work force, they only make 38% of the total wages paid out.

In the 1982 elections for works' committees in all sectors of industry, women obtained 19.3% of the seats, with 12% of the "chairmanships". In the textile and garment sector, women were elected to 55% of the seats and 54% of the "chairmanships".

Useful address: D G B - Textil und Bekleidung
Hans-Böckler-Haus
4000 Düsseldorf

Elections in Hamburg

During the last elections in the Hamburg Land (Regional government), candidates from the GAL (Grüne Alternative Liste - the Alternative Green Party), put forward by ecologists, did so well that even the party's own members were amazed. The "Green" platform called for a shorter working day, demanded a reduction in the amount of part-time work and insisted on women in the Hamburg region being consulted more often. 60% of those elected for the GAL party were women.

Useful address: G A L - Fraktion
c/o Bürgerschaft Rathaus Hamburg
2000 Hamburg 1

Women and advertising

Ellen Wolf, government official concerned with women's rights, described during a meeting with representatives from the advertising and publicity industry, how the image of women conveyed in advertisements can lead to increased sex discrimination. Her audience was convinced by Ellen Wolf's arguments and promised to be more responsible in this area in future. All those working in the field will have the matter brought to their attention through their relevant professional body.

Various women's organizations have already demanded that action be taken against any publicity using women in a degrading way and some of them have organized exhibitions which make the point very clearly.

Useful address: Ellen Wolf
Arbeitsstab Frauenpolitik
Bundesministerium für Familie, Jugend, Gesundheit
Kennedyallee, 105-107
53 Bonn 2

Salaries

A study commissioned in Nuremberg by the Labour Office shows that there is still a wide gap - 33% on average - between men's and women's salaries. This gap, even for the category where it is lowest (university graduates) is still 22%.

Women's position in the universities

Following up on work already done in the universities of Berlin and North Rhine-Westphalia, Hamburg University has just started its own research on the position of women in the universities.

A grant of DM 833 000 has been made available for the research which will be spread over 18 months. The subject will be "the situation and possibilities for women's research by a centralized or decentralized institution".

Useful address: Frau Stoltenberg
 Universität Hamburg
 Von-Melle-Park
 2000 Hamburg 1

Sick leave

Roswitha Verhülsdonk, a Member of Parliament (Christian Democrat) has taken a stand in public against the misconception that women take more time off from work than men for reasons of ill-health. The argument Roswitha Verhülsdonk makes is that the largest number of absences occur where there is low job-satisfaction. At the management level in firms, women take less time off than their male counterparts. On top of this, statistics often hide the fact that women stay at home to look after sick children, a responsibility which men are seldom prepared to share.

In the police

Until now, the three hundred or so women in the German police force have been restricted in the kind of jobs they do to parking offences, administrative jobs and so on. Now a shortage of men applying to join the police is giving women a better chance, and they are being hired in greater numbers, particularly in Berlin, Hesse, Hamburg, Lower Saxony and North Rhine-Westphalia.

In Düsseldorf, Herbert Schnoor, Minister of the Interior, has spoken very positively about women's role in the police. Senator Alfons Pawelczyk has made it quite clear that "women are particularly talented at avoiding confrontations and preventing situations from escalating".

As men and women both receive the same police training, they will soon be performing the same duties. It has been said that women applying to join the police are usually better-qualified than male applicants : more than a third of them have finished secondary school (i.e., have the equivalent of "A" levels) whereas only 20% of men have done so.

Useful address: Innenminister der Länder
 Nordrhein-Westfalen
 4000 Düsseldorf

In the construction industry

The ban on women working on building sites is provoking strong reactions from women. A new document has just been added to the case. This is a study carried out by a Professor Ruthenfranz, who claims that women's physical capacity is not sufficient to allow them to carry out jobs on construction sites. These jobs require not only muscular strength but good cardiac resistance and lung capacity. According to Prof. Ruthenfranz, 95% of women are unable to work on sites without damaging their health.

Mr. Farthmann, Minister for Employment and Social Affairs for North Rhine-Westphalia, has said that protection of health is an absolute priority and he has refused to change the laws currently in force. Only one exception is provided for: this is the case of the daughters of the owners of building firms who wish, eventually, to take over their fathers' businesses.

Women have protested very strongly against Prof. Ruthenfranz's findings and have stressed that the right to equal treatment should be the first consideration. They also point out that women accomplish very heavy tasks in hospitals, supermarkets, post offices and many other places.

Useful address: Ministerium für Arbeit und Soziales
 4000 Düsseldorf

Young women

A survey conducted by the Deutsche Jugendinstitut and published in the magazine "Brigitte" gives a new picture of young women in the 15-19 age bracket. Two sociologists have interviewed 1 148 young women and found that they are committed, critical and well-informed. In other words, they belong to a generation which is wide-awake.

58% of them view a job as the prime condition for economic independence. Going with this is an increased wish for education. For example, 67% of them were attending secondary school (compared with 29% of their mothers), and 14% want to go on to higher education. A sign of awareness : 73% of these young women feel that women are at a disadvantage in the job market and 30% of them are afraid that they will end up unemployed.

Marriage and a family are still on the horizon. Only 10% of them don't want to get married and only 6% don't want children. On the other hand, they make it clear that marriage is not incompatible with continuing to earn their own money.

Organizations, movements and associations hold no fears for them: 13% of them belong to one of the peace organizations, 30% are interested in them and 28% would like to know more. This means, in other words, that eight young women out of ten have a positive attitude toward some form of commitment.

"Brigitte" is one of the largest-circulation women's magazines in Europe, printing 1.3 million copies (it comes out every two weeks) and reaching an estimated 4.3 million readers.

Useful address: Brigitte
 Gruner + Jahr AG & Co
 Postfach 30 20 40
 2000 Hamburg 36

Women and the army

Should women be allowed to join the armed forces or not? There is a debate raging in Germany between men and women who believe that access to the army is part of women's equality of opportunity and those who cannot accept this point of view. Under the German Constitution, women are not allowed to enter military service, but any alteration to the law would require a two-thirds majority in the Bundestag (German Parliament).

Here are the views of Rita Fromm, a German Liberal MP, on the subject: women are now being encouraged to join the armed forces because the birth-rate is going down while the number of conscientious objectors is going up. This is not therefore a move towards equal treatment but is simply designed to solve a recruitment problem. Moreover, while Article 3 of the Constitution does provide equal rights for both sexes, it is well-known that in practice, the law is far from being realized. And there is nothing to guarantee that, in the army, women will have the same promotion prospects as men in active service. The example of Germany's neighbours leads to some scepticism on the matter.

Useful address: Rita Fromm
Bundeshaus
5300 Bonn 1

BELGIUM

Communal (local council) elections

In the recent run-up to the communal (local council) elections (October 1982), the Conseil national des Femmes belges and the Nationale Vrouwenraad van Belgie (the two Belgian Women's Councils, one French-speaking and the other Dutch-speaking) conducted a campaign with the slogan "In your area, put your trust in women too". This activity, designed to inform women and make them more aware of the role women can play had the blessing of the Prime Minister, the Minister for the Interior and the Ministers responsible for the two linguistic communities (see No. 25).

The Women's Committees of the political parties were consulted about the conception of the poster, and the 40-odd organizations affiliated to the National Council contributed to getting it put up not only in their own premises but in shops, offices, schools, workshops and outside employment offices.

The system of voting in local elections allows for "multiple" votes, in other words, one can support several women appearing on the same electoral list. However those behind the campaign did not exclude the possibility of voting for a male candidate, as well, if the voter favoured him. "We are convinced that men and women must work together at the local government level, for good results", they explained.

The campaign was launched by a press conference at which the two National Council chairwomen, Fanny Fuks and Lily Boekens, explained that their campaign was in response to the wishes expressed in the Action Programme for Equal Opportunities, adopted by the Commission, for it was "positive action" designed to get rid of inequality and to encourage the participation of women in the decision-making bodies which control our political world.

Attending the press conference was Mr. Charles-Ferdinand Nothomb, Belgium's Minister of the Interior, who gave the lie to a common fallacy that women are better represented at the local government level than they are nationally. According to Mr. Nothomb's figures, while 53% of the population is female, only 9.24% of local councillors, 6.4% of "aldermen" (deputy mayors) and 2.01% of mayors are women.

Specially prepared news flashes on the subject were put out by the Belgian radio and television stations during the campaign.

Useful addresses: Conseil national des Femmes belges
 16, avenue de la Toison d'Or
 1060 Brussels

 Nationale Vrouwenraad van België
 16, Guldenvlieslaan
 1060 Brussels

Women's Employment Commission

The Commission on Women's Employment in the Ministry for Labour and Employment has recently handed out two opinions concerning the effects of protective legislation on the access of women to certain occupations. The jobs in question are fire brigade personnel, funeral bearers and engineer officers on board ship.

For this last category, training schools have already shown great reluctance in accepting female trainees. The Women's Employment Commission is quite clear: women must be allowed in the engineering branches of naval training, since Article 124 of the 4 August 1978 law relating to access to vocational training does not allow for any exceptions.

With the other two jobs, there is a problem about women having access to them because of the Royal Decree of 24 December 1968 laying down lifting and carrying limits. Members of the fire service may have to move loads exceeding 27 kgs manually, to regularly transport loads exceeding 15 kgs and to carry out digging and excavation work. Funeral bearers too are required to carry average loads well over 27 kgs.

