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WOMEN OF EUROPE



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THE CHANGING EUROPEAN COMMUNITY

WOMEN OF EUROPE AWARD: On the eve of the Single Market of 1993 and in this extraordinary period of democratisation that is sweeping Central and Eastern Europe, the European Community is much more than a community of economic interests. The Community must accept its role as a driving force of interpersonal exchange and cultural sharing. In a nutshell, it must become a People's Europe in the broadest sense of this term, a Europe that has been built, step by step, over the decades, thanks to the enthusiasm, idealism and determination of countless men and women.

Strengthened by the responsibilities that they bear in all areas of social activity (politics, economy, medicine, education, etc.), women have contributed their know-how, sensitivity and courage to the fulfilment of this great European dream. Yet these women have often gone unrecognised.

The Women of Europe Award tries to make up for this failure by making these women's actions known. Created in 1987 with the support of the Women's Information Service of the European Commission, this award was given in December of that same year to Hélène Pastoors, human rights' advocate, during the Copenhagen European Council. In 1988 it was conferred on Marianne Rombola, who represents a group of Italian women against the mafia, during the European Council in Rhodes. The third Women of Europe Award - still under the Commission's patronage - was awarded to Rosanna Benzi by MEP and mayor of Strasbourg, Catherine Trautmann, in December 1989 during the European Council held in that city.

Each year, elections are held in each Member State in October to select from the candidates proposed by the country's journalists the woman who has made a special contribution to European integration. Spain chose solicitor Blanca Vila Costa, founder of the Centre of European Law of the University of Barcelona. Germany chose Czilla Von Boeselager, who has been directing medical and food aid programmes for Hungary and Romania for the last three years. In selecting Grainne Kenny and Lone De Neergaard, Ireland and Denmark called attention to the fact that the war on drugs, in the first case, and struggling against all forms of physical abuse, in the second case, must be waged at the European level. Three representatives of culture - authoress Rosemarie Kieffer (Luxembourg), sculptress Maïri Papakonstantinou (Greece), and pianist Maria Joao Pires (Portugal) - remind us of the merits of Jean Monnet's statement, "If I had to start building Europe again, I would start with culture". Why was Rosanna Benzi Europe's final choice? Because, despite being immobilised in an iron lung for 28 years of her life (she is 41), she has, through her thoughts, writings and influence, made a real contribution to the fight against social exclusion of all kinds.

The first rounds of selection for the 1990 Women of Europe Award will begin in each country in September. The final winner will be selected in Brussels on 5 December. The proclamation and award ceremony will take place in Rome on 14-15 December 1990. For further information, contact: Women of Europe Award, General Secretariat, 193 rue Américaine, B-1050 Brussels. President: Angéle Verdin.

European Women's Lobby

The European Women's Lobby will hold its first General Assembly in Brussels on 21-23 September 1990. This landmark event in the history of the women's movement has been in the making since December 1987. Women's associations have been calling for the creation of a pressure group or lobby for years. The Women's Information Service of the European Commission, ever eager to support dialogue with the grass roots, has been holding European colloquia for women's associations for many years to enable them to get acquainted and exchange information amongst themselves and with Community institutions. The 80 European and national associations attending the 4th Colloquium (held in London in November 1987) adopted a resolution proposing the creation of a lobby open to all interested women's groups to pressure Community and national institutions efficaciously into providing better defence and representation of women's interests. In addition, the delegates asked the Commission to help in setting up such a structure.

A Working Group consisting of 40 representatives of European associations, national coordinating groups, and a few very large national associations met twice - once in April 1988, then in June 1989 - to draft the lobby's by-laws. Operating rules that were both flexible and clear were worked out and submitted to the first General Assembly. In 1989 this 40-person body entrusted a 9-person Committee with the task of coordinating the preparations for and convening the first General Assembly. Many grass roots associations were consulted on the by-laws project and negotiated amongst themselves to choose the national representatives (4 for each Member State) to be sent to the General Assembly.

European organisations with members in at least seven EC countries have applied for membership of the Assembly. The seats will be distributed on 30 June. All European or national women's associations subscribing to the lobby's aims may become corresponding members, which gives them the right to obtain information directly, put forward campaign suggestions, and support or abstain from specific actions. All interested associations are invited to make themselves known to their national or European coordinating groups and may obtain further information from their national correspondents (see the list below).