In its opinion, the Women's Employment Commission first of all recalls its general position, already expressed in 1979, when it called for the retention of certain protective legislation for occupations such as the transport of heavy loads and digging and excavation, while awaiting any research which might prove that such protection was unnecessary.

This time, the Women's Employment Commission is agreeing with the opinion of the Conseil Supérieur de Sécurité, d'Hygiène et d'Embellissement des lieux de travail (the Committee for Safety, Hygiene and Improvement of Work Surroundings) which recommends:

- determining the method used in transporting loads (mechanical, hydraulic, manual, etc.) in conjunction with the person responsible for Safety, Hygiene and Improvement of Working Surroundings and the doctor of the enterprise;

- eliminating discrimination against women in jobs involving digging and excavation since today these are performed with technological aids;
- abrogating the part of the regulations relating to work involving paint containing white-lead, since this product is now obsolete.

Where funeral bearers are concerned, the Women's Employment Commission adds that the present legislation is no longer applicable since it refers to a single bearer working alone; in reality, there are always several funeral bearers carrying a coffin.

In the prisons

It was in 1980 that the Ministry of Justice first asked the Women's Employment Commission whether the legislation on equal access could be waived as far as prison staff responsible for guarding prisoners out-of-doors was concerned. Its argument was that factors connected with life in detention might affect relations between prisoners and guards and perhaps also be a threat to security and good order in prisons.

The Women's Employment Commission at that time suggested waiving the equality legislation for two years while an experiment was being carried out in several prisons on the occupation of prison guards of the opposite sex to their prisoners.

The experiment was never organized, since too few men and women guards volunteered, and insufficient time was allocated to it (the prison authorities having decided that it should only extend over 3 months). According to the Women's Employment Commission, another hitch was probably the "lack of real enthusiasm for the outcome of the study".

The Ministry of Justice has now asked for the waiver to be extended, and the Women's Employment Commission has - rather angrily - insisted that the experiment it requested be properly organized and that it last a year at least. The Women's Employment Commission is actually convinced that the job of prison guard is equally accessible to women: experiments of this kind have been conducted in other European countries. It also recommends that certain precautions are taken to increase the chance of success of the operation. It finally wishes to be closely involved in the experiment so that it can "observe all the risks in the operation".

In its opinion, the Women's Employment Commission draws the Minister of Justice's attention to the fact that the Commission of the European Communities has not specified the job of prison guard as being one of the professions where, because of its nature or working conditions, the principle of equal access for both sexes can be overridden.

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

Local government elections

Anne-Marie Lizin, a member of the Socialists' Group in the European Parliament, headed the Socialist list in the town of Huy, in Liège province, at the recent local government elections. She polled an exceptional number of votes as a result of which she was elected mayor of her town (as from 1 January 1983).

DENMARK

Government posts

There are two women in the new government led by Mr Poul Schlüter (Cons.). They are Grete Fenger-Møller (Cons.), Employment Minister, and Britta Schall-Holberg (Lib.), Minister of the Interior.

Part-time work

The Danish Gallup conducted a poll recently which revealed that 85% of women wanted to see part-time work as an option for anybody with access to the job market. Only 7% of the people interviewed wish to see part-time work abolished.

These figures are politically significant, given that Danish trade union activists are currently pressing for an end to part-time work. Ms Løjberts, a well-known trade unionist, admits that the survey results came as a surprise but confirms that the unions will stick to their position.

1981 elections

The Ligestillingsrådet (Equality Council) has done a detailed analysis of the three elections which were held in Denmark in 1981: for local and district governments in November, and parliamentary elections in December. The study is published as a working document called "Valgene i 1981 - En Ligestillingsmaessig Belysning" (1981 elections - some lessons on equal rights).

"In our view, the results were modest", commented Helle Degn, President of the Ligestillingsrådet. With 42 women elected, the Parliament has exactly the same number of women as after the 1979 elections.

During the local government elections, the number of women councillors elected rose from the previous 17.7% to 21%. But it's the first time that each of the 275 councils in the country can boast at least one woman. In Birkerød, there are even nine women out of seventeen councillors. 25 councils have only one woman member, and the number of women mayors has risen from six to ten.

In the districts, 20.5% of district councillors are women against 14.6% in the previous elections.

The Ligestillingsrådet's study mentions the percentage of women candidates in each party, geographical differences between the number of men and women who stood and who were elected, and the way in which position on the electoral list influences results.

The capital and the suburbs of the large towns were the places where the largest proportion of women stood for election: 31.8% in Copenhagen, 22.2% in Bornholm and 22.9% in Viborg. West Jutland, with a rural population, had the lowest percentage of women candidates.

There was a general increase in the number of women candidates in almost all the political parties, with extreme left wing parties making a special effort to put women up. Thus, under the voting system in force, only 14.4% of all voters had no women to vote for in the party of their choice, against 21.1% in 1979. But the percentage varies according to the party. 33.3% of the People's Christian Party were unable to vote for a woman, whilst only 10% of communists or left-wing socialists were denied the choice of a woman.

At the end of its research, the Ligestillingsrådet notes that only stronger participation by women in the life of their political parties will enable democratic rules to be used better or more women to be put up on the electoral lists at election time.

Useful address: Ligestillingsrådet
 Frederiksgade 19-21
 1265 Copenhagen K

FRANCE

Equality in employment

The Ministry for Women's Rights has prepared a draft bill on equality at work. Its purpose is to put an end to discrimination wherever it occurs: in the wording of job vacancies, in the selection process, on salary, in-service training and promotion, and even in dismissal.

The bill, if passed, would also allow a union to bring charges on behalf of a victim of discrimination if the latter feared retaliation.

If they are so disposed, some employers can always find ways to avoid hiring women. But it will be difficult to confine women to low-paid jobs and to refuse them promotion without making themselves liable to prosecution. The new law would allow a judge to sentence a firm to comply with "a plan for employment equality", providing measures so that women could catch up with their male colleagues.

To ensure that equality really operates, the text of the bill provides for employers to present annual reports to the works' committees or staff representatives, in which the position of men and women is compared as regards numbers employed, salaries, conditions and so on.

A "Governing Board for Employment Equality" composed of both sides of industry will see to it that the law is applied and suggest ways of applying it.

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

Information campaign

Since she took up the post of Minister for Women's Rights, Yvette Roudy has made it a point to mount annual information campaigns aimed at changing attitudes in specific areas where women are concerned.

The information campaign on the right to contraception is ending this autumn with a 6-part television serial with contraception as its theme on the third French channel (FR3). At the same time, a new campaign is being launched, this time on the subject of equal employment opportunities.

The campaign is the work of Christiane Gilles, technical adviser to Ms Roudy on matters of women's employment and training. The campaign is designed by the same advertising agency which handled François Mitterand's publicity during the Presidential elections. The slogan which we shall see and hear during the coming 18 months is "Allez les femmes, supprimons les obstacles !" (Come on women, break down the barriers!) The first poster which has come out shows a man and woman at the starting line of a race. But the man has a flat race track in front of him while the woman faces a set of obstacles as though she's hurdling.

Spread over three phases, the campaign will be launched through TV spots showing the position of women in the French working world. The second phase will emphasize vocational training for young women. The third phase has not yet been announced but it will probably show examples of equality in employment which have been carried on by pilot firms.

Abortion and public hospitals

A decree has just entered into force in France concerning voluntary termination of pregnancy in public hospitals. The text obliges public hospitals with a surgical or maternity unit to "have the means for voluntary terminations of pregnancy" geared to "meeting local needs". The Women's Rights Ministry puts the potential demand for abortions at 2% of the female population in the 15 - 45 age bracket.

Hospital departments where abortions are carried out have six months in which to be registered as "centres for family planning". They will give information and offer consultations, examinations and all the prescriptions connected with fertility control, including free medication, products or contraceptive devices to persons eligible for welfare.

The novelty of this decree is that it regulates both abortion and contraception in public hospitals. It has happened all too frequently that women who undergo abortions have great difficulty in obtaining proper and complete information on contraception afterwards.

Should the cost of abortions be reimbursed to patients? The French Government intends to debate this issue before putting it to the vote.

Interviewed by the press on this subject, Simone Veil has stated that if she was in parliament she would vote in favour of women having free abortions under their health schemes, saying that "it is often the most deprived women who have to resort to abortions".

Top post

Ms Michèle Cotta, journalist and a graduate of the Institut d'études politiques in Paris, has just been appointed to the top post in the newly-created Governing Board for Audiovisual Communication (Haute autorité de la Communication Audiovisuelle). Ms Cotta has already been head of Radio-France.

Equality and the tax man

63% of married women of working age are employed. But the tax system is geared to single men and women or couples where the wives are not earning. Retention of the concept of "head of family" in French tax law is a total denial of the independence of married women, who play little part in the family's tax return and are not recognized by the tax authorities as having any legal right to enter into discussion with them.

In contradiction to this, when troubles occur in a couple - when for instance the husband cannot pay the household or family business tax dues or when he has disappeared after a divorce - the woman has then to take on the responsibility for his debts.

It is to end anomalies like this that Yvette Roudy, Minister for Women's Rights, would like to see spouses treated the same way by the tax laws. As a first step, the principle of having both marital partners sign the tax return and the abolition of the concept of "head of family" have both been adopted and will be put into force for 1983 returns. The couple will decide jointly which of them is to be responsible to the tax authorities.

Ghislaine Toutain, a member of parliament for Paris, has been put in charge of studying various approaches to the problem, looking at ways of having separate taxation and of how, in such a case, the question of dependent children would be handled. Ms Toutain's report has to be finished by the end of the year and will be sent to the Prime Minister, Ms Roudy and to Mr Fabius, the budget minister.

Women and research

"Research on women is vital to the country": this is the view of Maurice Godelier, author of a report on human sciences addressed to Mr Chevènement, Minister for Scientific Research.

"Research on women and feminist studies, far from just being a scientific curiosity, must be recognized by research bodies as insights into some of society's new options", Mr Godelier says. For this reason, he has proposed setting up an interdisciplinary committee in the Centre national de la Recherche scientifique (Science Research Centre) which would support research projects on women and on male-female relations, and would recruit officially-recognized research workers in this field.

The Women's Rights Ministry has asked the Scientific Research Ministry for funds for five basic research programmes on law, employment, language, history and free time.

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

France in 1990

In an article on France in 1990, the weekly L'Express produced a list of the hundred men and women who will "make" and "be" this France of 1990. There are only nine women in the list, three in the cultural sphere (an actress, a dancer, a pianist), three in the sphere they describe as "society" (a woman priest, a fashion designer and a rally driver). The three others are a senior official, a trade unionist and an ethnologist. It would be interesting to hear the views of the 91 men in the list on what the outlook for equal opportunities will be in 1990.

Useful address: L'Express
61, avenue Hoche
75380 Paris Cedex 08

GREECE

New Council for Equal Rights

At the beginning of September, the Greek Parliament passed a law bringing into being an advisory body for the promotion and achievement of equality. The new law also covers practical details as to how the body will run.

The lack of a government department with specific responsibility for women's affairs has been felt severely in recent years. All the women's organizations insisted on having one, and many parties included it in their platform at the last elections.

The government text gives the new body authority to study, prepare and propose measures for achieving full and complete equality. It will have money to pay for specialized research. An earlier version of the bill had proposed setting up a special group of three people in each Ministry with responsibility for women's issues and sexual discrimination, but this proposal was turned down as a result of the debate in the House.

The new body will come under the Minister responsible for the public service in the Prime Minister's office, but will have complete autonomy in its initiatives and activities. The chairperson and members will be appointed by the Prime Minister.

The new Council for Equal Rights has been generally well-received, though with criticisms here and there. These relate to the way in which the members are appointed, and the size of the Council. This is seen as too small to be truly representative of Greek society.

Bank of Greece

For the first time in 160 years, a woman has been made a director of the Bank of Greece. She is Ms K. Kokkota, an expert in economic and financial affairs.

On television

The TV channel YENED recently broadcast two series of programmes on women.

The first was called "Portreta" (Portraits). It was a series of six short films describing the background and daily lives of six contemporary women. Produced by women, the series went on the air at an unpopular viewing time and was not greeted as well as had been hoped. This may also have been because the portraits were not sufficiently unusual.

The second series, called "Genithika Gyneka" (Born a Woman.), consisted of six weekly half-hour programmes, each of which dealt with one theme (e.g. birth of a baby girl, woman-as-object) close to the heart and life of women audiences.

Producers of the programme, which was described as "objective and imaginative", were Ms P. Kefala-Karakatsani and Ms A. Rapitou, already well-known for their women's radio programme.

Economic planning

A woman has been appointed as Director-General of KEPE (Economic Research and Planning Centre), a body which works closely with the government on decisions of a political or economic nature. She is Ms L. Katseli.

IRELAND

In the Seanad

Ms Tras Honan, a senator and member of the governing Fianna Fail party, has become "Cathaoirleach" (Chairperson) of the Seanad (Irish second chamber). It is the first time in the history of Ireland that the Seanad has had a woman president.

In opposition

Garret Fitzgerald leader of the opposition party Fine Gael, has appointed two women to his shadow cabinet. They are Nuala Fennell, spokesperson for women's affairs and Gemma Hussey, who has the arts, cultural affairs and broadcasting portfolio. Both women became active in politics through the women's movement.

Nora Barnacle

The centenary of James Joyce (immortalized through his book "Ulysses") was celebrated strikingly in Ireland. Irish women did not let the occasion pass without paying tribute to Joyce's companion, Nora Barnacle, whose freshness and simplicity found their echo in Joyce's heroines, Molly Bloom and Anna Livia Plurabelle.

Courts' powers

A recent law, allowing district courts the power to decide which parent should have custody of the children of broken marriages, has already met with criticism.

The Courts Act 1981 was brought in so that families could settle custody and guardianship without recourse to expensive and delayed proceedings in the High Court. But the law came into force before district judges had received any guidelines for dealing with cases.

Women's groups working on aspects of family law say the situation demonstrates the need for a system of family tribunals to be instituted.

ITALY

The Council of State and women

Women are not allowed to enrol in a military academy and are thus excluded from the army. This judgment was handed down by the Council of State thus overturning a decision of the Regional Administration Tribunal of Tuscany under which a woman student from Trieste had been accepted by the Leghorn Naval Academy.

Diadora Bussani, who had already graduated in science from Trieste University, started her campaign to get into the Naval Academy three years ago. She thought she had succeeded when, last year, the Tuscany Tribunal decided that Article 51 of the Constitution guaranteed all citizens regardless of sex access to the public service and elective grades, on completely equal terms.

However, this spring, the Council of State suspended the tribunal's decision and then confirmed the opinion of the State Advocate, who had brought the matter before the Council on behalf of the Ministry for Defence and the Leghorn Naval Academy.

Women and the steel industry

Fourteen women have been given jobs in the Dalmine steel works, alongside male workers. They were taken on after a month's trial, in agreement with the works committee. This is not the very first example of women working in the steel industry, but the situation is becoming more frequent and is worth mentioning.

The jobs women are doing at Dalmine are in the fitting and tube finishing shops, but there is no reason why they cannot work in foundries or rolling mills. Dalmine has for some time been operating the "continuous flow" system, at the peak of technical progress in the steel industry.

A law against sexual violence

The Committee on Justice in the Chamber of Deputies has already approved a bill on sexual offences. In a report presented to the Chamber by Angela Bottari, the most important changes in the new text are that it is now individuals and their freedom which are seen as the true victims of sexual violence, rather than viewing the crimes as attacks on public morals, manners or indecency, as in the past.

The new text does not distinguish between "carnal violence" and "violent acts of lust". It also provides for automatic prosecution for sexual offences, except where spouses or common law couples are concerned, when charges still have to be made. The right to sexuality is recognized for minors, and the physically and mentally handicapped. When cases are being examined or heard, the police and the court are not allowed to question victims on their sexual relations: they must limit themselves to the facts of the offence.

Sentences will be heavier when the crime has been committed by relatives or the guardian of the victim or if a group is involved. The bill, which only contains twelve clauses, allows organizations (such as women's groups) to bring charges.

Laura Remiddi, a lawyer who specializes in family law and an adviser to the women's liberation movement, says that she is satisfied that "all the demands made by the women's movement have been included".

A woman chairing the synod

Giuliana Gandolfo, a priest in Italy's Protestant Church, presided over that body's synod this summer in Torre Pellice. She was the first woman ever to do so. The Chiesa Valdese-Metodista (the Methodist-Val d'Aosta Church) is unique in that it pre-dated Luther by centuries, since it was founded in 1170. It has 30,000 members mainly from the Val d'Aosta region, hence its name, and a few years ago merged with Italy's 6,000-strong Methodist Church, a fact also reflected in its name.

Responsible parenthood

The Consulta Femminile Regionale (regional advisory committee) in Lombardy has been working on the theme "Birth control and information for responsible sexuality and parenthood" and has organized a meeting on it.

As a result of the work, the need for better contact between family planning centres and hospitals carrying out abortions has emerged. A detailed analysis of family planning centres shows up the fact that they do not exist everywhere in Italy, that only ten of them have regular contacts with schools and enterprises, that 32 have no contact at all with factories or other places of work and that 24 only have contacts with schools.

34 of the family planning centres do work together with hospitals but this is limited to preventing abortion and distributing contraceptives. 24 of the centres have no contact with hospitals.

It appears that the best results are obtained in centres which are run by a committee trying to improve relations with the local authorities, enterprises, schools and in some cases, the hospitals.

The meeting organized by Lombardy's Consulta Femminile Regionale has enabled it to strengthen its role as a mobilizer of political, social and union forces, as well as of the health authorities.

Useful address: Regione Lombardia
Consulta Femminile Regionale
Via F. Filzi, 22
Milano

LUXEMBOURG

Part-time work

Following the announcement by the Luxembourg Government that it intended to offer part-time work only to people with children under the age of 4 (not 12, as the limit has been till now) part-time work (in all its various forms) has become the subject of extensive discussions.

In a recent message to the President of the Government, Mr Pierre Werner, women of the Social-Christian party insisted first of all that part-time work should be viewed as a way of making work go round, and it should therefore be widely available as a possibility, without consideration of the family situation.