The Constituent General Assembly shall adopt the European Women's Lobby's by-laws, set the lobby's first agenda of work and adopt its budget.

This work has been made possible by the technical and financial support of the Commission of the European Communities (Women's Information Service), as requested by the London Colloquium. However, the Commission has refrained from interfering in this work, giving the working groups the broadest autonomy and independence possible.

The European Women's Lobby will have two major goals, namely, getting women interested and involved in European policy-making and lobbying the Community's institutions. By joining forces, women will truly be able to catalyse the construction of a single, united, democratic Europe. This appears to be a very welcome initiative today, as new, voluntary associations anxious to play a political and social role in the new European society of 1992 are beginning to come forth. The creation of the European Women's Lobby is further proof that a People's Europe exists. Contact: Jacqueline De Groote, 11 avenue du Mercure, Bte 4, B-1180 Brussels.

European Women's Lobby - List of national correspondents

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EUROPEAN YEAR OF TOURISM: EC Commissioner Cardoso e Cunha officially opened the European Year of Tourism in Strasbourg on 11 December. The aims of this year of activity are to instill the idea of Europe in its citizens with the help of tourism and to strengthen the economic and social dimensions of the development of this sector. The specific themes that will be touched upon include improving the participating countries' nationals' knowledge of cultures and lifestyles in the other countries; encouraging staggered holidays; and developing new forms of tourism and more individualised travel ideas. Most of the initiative's 5 million-Ecu budget will be used to provide financial support for the various types of projects that will be carried out in 1990. These projects must meet one or more of the above-mentioned goals and may be proposed by private, trade, or government tourist offices or agencies. The European Steering Committee

for the European Year of Tourism has already selected close to 40 national projects from eight countries. (Press Office, European Year of Tourism, DG XXIII - Tourism Unit, 80 rue d'Arlon, B-1049 Brussels. Tel.: (+32 2) 235-8604 or 235-5395)

ATYPICAL JOBS: The Applied Economics Department of the Free University of Brussels presented a report in April 1989 summarising the studies on women with "atypical jobs" that have been carried out in the EC's twelve Member States. The term "atypical job" covers all types of jobs that differ from traditional jobs as regards working hours, scheduling, organisation and/or site of production, etc. The first conclusion is that, given the differences in the institutions, legislation and habits in the Member States, it is very difficult to draw up a comprehensive description of this type of employment, which, it might be added, is steadily gaining ground. The slump in employment and changes in the institutional framework of production have led to great diversification of the types of labour. Old types of jobs that were previously declining have made a comeback. Self-employment, sub-contracting, child labour, and various types of apprenticeship contracts have been updated. Secondly, women greatly outnumber men in the "atypical jobs" category. Now, there proved to be insufficient guarantees of social protection for all of the forms of employment studied. Besides this, atypical jobs often come with lower pay, except in the case of night work.

Government has had a predominant role in encouraging atypical jobs. In most cases, the public authorities have helped guarantee a degree of job protection while helping the spread of such jobs by relaxing various labour laws (and, very often, by using forms of atypical jobs in State-owned companies).

What is the outlook for atypical jobs? Those that have been created specifically to deal with long-term unemployment will most likely disappear as long-term unemployment does. Job offers, notably those generated by the government, will definitely play a major role in the trend to work part-time and, consequently, discrimination against women. Finally, the male/female cleavage is probably the most negative aspect of atypical employment, just as it is the most difficult problem to solve, to the extent that some forms of employment almost necessarily involve fewer qualifications and responsibilities. (Equal Opportunities Unit, Commission of the European Communities, Directorate-General for Employment, Industrial Relations and Social Affairs, 200 rue de la Loi, 1049 Brussels.

SOCIAL PROTECTION MEASURES: Speaking at a conference on human rights in post-1992 Europe that was held in Strasbourg on 20-21 November 1989 by the European Commission, Professors Cassese, Clapham and Weiler of the European University Institute of Florence, Italy, proposed that special measures be taken concerning 1) women (notably, that the Community's powers should extend to family policy, population movements and migration, and structural support for childcare); 2) children (the Member States should ratify the existing conventions in this area); and 3) immigrants (they recommended treating non-EC and EC nationals as equals with regard to labour, freedom of movement, the right to vote and education). Moreover, they suggested that the European Commission create an Office to Combat Racial Discrimination.