These women also stressed that part-time work should not be a cause of discrimination. They feel, nevertheless, in the interests of running the public service efficiently, that a study should be carried out to see how many part-time jobs are available in the various departments.

They also believe that officials who are refused part-time work should have some form of appeal open to them. Finally, because they see part-time work as a means for many parents of combining their two roles, the Social-Christian women have called on their Head of Government to take decisions bearing in mind demographic policy, as defined in the recent "Calot Report".

Revision of pension system

The Women's Employment Committee has adopted a report on women's insurance and pension rights, in view of a forthcoming revision of the law being planned by the Luxembourg Government.

In the report, the Committee asks that the law make a positive contribution to non-discrimination and that legal recourse be established over questions of social security, to guarantee equal treatment for men and women.

The Committee also recommends that the provisions made for the voluntary insurance qualifying period for spouses of artisans, traders and factory owners be brought into line. It would also be fair, the Committee feels, if the time taken in bringing up children (allowing six years for each child) were taken into account when calculating minimum pensions and flat-rate supplements.

Among the anomalies it would like removed, the Committee mentions the less-than 15 years age difference that is required in cases where marriage has lasted less than ten years. In addition, the ten-year period of living together needed in some cases before spouses' pension rights are granted should be reduced to one year.

The Committee is also concerned over the provisions which will remove the concept of joint earnings. It feels that this should only be done over a certain threshold, otherwise it will no longer be worthwhile for women to take on paid employment.

Useful address: Comité du travail féminin
 10, rue C.M. Spoo
 Luxembourg

STOP PRESS : In the new Netherlands government, Ms Smit-Kroos has been given the post of Minister for Rivers and River Transport. The Development Cooperation portfolio has gone to another woman, Ms Schoo (who is Chairperson of the Emancipatieraad (Equality Council))

NETHERLANDS

Employment legislation

The Netherlands Government has said that it is about to revise employment legislation, which is out-of-date on a number of points. The main clauses to receive attention will be the length of the working day and protection against harmful substances.

The Emancipatieraad, the government advisory body on equality issues, feels that not enough notice has been paid to its comments on women's interests. In a letter to the Government, the Emancipatieraad argues that the maximum number of hours per day of work should be fixed more precisely so that it would be easier for both men and women to combine their jobs with household and educational tasks at home.

The Emancipatieraad also considers that unfair discrimination between men and women is embodied in the legislation concerning protection against harmful substances. So much protection is envisaged for pregnant women or women of child-bearing age that they will be virtually excluded from a large part of the job-market. The main claim however is that any difference between men and women in the laws is unfair in principle. If working conditions are unsuitable for a pregnant woman, then they are unsuitable for all workers, men and women alike, says the Emancipatieraad in its letter to the Government.

Useful address: Emancipatieraad
 Sir W. Churchilllaan 366-368
 Rijswijk

Pornography

The issue of the law on pornography continues to worry women in the Netherlands. The Minister for Justice, Mr. Job de Ruiter, will shortly be submitting proposals for amending the law. The text in force at present dates from 1911 and deals with pornography as a punishable offence; it is this clause that the Minister proposes removing given current attitudes to the subject. The women's organizations have expressed their doubts over what the Minister is planning.

The Minister of Justice says that he has taken account of the findings of a conference on sexual violence against women organized by the previous Secretary of State for Women's Equality, the socialist Hedy d'Ancona. At the meeting the idea was brought up that pornography should not be allowed to "shock" those who came across it unexpectedly and that this should be the criterion used in the new law. Mr Scheltema, the then Secretary of State for Justice, who attended the conference, thought that this was an "interesting suggestion".

In the bill now being examined "unexpected confrontation" is being declared punishable, with special measures being included to protect young people. But the idea of "shock" accompanying the confrontation has been dropped from the text.

The conference mentioned above also wanted a bureau to be opened where complaints about what the Dutch term "unwanted intimacy in the workplace" could be received. The Government was asked to set a good example by ensuring that public servants were not guilty of harassing women sexually. The Secretary of State for Justice thought there was food for thought here, suggesting that it would be a good idea to have an enquiry to find out whether "unwanted intimacy" lay behind any dismissals of women from work. A grant could also be found to advance the state of knowledge on sexual violence against women and girls.

The ideas that came out of the conference are going to be incorporated into government guidelines which should be ready by the end of the year. A more consistent policy on combatting sexual violence should result.

Useful address: Ministerie van Justitie
 Scheldedoekshaven 100
 The Hague

Driving licences

The economic crisis is resulting in couples having less money to spend on driving lessons for the women. According to the Centraal Bureau Rijvaardigheidsbewijzen (Central Driving Licence Office) at Rijswijk, there has been a drop of 57,000 in one year in the number of people taking tests, much of which is due to a reduction in the number of women over 22 applying.

These are what are thought of as "second licences": the ones belonging to the wife who may or may not have her own car, but who wants to learn to drive and get her licence. If there is only one in the family with a driving licence, naturally it will be the man who has it.

Women and technical skill

Women doing jobs normally reserved for men are generally appreciated by their employers. Such is one of the findings of an experiment on equal access through vocational training started in 1980.

From the first year, 37 firms took part in the project whose objective was to make it easier for young women to go and visit the kind of firm they were interested in. The project covered a number of sectors: metal work, carpentry, electrical installations, painting etc.

At the outset, the young women had only vague technical knowledge, due to the kind of traditional education they had received. But with the help of the explanations they received at the place of work itself, they were quickly able to make up for this.

Half of the firms involved would give preference to young women again in future, they said. Painting firms were the ones to be particularly pleased with the performance of their female workers.

Usefull address: Ministerie van Sociale Zaken en Werkgelegenheid
 Zeestraat 73
 The Hague

UNITED KINGDOM

Code of practice for employers

British employers will have no excuse for not knowing the law on equal opportunity for women and men at work if Parliament approves the Code of Practice: Procedures and Practices in Employment, compiled by the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC). This is due to be sent to the Minister of Labour at the end of the year.

The EOC draft is based on an original document sent out to employers, trade unions and governments in January 1981 and it explains in simple form what the Sex Discrimination Act 1975 says about equal opportunities in employment, and what this means in practice at the workplace.

Although it is still open to amendment, Baroness Lockwood, Chairperson of the EOC, made clear that the Code is regarded as a "fundamental instrument" in promoting equality of opportunity for women. The Code insists that only in very exceptional circumstances should sex play any part in deciding on the composition of the workforce and that job advertising, selection and promotion should be totally impartial.

The Code proposes that management should issue a statement setting out commitment to equal opportunity, its opposition to discrimination on grounds of sex or marriage and its determination to adopt appropriate procedures and practices.

On the trade union side, collective agreements should take account of these principles.

Some firms have already introduced measures similar to those mentioned in the Code, and are carefully monitoring results.

Lady Lockwood made it clear that the Code would have no legally binding force on employers, but would be taken into account in sex discrimination and equal pay industrial tribunal cases.

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

London concern for women

The Greater London Council - Britain's most heavily populated local authority - has appointed a women's committee.

The Committee, thought to be the first set up by a local Council, will be officially responsible for promoting the welfare and interests of women in London. It will start by paying special attention to the effect of the new technologies on women's employment in London, to sexism in the media, the health and child-care needs of women in the capital and the problem of taxation and national insurance.

The Chairperson, 25-year old Valerie Wise, the youngest woman on the GLC, told a reporter: "This is a major step forward, but we are still behind other countries, for example France, where there is a Minister for Women".

Useful address: Women's Committee
 Valerie Wise
 Room 175, County Hall
 London SE1 7PB

Where is a woman's place?

An Employment Appeal Tribunal has ruled that a woman's place was not necessarily where her husband's job took him, and it could no longer be lawfully assumed that a wife would give up her job to join her husband.

Beatrice Horsey had challenged the Dyfed County Council, a Welsh local authority, on the grounds that they had refused to send her on a training course because they feared that her husband's change of job meant that she would soon be leaving her own job as a social worker with the Council.

The Judge said that the Sex Discrimination Act did not only cover allegations of discrimination on grounds of sex or marital status, but far more common cases

where the reason for the discrimination was a generalised assumption that people of a particular sex or marital status possessed or lacked certain characteristics. The Dyfed County Council, he said, "had made a general assumption on the basis of her sex that she would follow her husband's job". Such assumption was unlawful.

Women's earnings on a plateau

A new earnings survey shows that women's hourly earnings were 74.8% of those of men in 1981 - a slight improvement on 1980, but less than in 1976 and 1977, when equal pay legislation came into force.

This situation can only be changed by amendment of the Equal Pay Act on the lines required by Community legislation, the Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC) insists in its Sixth Annual Report.

"Women's relative earnings have reached a plateau, and are unlikely to show any significant improvement so long as the law remains unaltered", the EOC declares. The reason is that women remain concentrated in a narrow range of occupations where job evaluation is insignificant because so few men work in these industries.

In 1981 the EOC was increasingly concerned with discrimination against women in redundancy schemes and with discrimination in the schools. It also received several complaints from women about "sexual harassment" in their jobs, alleging that failure to respond to sexual overtures from male colleagues had caused them loss of promotion or even dismissal.

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

In Northern Ireland

The Northern Ireland Equal Opportunities Commission is also calling for reform of the Equal Pay Act which it considers to be out of date and failing in its objective of equalizing men's and women's pay.

It has set out 14 proposals for change, including the introduction of a "hypothetical man" clause in new legislation which would enable women to secure the sort of pay men would receive were they to do the women's jobs. This would help to overcome the problems of low pay found in industries and services where women predominate.

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

And the European Social Fund?

During the last three years not one request has been received by the European Social Fund (ESF) from Northern Ireland to promote vocational training for women. To remedy the situation, a conference was organized recently by the Northern Ireland Equal Opportunities Commission (EOC), in conjunction with the European Communities Information Office in Belfast. It aimed to show women and also people in business and the public services the advantages of ESF.

Janet Trewsdale of Queen's University, Belfast, made a speech which painted a depressing picture of the job situation of women in Northern Ireland and showed that the concern expressed by Muriel Wilson, EOC Chairman, was fully justified. The latter spoke of the importance of training, describing it as essential to the achievement of real equality in the world of work. On behalf of the EOC she also hoped to see a specific women's project launched in Northern Ireland, with assistance from the ESF. The conference also heard first-hand accounts of successful experiments from Italian, British and Irish women.

Useful address: Information Office of the European Communities
 Windsor House
 9/15 Bedford Street
 Belfast - N-I

P R I X N O B E L

The 1982 Nobel Peace Prize has been awarded jointly to the Swedish woman Alva Myrdal and the Mexican man Alfonso Garcia Robles, for their efforts to achieve disarmament.

Alva Myrdal, who is 80, has been working for women's rights since 1930, advocating equality, the idea of family allowances, kindergartens, and sexual education. In 1955 she was the first Swedish woman to serve as an Ambassador and in 1962 entered parliament. She became Minister for Religious Affairs and later represented Sweden at the disarmament conference in Geneva. Alva Myrdal has said that it would be "insane" to deploy 572 nuclear missiles in Europe.

Alva Myrdal has already received the Einstein Prize (in 1980) for her pacifist activities.

MILITANT ACTIVITIES

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Widows and widowers

With the initials F I A V (standing for Fédération internationale des associations de veufs et de veuves) an International Federation of Widows' and Widowers' Associations was formed in the Netherlands in 1981. The Federation now includes thirteen different associations from eleven countries in four continents.

The F I A V has just brought out its first newsletter and its Dutch chairman, Jan van der Heijden, is trying to contact all organizations, in any country, with similar aims. June Hemer, Chairwoman of the National Association of widows has been made responsible for this research.

Useful address: F I A V
J.J. Cremerstraat, 1
NL-6665 CZ Driel O.B.

Women heads of firms

The 31st Congress of Women Heads of Firms will be held in Brussels in June 1983. Women taking part in the 30th Congress in Vichy, France, examined the special problems affecting small and medium-sized firms with respect to financing and access to new technologies. One of the Congress's recommendations was that specialized departments should be formed in all countries to advise small and medium-sized firms, along the lines of financial bodies already existing in some countries.

Useful address: Les Femmes chefs d'entreprises mondiales
Boulevard Général Wahis, 15
1030 Brussels

Women and Men

A group called Women and Men, founded by Raymond Lloyd, is paying close attention to the posts of Director General in the ILO and the WHO, both of which are soon to be refilled.

In a letter to the Ambassadors of the member countries of the two organizations, Raymond Lloyd points out that in the 64 years of the ILO's existence and the 35 years of the WHO's, the person at the top has always been a man. He politely suggests that there are women capable of running the organizations and attaches two lists of fifteen or so names of women with outstanding abilities and long experience.

Useful address: Women and Men
10 Piazza Albania
00153 Rome

The press and change

It was at Lake Balaton in Hungary that members of the International Association of Journalists from the Women's and Family Press (A I J P F) met for their 10th International Congress, on the theme of the women's press and changes in patterns of living. It was the first time the Association had held its meeting in an Eastern European country.

Women at the conference stressed the need for the women's and family press to be alert where new rights and those still to be gained were concerned, otherwise there was a risk that these would be ignored for demographic, national, economic or other reasons. The participants also said they would ensure continuous action by journalists to foster constructive trends in our society, avoiding concentrating on sensational news stories.

The congress elected the Canadian Lily Tasso to succeed the French woman Jacqueline Chabaud as the Association's Chairperson.

Useful address: A I J P F
 c/o I P C
 Boulevard Charlemagne 1 Bte 54
 1040 Brussels

GERMANY

Trade Union President

Monica Wulf-Mathies, aged 40, is the first-ever woman to be elected as President of a Trade Union in Germany. With 1.2 million members, the O T V Union has members from government departments, and the transport and communications sectors. An economics and history graduate, Monica Wulf-Mathies worked in the Ministry for Economic Affairs and the West German Chancery before joining the executive committee of the O T V.

Women living in the country

Re-elected Chairperson of the Deutscher Landfrauenverband (German country women's association) Adelheid Lindemann Meyer is worried: the number of women living in the country continues to decline. In 1970, there were 1.7 million such women, in 1980 only 1.3 million. With almost half a million members the Deutscher Landfrauenverband is however still one of the largest women's organizations in Germany, increasing its membership by about 12,000 between 1980 and 1981.

The Frauenverband will step up vocational training for country women and encourage women farmers to specialize. It is also campaigning for a better retirement pension for women in agriculture.

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

Witches on bikes

Three hundred or so women motor cyclists have started an organization called Hexenring (Witches' Circle). As well as just wanting to get together to talk about bikes and to organize rallies, the women feel that by joining forces they can help each other in case of breakdowns, accidents or simply just to ride together.

Useful address: Renate Sardemann
 Am Katteloh 12
 5810 Witte-Stockum

Animal protection

The German League for the Protection of Animals (Deutscher Tierschutzverein) intends to boycott cosmetics produced by firms which experiment on animals. They have circulated a list of firms accused of this practice.

Useful address: Bürger gegen Tierversuche
 Siebenweg 1
 2000 Hamburg 55

Feminist publications

Journalists working on feminist papers are losing the habit of getting together to exchange ideas and talk about their concerns. At one of their rare meetings, they expressed disappointment that Germany had no feminist publications archives, so it was agreed that Stuttgart's women's library should fulfil this role. Each paper or periodical will send copies of past and future issues there.

Useful address: SARAH - Frauenkulturzentrum
 Johannesstr. 13
 7 Stuttgart 1

Women's portrayed in the media

Dr Helga Thieme, President of the Deutscher Frauenrat (German Women's Council) held talks with Dr Dankwart Rost, President of the Deutscher Werberats (German Advertising Council) to inform him of the poor opinion of women's organizations of the way women are usually portrayed in advertisements.

The discussion was positive, ranging over ways in which women's views could be put into practice, for example through advertising firms monitoring their own advertisements. Dr Thieme and Dr Rost agreed to meet regularly in 1983 to look into all cases of abuse and work out new approaches to the problem.

Useful address: Deutscher Frauenrat
 Südstrasse, 125
 5300 Bonn 2

BELGIUM

A "Woman of the Year" Award

The French-speaking branch of the Belgian National Council of Women has just instituted a Woman of the Year Award on the suggestion of its Press Committee.

The aim of the prize will be to reward the woman who, through her work in Belgium, has contributed the most to promoting women's position or integration on the political, economic or social level. If such activities form part of a woman's normal job, they should be notable for the impact they make or their degree of success.

The award will be adjudicated on the second Tuesday in January and the prize will be presented publicly a month later.

Useful address: Conseil national des Femmes belges
 Prix de la "Femme de l'Année"
 1a, Place Quételet
 1030 Brussels

Keys to employment

In the present crisis, to create one's own job may be a sensible option for women entering the job market late on. But to be self-employed, a knowledge of management is needed in addition to one's technical know-how. For this reason, the Centre féminin d'Education permanente (CFEP - Women's Centre for Permanent Education) has been running management training courses for some years now, under the title of "Keys to Employment".

These special courses have been so successful that the CFEP decided to put on a course to help women get into management posts, with financial aid from the European Social Fund.

This parallel professional training scheme lasted four months. There were 26 women, aged between 25 and 54, on the course, none of whom had university or equivalent education. The special feature of the scheme was that the course teachers were all women who had specialized in adult education.

The actual training was supplemented by practical work adapted to the many demands of the working world and by taking on responsibilities. In addition, there were lectures on the special problems of being a woman in management.

At the end of the course, nearly all the participants either completed their project or found a job corresponding to their new qualifications. Sulamite Peretz, the leader of the "Keys to Employment" project says that this success was because the training had been designed by women, for women, in a women's centre.

Useful address: Sulamite Peretz
 Clés pour le Travail
 C.F.E.P. asbl
 1a, Place Quételet
 1030 Brussels

In Memoriam - Nelly Wiener

For almost 30 years, Nelly Wiener set an example of generosity and cheerful tolerance in the Belgian National Council of Women and the International Council of Women. With unusual devotion and tact, Nelly Wiener, who spoke many languages, moved around the world tirelessly, drawing the many threads of solidarity ever tighter.

Lack of personal ambition lead her to think in terms of jobs to be done efficiently rather than honours to be won. She had been ill for several years. Nellie Wiener faced her death as she had her life: with a rare mixture of lucidity and courage, humour and gentleness.