FAMILY PROTECTION: The disappearance of physical, technical and tax barriers that is planned under the Single Act will have significant effects on everyone's living conditions. The primary objectives of a European family policy should be: improving working conditions for everyone (e.g., allowing both male and female workers to take career breaks for family reasons) and protecting women's rights and the quality of life (e.g., the harmonisation of taxation should not cut into families' disposable incomes). The right to social security must be guaranteed, as well as the underprivileged's right to a minimum income.

People's Europe must also enhance the well-being of people as consumers. To achieve this, the Community's various policies must pay greater attention to consumers' basic rights, i.e., the protection of health, safety and economic interests and the right of representation. To achieve the real inclusion of family interests in all European policies, COFACE (Confederation of Family Organisations of the European Communities) has asked the Commission to set up a Family Affairs Office with enough staff to be effective. COFACE has also expressed its desire to step up contacts between family organisations and the Community's institutions. (COFACE Documents, 6/89. COFACE, rue de Londres 17, B-1050 Brussels, Tel.: (+32 2) 511-4179. See also Commission Communication on family policy, [COM (89)] 63 of 8.8. 1989.)

EDUCATION: The main goals of ERASMUS, the European Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students adopted in June 1987, are to increase student mobility within the Community so as to ensure the availability of human resources that meet the Community's future needs, strengthen People's Europe and encourage cooperation amongst schools of higher education in Europe. The programme, which is based on the notion of academic recognition of foreign study, has been very successful. It has met with an enthusiastic reaction and been swamped with requests to participate. In 1989/90, 28,000 students will study outside their home country, compared with some 2,000 before ERASMUS. ERASMUS has spawned more than 1,500 interuniversity cooperation programmes (ICPs) involving more than 1,000 educational establishments.

The ICP officers depend heavily on Community aid, which should continue until the institutions themselves are able to take over this burden. ERASMUS also benefits from the growing support of national institutions and policies. It can flatter itself on having contributed to the adoption of a similar programme by the Nordic Council countries. (ERASMUS Office, 15 rue d'Arlon, B-1040 Brussels).

EMPLOYMENT:

* Between 1977 and 1987, over a period in which all the EC's Member States, acting under pressure from the European Community, adopted a legal framework for equal treatment for male and female employees, the female employment rate rose from 35% to 42%. This trend was not accompanied by the necessary structural adjustments (changes in working hours, infrastructural improvements). As a result, the improvements in employment figures seen since 1987 have not counteracted the widening gap between female and male unemployment rates (12% versus 7%). Women's average salaries are likewise 25-30% lower than those of men. To this one must add the growth of types of employment bereft of job security; many such jobs are filled by women.

One of the priorities of the Third Community Action Programme for Equal Opportunity for Men and Women, which is currently in the works, is to encourage improvements in training for women and job choices that are usually considered "masculine" (technical fields, marketing, etc.). The Danish Employment Confederation has designed a project to increase the recruitment of women in traditional male sectors. The project includes an ongoing information campaign aimed at employers, schools and young girls. However, the sharing of family responsibilities and right to maternity and parental leaves are other prerequisites if women are to participate on an equal footing in the future economic activity of Europe.

- * The Commission of the European Communities, represented by Vasso Papandreou, Commissioner for Social Affairs, has approved 822.6 million ECUs in aid to enable Portugal to carry out measures to improve the training and hiring of young people, the long-term unemployed, women, immigrants and the handicapped. The Portuguese Government will add 477.3 million ECUs to this sum, bringing the total to 1.3 million ECUs.

COURT OF AUDITORS OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES: This institution elected a new president, Aldo Angioi, in January. There are no women amongst its twelve magistrates.

DOCUMENTATION CENTRE: Since its creation, CREW (Centre for Research on European Women) has amassed a wealth of documentation on all aspects of European policies affecting women, national legislation, employment schemes, education, training and new technologies. This information may be consulted, by appointment, at CREW's Documentation Centre. CREW also provides assistance in applying for Community subsidies for local employment initiatives. (CREW, 38 rue Stevin, 1040 Brussels. Tel.: (+32 2) 230-5158).

PUBLICATIONS: Of interest on the latest list of publications put out by the Commission's Documentation Office:

- * European File N° 13/89: The European Community and Professional Recognition of Degrees (series published twice a year in all of the Community's languages);
- * Document series: The Social and Economic Situation of Elderly Women in Europe (available in English and French; 7.5 ECUs);
- * ERASMUS - Directory of Programmes 1988/89 (available in English and French; 27.5 ECUs).