Hope

Refuges for battered women have become more common in Belgium. Here are some of their phone numbers (correct this time, unlike those which were published in our last issue) :

Brussels:	02/539.27.44
Liège Province:	041/23.42.85
Hainaut Province:	064/21.43.33
Namur Province:	081/71.55.45
Luxembourg Province:	063/21.46.82

Family allowances

The Comité de Liaison des Femmes (Women's Liaison Committee) is taking action against the Belgian Government's decision to reduce or cut out family allowances for only children. In the Committee's view all children are born equal and each of them should be entitled to the same child benefit (though the present allowance is far too little on which to bring up a child).

The Committee moreover believes that children are subject to social and economic inequality which should be corrected by other means.

It is opposed to confusing the issues of the number of children and the social and economic status of parents. Some parents find it a greater burden to bring up an only child than others do to raise several. Finally, the Committee comes out against any measure aimed at influencing parents' choice about the size of their family.

Useful address: Comité de Liaison des Femmes
 1a, Place Quételet
 1030 Brussels

La Rabouilleuse

The women's bookshop "La Rabouilleuse" (a character in French fiction named for her occupation of shrimp-fishing), which nearly closed recently, has risen from its own ashes, under a new kind of management. It is now a cooperative whose members are women's organizations. La Rabouilleuse, which is feminist without being sexist, naturally opens its door to male customers. It also wishes to decentralize and will be organizing book depots in the provinces.

Useful address: La Rabouilleuse
 221, chaussée d'Ixelles
 1050 Brussels

Dialogue with employers

The Nationale Vrouwenraad van België (Dutch-speaking branch of the Belgian National Women's Council) has started a dialogue with employers to study the problems of women's work.

In an open letter to employers, Lily Boeykens, Chairperson of the Nationale Vrouwenraad, tells bosses they must stop considering women simply as a reserve labour force: at a time when creativity and an ability to come up with new ideas are more necessary than ever, it would be a mistake to ignore the special contribution women can make.

After urging employers to play a more active part in providing women with vocational training, Lily Boeykens calls for closer collaboration between industry and the educational authorities, since educators need to be brought up to date on the latest advances in technology.

These contacts with employers will continue and each problem area will be looked at separately, including some of the sensitive areas such as absenteeism.

Useful address: Nationale Vrouwenraad van België
 Middaglijnstraat, 8
 1030 Brussels

DENMARK

Equal Rights through Positive Action

The question is no longer "should positive action be taken to help women" but "how can we obtain this action?". At any rate, this was the hope expressed by Lilian Vohn, Chairperson of Kønnsrolleudvalget" (Committee for Sexual Equality) in a letter she sent out with the booklet called "En vej til ligestilling - positiv saerbehandling" (Equal Rights through Positive Action).

The Seventies - During the seventies, the booklet explains, the equal rights campaign found wide popular support. Agreements were signed guaranteeing equal pay for equal work. Two laws were passed, one on equal pay, the other on equal treatment of men and women in employment matters. The Ligestillingsrådet (Equal Rights Committee) was set up. Many of the political parties included the equality issue in their platforms, some of them starting equal rights committees or women's committees. The unions and employers' associations also showed a lot of interest in these issues in their publications and reports. The movement spread towards the end of the decade, with most efforts directed towards removing discrimination in the job market rather than towards improving training for women.

In other words, less progress was made regarding positive action in training than in connection with the job market.

Serious discrimination still exists - The real facts, which make very sad reading, can be summarized as follows: during the seventies, a large number of women arrived on the job market. However this market did not noticeably alter its structure. On the contrary, some sectors seemed even more closed to women than before, a trend which was reinforced by the fact that many women who had started taking up paid employment turned to part-time work, something

only existing in a few occupations. Unemployment has accentuated the inequalities in the job market, for, structured as it is, women are the most severely hit.

Discrimination in training - Where training is concerned, some changes have appeared and more young women are now receiving vocational training after they leave school. But there are still more young women than young men being turned away. Even though there are more girls than boys attending comprehensive schools and staying on in the sixth form, they are under-represented in training leading to a craft or trade.

But some changes have occurred in the number of women in vocational training and apprenticeships for certain jobs in the food and services sectors hitherto regarded as typically male. The number of young women embarking on long higher education courses, to become doctors or lawyers for example, has also risen sharply.

Despite all this, women are still not equally represented in a whole series of important jobs and the overall percentage of women in vocational training is less than that of men.

Two wide areas of vocational training and apprenticeship - metal-working and construction (including civil engineering) - still have many more young men than women. On the other hand, most training at the intermediate level, particularly in the social and health sectors, is largely a female preserve.

Decision-making - The Kønrolleudvalget booklet mentions, when talking of the areas where clear progress has been made, that there are now more women than before in decision-making roles, though they are still seriously under-represented. They are in a minority not only in elected bodies, but also on councils, commissions, committees and boards, where a great deal of real power is wielded.

In the last elections, for example, voters clearly showed that they wanted to see more women in power. In the last legislative elections, woman candidates for seats in the Folketing (Danish parliament) obtained many more "preference" votes than men - 1723 against 1272 votes cast for men.

But, because the political parties do not field enough women candidates and because, generally speaking, women are not as well-placed on the electoral list, the electorate's wishes have not resulted in the election of more women. Nevertheless, it would not be difficult to do something to change both these factors.

A new direction - The conclusion is that even with all the will in the world plus the new equality legislation, very little progress has been made in removing the inequalities between men and women.

In other words, goodwill is not enough, and the legislation has not been sufficiently radical.

The Kønnsrolleudvalget shares the view of those who believe that the present state of affairs is unacceptable and who feel that a resolute attempt must be made to change direction, in order to remove discrimination based on sex or its harmful effects.

Positive action : a whole range of possibilities - One useful tool for changing the situation is positive action, which means giving one sex special treatment with regard to certain kinds of training, job selection and appointment, in order to bring about as fair a division of available work as possible between the sexes.

Positive action is not restricted to a carefully laid-down strategy. It could mean any of the following:

- 1.- Fixing a quota by sex, so that a given number of positions or jobs are reserved or given as a priority to one of the sexes;
- 2.- Priority to the under-represented sex, in cases where applicants have the same qualifications;
- 3.- Different conditions for acceptance or appointment of the two sexes. (In this connection, one could mention that for many years, men have been admitted to the top colleges (training grounds for politicians, diplomats etc.) on much lower marks than those required of women);
4. Measures to help one sex particularly. Examples would be introductory courses designed for women, so that they can enter non-traditional training areas, special advice or training grants, bonuses for employers who accept female apprentices;
- 5.- The special obligation to ensure that applicants of both sexes are given the same consideration when filling a job, a seat on a committee, etc. This could be ensured by making it compulsory to present a male and a female candidate for every post.
- 6.- An active recruitment campaign, which by being particularly geared to the under-represented sex would attempt to encourage more people to apply for the training, employment or category of occupation. This could be used, for example, to encourage more women to apply for senior posts;
- 7.- Fixing broad objectives rather than any of the above specific methods, which would have a long-term effect. For example, the objective might be to ensure that 30% of the people receiving a certain kind of training should, within 2 years, be women.

Problems at all levels - The proposals concern chiefly training but also spill over significantly into the job market, for the Committee realizes that the results of any training measures will be largely dependent on the job-market situation.

In the Committee's view it is just as desirable for a larger number of men to look for jobs usually regarded as being reserved for women as is the contrary. This is the only way to put an end to the rigid segregation of the sexes in the job market, and to find room for women in jobs which have hitherto been closed to them.

There are inequalities based on sex at all levels, be it in requests for training, acceptance for such training, and later possibilities for employment or promotion. For this reason, it must be stressed that a few measures here and there are not going to remove the existing discrimination. On the contrary, a whole arsenal of methods and innovations must be used.

Career counselling and training - When career and training guidance is being given, it is proposed that counsellors should indicate the possibilities that exist in non-traditional areas. Counsellors should be under an obligation to see that the more "gifted" or motivated young women make the most of their possibilities by entering non-traditional fields, thus leaving more jobs available in traditional areas for women without this possibility.

More attention must be paid to proper information and the media should be appealed to, to fight against stereotyping and prejudice.

Information should also be sent out to employers, encouraging them to hire men and women in non-traditional areas in future.

Sex as a criterion for acceptance - Concerning access to different kinds of training, care must be taken to see that distribution between the sexes is not distorted. To this end, when access to certain training is limited, sex could still be used as a criterion. (This is what happens already to the advantage of men in some of the top colleges or universities).

The Committee is aware that if the proposal to retain sex as a criterion is adopted, there is a risk that this will work against those women who want to follow a humanities or teacher's training course - areas where women are in a majority at present. But it is felt that women should be encouraged to look at other courses offering better employment possibilities, for example in science or technological subjects. Another problem that might arise is if women with more limited possibilities (lower marks) are forced to opt for non-traditional types of training. The ideal solution would be for the more able women to open the way. To resolve the problem, supplementary education, a change in the different types of education, or specific career guidance activities, are all possible.

Individual financial and social assistance - Once women have access to non-traditional training and employment, various types of assistance may prove necessary. This could take the form of a larger number of teachers, intensive counselling, or the possibility of enabling women working in traditionally-male jobs to be in the same class and to help each other.

It might also be useful to deliberately influence the composition of the teaching staff, where it is recommended that numbers of men and women should be kept equal. In this respect, the Committee pointed out that the most highly-qualified people do not necessarily make the best teachers. Pupils' needs must also be taken into account, and here, the teacher's sex may be at least as important as his or her qualifications.