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

EUROPEAN COMMISSION'S AGENDA: Commission President Jacques Delors presented the European Commission's agenda of activities for 1990, with relations with Eastern Europe heading the list. The pace of history, he said, is quickening, and we must keep up. The German question, the rapprochement, even the unification of the German people, is the business of the Germans themselves first and foremost, but it is also the Community's business. Nevertheless, the Community's relations with other countries must not be forgotten. Nor should the completion of the first phase of the Economic and Monetary Union and the institutional changes needed to transform the Commission into a genuine "responsible executive", produce a more powerful Parliament, and clarify the concept of "subsidiarity".

IRISH PRESIDENCY: The Parliament was also informed by the current President of the Council of Ministers, Irish Foreign Affairs Minister Gerard Collins, of the Irish Presidency's priorities for the first half of 1990. They are virtually identical to those of the European Commission and include the completion of the Internal Market, social affairs (the Irish Presidency intends to take specific measures to combat long-term unemployment) and the environment. Collins hopes that progress will be made in the environmental field, notably with regard to water quality, protection of the natural habitat, dangerous wastes and the protection of the ozone layer.

JANUARY PLENARY SESSION:

SAKHAROV PRIZE: Alexander Dubcek, one of the leaders of the 1968 "Prague Spring", as a result of which he fell into disgrace, and now President of the Chamber in a democratic Czechoslovakia, was awarded the EP's Sakharov Prize in Strasbourg in January. He received the prize from EP President Enrique Baron Crespo and was accompanied by a message written by Sakharov just before his death, according to whom the Prague uprising was "the prologue of the peaceful revolutions in Eastern Europe" and an inspiration for his own reflections. Dubcek, for his part, spoke of a "qualitatively new epoch of European civilisation" that shows that Europe is a "living entity" and that barriers are abnormal. At a press conference he expressed his conviction that morality eventually triumphs. He also stated that everything pointed to the likelihood of his country's being associated with the European Community, adding, "It is only a matter of time".

CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE: Developments in Central and Eastern Europe once again took centre stage, as they will continue to do for quite some time. One of the principals was Alexander Dubcek, who took part in a debate that followed a statement by Commission Vice-President Andriessen after the latter's visit to Prague. Andriessen stated that a way had to be found to unite the countries of Central and Eastern Europe with the broad union that the European Community and EFTA (European Free Trade Association) countries are creating. He also mentioned the possibilities offered by existing trade and cooperation agreements. During the debate, many MEPs regretted their own lack of information and absence of a comprehensive strategy in dealing with these regions. For example, Pasqualina Napolitano (Unitary Left, It.) felt that the Commission's proposals fell short of these countries' needs, while Kristen Jensen (Danish Socialist) expressed her concern over the political situations in the different countries, notably as regards how they intend to prepare coming elections. Willy De Clercq (Belgian Liberal), former EC

Commissioner responsible for External Relations, insisted, on the contrary, like Andriessen, that, while continuing to help their European neighbours, the Member States should not lose sight of the major objective of completing to the Single Market. In his opinion, agreements should be negotiated case by case, starting with negotiations to improve the contents of the agreements that have already been signed with the East European countries. Andriessen rebutted criticisms by highlighting the Commission's rapid action (within the limits of its possibilities). While asserting that the East Bloc countries must not be transformed into Western satellites, he nevertheless felt that the economic aid that they are granted must result in the development of market economies. Finally, he reassured those who feared that the southern countries would lose out because of developments in the East.

The Parliament also adopted the report by Karla Peijs (EPP, NL) on medium-term financial aid for Hungary, which requests that the conditions tied to the aid respect the "social stability" of this country. A number of MEPs called for a comprehensive aid programme; others insisted on the need to demand sufficient guarantees. Peter Beazley, British Conservative, pointed out that there was little need to worry in Hungary's case, for the country had a good track record as far as repaying its debts was concerned. The EPP and Conservatives finally gave up their demand to create a "fund for European democracy" that would have been set up to create "structures of political parties (in Eastern Europe) guaranteeing the satisfaction of these parties' material needs" (through advertising, for instance). Alexander Langer (Italian Green), who opposed this idea, warned the MEPs against "playing missionary" in Eastern Europe.