Economic and social factors are largely determinant in the decision to continue with one's studies after learning school. The real differences in the conditions of life of men and women mean that women very often have to interrupt their studies. This could also be taken into account by, for example, granting economic aid to students with dependents - especially single parents, who in the majority of case are women. Arrangements must also be made to provide childcare centres for those women wishing to continue their education.

One of the Committee's proposals is to provide assistance for employers, in the form of either advice or economic support.

Useful address: Danske Kvinders Nationalrad
 Niels Hemmingsgade 10
 Copenhagen K

FRANCE

The right to work

"The right to work and one's own dignity" is the slogan of a campaign that the C G T (one of France's biggest trade unions) is waging for women. "The right to work means a different policy on the family", say Paulette Dayan and Liliane Stéphan, two leaders in the CGT's social sector. Some of the means they propose: childcare facilities to enable women to be free to take up a job outside the home, and a revision of the current system of taxation for women, which at present penalizes working married women.

Useful address: Antoinette - C G T
 50, rue Edouard Pailleron
 75019 Paris

Secretaries

"Secretaries and new office technologies" was the title of a conference organized by the Association française des secrétaires et assistantes de direction (AFSAD) - a French association for secretaries and personal assistants. The report of the conference has been published and is available at FF 30.

In an occupation with no statute or official definition, secretaries know how vulnerable they are to new techniques of information handling. "We must start training ourselves immediately, without waiting till the new systems are introduced in our offices, so that assimilation will take place gradually". This is an enormous field, certainly: typewriters, dictaphones and photocopiers suddenly seem like simple tools when we have to cope with tele-meetings, video-conferences, computerized storage of documents and voice-recognition.

Useful address: A F S A D
 J. Paillot
 7, rue Rémy de Gourmont
 75019 Paris

Women's films

The (women) organizers of the International Festival of Women's Films, which was held in Sceaux (south of Paris) in March 1982, have now started a business called "L'Une Films" to distribute films by woman film-makers.

Useful address: L'Une Films
38, av. Augustin-Dumont
92240 Malakoff

GREECE

Summer school on Aegean Sea

For the second time, the Aegean Women's Studies Institute organized two four-week sessions this summer at Molyvos on the island of Lesbos.

Guided by American women academics, about fifty women attended the courses, given by teachers of both sexes, some American, and for the first time this year, some Greek.

Useful address: Aegean Women's Studies Institute
Box 601
1230 Grant Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94133

Resource Centre

The Kentro Tekmiriosis ke Meleton (Resource and Studies Centre), recently created on the initiative of the Syndesmos gia ta Dikeomata tis Gynekas (League for Women's Rights), has just received support from the UN office in Athens, and technical assistance from Dr. B. Tell, a UNESCO expert.

Useful address: Kentro Tekmiriosis ke Meleton
26, Asklipiou
Athens, T.T. 144

IRELAND

Stay-at-home pay

A group called "Challenge" is recommending that stay-at-home mothers be paid a £ 35 a week allowance plus free medical care. The group argues that this measure would upgrade caring for children, elderly relatives or handicapped people.

Useful address: Challenge
c/o Anne O'Reilly
15 Clonard Drive
Dundrum
Dublin 14

Uphill all the way

Eighteen young women have taken part in a race up a 2,000 foot Irish slope in a bid to recreate the legend of how Finn Mac Cool chose his wife. Finn, so the story goes, was loved by so many women that he promised to marry the one who won the race to the top of Sliabh-na-mBan (the mountain of the women). However, the chieftain cheated, and told one of them, Grainne, daughter of Cormac, King of Ireland, that she would win if she ran slowly at first, saving her strength for the finish. Not wishing to leave matters to chance, Finn Mac Cool also showed her a secret short-cut.

The 1982 winner did not take a short-cut. Neither did she win a bridal bounty. But she had the honour of opening a new playing field at Mullinahone (County Waterford), nestling at the famous mountain's foot.

Fighting sexism

Antoinette Farron and Linda Kavanagh, the leaders of the Campaign Against Sexual Exploitation (CASE), want to eliminate the degrading images of women in the Irish media.

Seeing a direct correlation between the way in which women are portrayed and the violence to which they fall victim, the group CASE is opposed to women's bodies being used to sell everything from cars to chocolate bars. The women are urging both shoppers and shopkeepers to boycott products sold by such means.

Useful address: Campaign Against Sexual Exploitation
P.O. Box 1207
Dublin 1

ITALY

Secretaries

The newly-formed Associazione Italiana Professione Segretaria (Italian Association of Secretaries) held an interesting meeting at Brescia, where, far-away from their bosses and among colleagues, secretaries asked themselves about who they are and where they are going.

With the advent of new technologies in offices, the role of a secretary is changing, requiring new and increasingly complex skills. "We must get ready for these changes", the women at the conference said. "But bosses, too must be trained how to treat secretaries in order to get the best out of them".

Note: the same concern was expressed at almost the same time by French secretaries at the seminar organized by AFSAD.

Useful address: Associazione Italiana Professione Segretaria
Piazza Duca d'Aosta, 14
Milan 1

Women and Unions

The women's national coordination in the union known as FLERICA-CISL (grouping workers in the energy, research, chemical and similar sectors) has carried out a very detailed analysis of women's relations with their co-workers, their employers and their colleagues in other unions.

Some of the figures which have been produced show that women's position at work has improved both quantitatively and qualitatively. For example, the number of women on the job market with no formal education has fallen by 267,000 between 1977 and 1980. This fall has been offset by the arrival of 321,000 women with a lower secondary school certificate, 293,000 women with an upper secondary school certificate and 75,000 women who have gone on to further education. Employers - as well as unions - now have to reckon with an entirely different work force, one that is better qualified but also more demanding and mobile.

A comment by these union women: in the unions just as much as in the place of employment, a man is judged by his promotion prospects and a woman by her achievements (which implies "in the past"). FLERICA has taken the women's point and in future will see that more women occupy posts in the union and get onto courses for leaders. In addition, an effort will be made to see that job experience is passed on and shared more efficiently.

Useful address: FLERICA - CISL
 via Salaria 30
 00198 Rome

An Equality Commission

"Women have obtained legislation which favours their equality, but they are still lacking a means of monitoring it and seeing that it is enforced", said Margherita Boniver, socialist member of the Italian Parliament.

To make her point, Margherita Boniver led off with her signature on a bill presented by the Italian Socialist Party, calling for the creation of a National Commission for Equality between men and women, attached to the President of the Council's office.

The bill provides for a Commission consisting of thirty persons representing the political parties, local authorities, national women's organizations and other experts. It will be empowered to ask for information, make proposals, supervise the application of existing legislation and even start proceedings in cases of infringement.

The presentation of the bill is the culmination of the work of the "Women's Affairs" section of the PSI, headed by Elena Marinucci. The contents were unveiled during a national meeting held recently in Mondoperaio.

Useful address: Elena Marinucci
 Responsabile della Sezione "Questione Femminile"
 P.S.I.
 Via del Corso 476
 00186 Rome

Erratum

The librarian of the Piedmont Region is Dr Mara Pegnaieff, not Ms Mara Mosca as mentioned by error in "Women of Europe" N° 25/82.

A new dimension

Women can add a new dimension to culture and politics. This was the theme of a well-attended meeting organized in Milan by the Movimento Femminile Repubblicano (Women's Republican Movement) and chaired by Paola Masella Viviani.

Several practical ideas came out of the meeting. One of the most important was to change the image boys and girls form of each other, right from the time they start school. Studying the Italian constitution and learning about art are two of the ways to bring about a better appreciation of women's contribution and their place in contemporary society.

Another idea: efforts should be made to develop a kind of "self-confidence therapy" for women, especially those who stay at home. This would reduce the competitive spirit and enhance solidarity, giving women a chance to be guided by their own set of values instead of trying to model themselves artificially on the patterns they see in advertisements.

Looking at Europe as a whole, the women in the Movimento Femminile Repubblicano are happy to note that the Community equality directives enlarge women's possibilities for putting their creativity to the service of a new society.

Useful address: Movimento Femminile Repubblicano
Via Ugo Foscolo 3
20121 Milan

LUXEMBOURG

Women from the north of the country

The voices of women living in the northern part of the Grand Duchy are rarely heard. In this peaceful, rural region, most of them work on family farms. But they have felt the need to unite and they have just formed an "Association des Femmes du Nord" (AFN - Association of North-country Women)

The AFN sees itself as non-political and stresses that its activities are concentrated in the social area. Through a system of "inter-service", the AFN helps people when they fall ill, providing temporary help to run errands and even carry out the necessary formalities with health schemes and other social services. Members of the AFN are also available to accompany sick, incapacitated or handicapped people on visits to the doctor. Finally, AFN members help out mothers by looking after their children so that they can do any urgent shopping and so.

The Association des Femmes du Nord also provides assistance for immigrant families, giving advice on the Luxembourg educational system and other problems such families may have to cope with in their contacts with the administration or their life in Luxembourg.

NETHERLANDS

Building workers

In the Netherlands, too, the building and construction sector is traditionally a male preserve. It is high time that this was changed, according to a group of fifty or so women who have managed to penetrate this stronghold.

They have started an organization called "National Association of Women in Construction - Nederland", modelling it on a similar women's organization in the US. Their aim is to increase the number of women building workers by organizing courses, searching out jobs, finding out about apprenticeship centres, schools and related activities.

The architect, Ms Joke Timmler, who founded the association, believes that the work will take a long time. She wants the NAWIC-Nederland to reach out to all women, whatever their level of education or the type of job they do in the industry, and hopes, for example, that contractors' secretaries will also be interested.

The American example gives grounds for optimism - the NAWIC-USA has been in existence for 28 years and today has about 10 000 members.

Useful address: NAWIC-Nederland
 Dribergsestraatweg 59 A
 Doorn

Women in Limburg

The Limburgse Vrouwenraad (Limburg Women's Council), an umbrella organization for thirteen active women's groups in the Netherlands province of Limburg, has just published its annual report.

A major part of the report is given to the activities of the local women's councils in the towns of Heerlen, Maastricht, Roermond and Geelen. These local councils bring together the local branches of national associations and various local groups and through their joint efforts, they can offer a wider range of activities to the people living in these towns.

Ms J. Gielen-Drehmanns, Chairwoman of the Limburgse Vrouwenraad, in her introduction to the report, touches on the delicate subject of cooperation between women who are in organizations and those who are not. The problems of such contact are felt both by the members and the leaders of women's organizations. Organizations need to find a new way to operate in order not to scatter their human and financial resources and to ensure that work gets done properly.

Useful address: Limburgse Vrouwenraad
 Hendrikstraat 5
 6074 BE Melick

UNITED KINGDOM

Conservative Party Women

The Conservative Party's annual women's conference had before it a number of papers compiled by area Women's Advisory Committees ranging from trade within the European Community, Youth and Inner Cities, Law and Order, to Rural Problems.

A panel of government Ministers from the Department of Trade was closely questioned on Britain's economic situation, and Sir Henry Plumb, Member of the European Parliament, affirmed that, despite the difficulties, Britain gained substantially from her membership of the Community in terms of trade.

Margaret Thatcher, who addressed the conference, received solid support for her attitude in the Falkland crisis.

Useful address: Women's National Advisory Committee
Conservative Party
32 Smith Square
London SW1P 3HH

Labour Party Women

At their conference in Newcastle, Labour Party women were chiefly concerned with problems of disarmament, unemployment among women and their place in the party structure. The National Labour Women's Committee wanted to see women better represented at all levels in the Labour Party.

The Conference welcomed the appointment of Joan Lestor, M.P., as spokeswoman on women's rights in the Parliamentary Labour Party. It was also enthusiastic about the programme of training courses being sponsored by the National Labour Women's Committee to encourage women to seek public office.

Useful address: National Labour Women's Committee
150 Walworth Road
London SE17 1 JT

Row over women police constables

The failure of the Chief Officer of the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) to renew the contracts of a group of women reserve constables has made the women very angry. No male reservist contracts were cancelled and the women were told that because they were not allowed to train in firearms or take part in duties involving public order, their uses were more limited.

Two of the women who lost their jobs appealed for help to the Northern Ireland Equal Opportunities Commission and have taken their case to court.

For peace

During the Falklands war, an Argentine woman refugee in Britain wrote a letter to The Guardian saying: "This war is not our war. Women in Britain and women in Argentina are allies in a common struggle against war, against poverty and against job shortages imposed by our governments".

To support her argument, the writer quoted two recent slogans: the first was coined by women in connection with rape: "Give women the Ministry of Defence's money and we will be able to defend ourselves". The second came from nurses on strike: "Give the money from the Falklands to nurses".

The "Wages for Housework Campaign" agrees with the Argentine woman's views and has given the letter wide publicity.

Useful address: Wages for Housework Campaign
 Women's Centre
 71 Tonbridge Street
 London W C 1

RESEARCH, MEETINGS AND BOOKS

A new kind of piece work

Ursula Huws is doing research on the effects of computers and new technologies on the employment of women at home. Will women find new and better jobs or is there a risk that they will be caught in a new trap where they will be exploited more than ever?

Ursula Huws would be glad to receive, in any language, a direct account from any woman working at home as a programmer or analyst, or working in a firm which sends work out to home workers. Ursula Huws's research has been commissioned by the Equal Opportunities Commission.

Useful address: Ursula Huws
 20 Canonbury Square
 London N1 2AL

WOMEN IN STATISTICS

This is the title of Supplement N°10 of Women of Europe. It leaves no doubt as to the contents: a unique selection of recent statistics on the economic and social condition of women in European Community countries.

In the retail trade, job qualifications, marriage and divorce, their role in agriculture ... nothing has been overlooked.

As promised ... (see N° 25)

Nobel prize winners. Here is the list of women who have won the Nobel prize, with the subjects in which they have made their contribution.

1903	Marie Slodowska CURIE	Physics
1905	Bertha von SUTTNER	Peace
1909	Selma LAGERLOF	Literature
1911	Marie Slodowska CURIE	Chemistry
1926	Grazia DELEDDA	Literature
1928	Sigrid UNSET	Literature
1931	Jane ADDAMS	Peace
1935	Irène CURIE	Physics
1938	Pearl Sydenstricker BUCK	Literature
1945	Gabriela MISTRAL	Literature
1946	Emily Greene BALCH	Peace
1947	Gerty Therese RADUITZ	Physics
1963	Marie GOPPERT MAYER	Physics
1964	Dorothy HOTGIN-CROWFOOT	Physics
1966	Nelly SACHS	Literature
1976	Mairead CORRIGAN and Betty WILLIAMS	Peace
1979	NotherTERESA of Calcutta	Peace

Steps to European Unity is a booklet outlining in chronological form the history of the European Community from its origins up to February 1982. Most of the events are commented on and the booklet is therefore of interest to a very wide audience. 80 pages. Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, L2985, Luxembourg.

Coping alone, by Clara Clark, describes this woman's personal experience of living alone, as a divorced parent. She tells of all the problems - practical, psychological and spiritual - that a woman on her own faces, and offers some solutions.

Was Geht uns Frauen der Krieg an? (What does war mean to us women?) is a book made from a series of articles written by women which Christa Randzio-Plath has assembled. It makes the point that the peace issue is just as important as equality, requiring the same kind of mobilization - pacific - of women. 156 pages. Published by Rowohlt, in the series "Frauen aktuell".

Dinamica dell' occupazione femminile e mercato del lavoro nei paesi delle Comunità Europee. (Dynamics of women's employment and the job market in Common Market countries), by Michela Sironi Mariotti, interprets and makes a political analysis of women's position in the European job market. 181 pages - 10,000 Lit. Published by Libreria Universitaria Editrice, Via dell'Artigliere 17, Verona.

Feminism in Europe - Liberal and socialist strategies 1789-1919 by Maria Mies and Kumari Jayawardena, is one of the titles in a series on the history of the women's movement. It contains a section of about 50 pages consisting of a general bibliography of the movement, prepared by Ettie Baes. 205 pages. Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, Netherlands.

Women and Power is the report of the Nordic Council's seminar on the position of women in decision-making bodies. The minutes and bibliographic lists can be obtained free-of-charge from Ligestillingsradet, Frederiksgade 19-21, I, DK-1265 Copenhagen K. Telephone 01-13.12.77.

Il "Chi è" delle donne italiane 1945-1982 (Who's Who of Italian Women, 1945-1982), by Marina Ceratto, is a review of the biographies of 796 women, most of them alive today, who are known for their contribution to Italian social and cultural life from 1945 to the present day (in the professions, entertainment, sport, writing, art, science, politics). 339 pages. 12,000 Lit. Published by Arnoldo Mondadori Editore S.p.A. Milan.

Strategies for integrating women into the labour market, although Danish, was written in English. It is the outcome of a seminar held in Liseleje, Denmark, which had two aims: to encourage theoretical discussions and conclusions among those conducting research into women's problems and to assist in the beginning of a dialogue between sociologists and those responsible for women's employment policy. 346 pages. Published by Women's Research Centre in Social Science, H.C. Anderson Boulevard 38, (mezzanine), DK-1553 Copenhagen V - Denmark.

Bilderbücher als Sozialisationsfaktoren im Bereich der Geschlechtsrollendifferenzierung. (The reinforcement of stereotypes through picture books), by Cornelia Hagemann. This book, published in the "Etudes universitaires européennes" series, shows how picture books implant stereotypical images in the minds of children. The first part describes the roles portrayed, on the basis of many statistical findings, and analyses the behaviour of children of both sexes. The second part is a survey of 116 picture books used in nursery schools in Bonn. One of the author's main conclusions is that women figure much less than men in all areas, and that 70% of the people in the foreground of the pictures are men. Peter D. Lang, Frankfurt am Main.

Outwrite is a monthly magazine on women launched in International Women's Year by a British and migrant women's collective. This publication talks about the problems women face in their daily lives. It costs 10 p. Orders from THIS, Oxford House, Derbyshire Street, London E2.

Riprendiamoci la Storia (Reclaim our history) Women's role in industry and in agriculture, feminism outside the Church, the women's issue in the Socialist Party ... these were the themes of courses organized in Catanzaro in 1980 and 1981 by the Union of Italian Women. The inspiration for this initiative came from Anne Maria Longo. Unfortunately, there is no address indicated on the publication.

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