CENTRAL AMERICA: The European Parliament adopted two Resolutions connected with Central America, one on the situation in Central America and Nicaragua, the other on the situation in El Salvador. The Resolutions called for special aid for the demobilisation of the Nicaraguan *contras* and the suspension of aid to El Salvador. In another debate the Parliament reproved the US intervention in Panama and called for free elections in the country.

ARMENIA: Turning to the crisis in Armenia, the European Parliament called for emergency aid for this Soviet republic and greater protection of the population through the dispatch of peace-keeping forces.

CORPORATE LAW: In adopting the report by Nicole Fontaine (EPP, France) on the Draft Directives dealing with corporate law (takeover bids, swaps, etc.), the European Parliament called for fairly major changes, notably to strengthen the protection of labour and improve the provision of information to employees' representatives during such operations.

EUROTECNET II: The Youth Committee went on record as being in favour of the adoption of the EUROTECNET II programme. The latter aims to promote innovation in vocational training so as to keep up with technological change. The amended Opinion was adopted unanimously. The most important amendments stress the importance of the so-called "less favoured regions", women, specific groups, ethnic minorities, the disabled and pre-training.

CHILDCARE: The European Parliament's administration has decided to open a daycare centre for the MEPs' children. The first centre was opened in Brussels; Strasbourg will quickly follow suit. The MEPs will thus be able to combine business and family obligations.

Useful address (for the entire section): European Parliament, Centre
Rupéén du Kirchberg, Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.

COUNTRY TO COUNTRY...**FACTS, INSTITUTIONS, LAWS****AND MILITANT ACTIVITIES**

BELGIUM

ABORTION: The main article of the bill for the partial legalisation of abortion was adopted by the Chamber of Deputies Committee with a clear majority of fourteen (Socialists and Liberals) in favour and nine (Social Christians and *Volksumie*) opposed. This article removes all notions of a crime if the pregnant woman, "who is put in a situation of distress by her condition, asks a physician to terminate her pregnancy before the twelfth week after conception, provided that the termination of pregnancy is performed under the stipulated conditions" (these involve a period for reflection, the woman's determination, information, assistance, etc.). Having been adopted by a clear majority in the Senate, the bill is now under study in the Chamber. The votes in plenary session should take place after mid-March.

RAPE: There were 394 official reports of rape and 1,382 attempts at sexual assault in Belgium in 1988, but the real statistics are thought to be ten times as high. An investigation commissioned by Miet Smet, Secretary of State (Junior Minister) for Social Emancipation, reveals among other things that 1 out of 3 women in Belgium have experienced some form of sexual violence (1 out of 5 before the age of 16) and 1 out of 8 women has been subjected to serious or moderately serious violence. To encourage the victims to lodge complaints, specialised training to deal with the victims of sexual violence is now given to policemen and *gendarmes*. However, the most remarkable development in this area is the law of 4 July 1989 on the crime of rape. All forms of rape are now recognised as crimes against the person, whereas previously rape was not considered rape when perpetrated by the victim's spouse. The new legislation also provides for better protection of the victim's anonymity and raises the sentences for certain extenuating circumstances. (Useful address: VIOL-VIOLENCE, 29 rue Blanche, 1050 Brussels. Tel.: (+32 2) 538-4773) from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Outside these hours, call SOS JEUNES, Tel.: (+32 2) 512-9020.)

A CHAIRWOMAN FOR WOMEN: Anne-Marie Pernot, labour conciliator, is the new chairwoman of the Committee on Female Labour. This tripartite committee (composed of government policy-makers, union representatives and management) has spent the past fifteen years striving to promote male/female equality on the labour market. Pernot replaces Jo Walgrave, who has become Chairwoman of the National Board of Labour (*Conseil National du Travail*). (*Commission du Travail des Femmes*, 49 rue Belliard, 1040 Brussels. Tel.: (+32 2) 233-4111)

AID FOR HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN: Belgian women have an average of 1.54 children, whereas the replacement rate (the average required to keep the population stable) is 2.7. Luc Van den Brande, Minister for Employment and Labour, has asked a mini think-tank, co-directed by his assistant private secretary, Paule WATHOUR, to study the interactions between the family and job market. This study has given rise to ten proposals from the Ministry, including the possibility for workers to take up to ten days of unpaid

leave to take care of a relative. The nine other proposals concern maternity leaves and extended leaves of absence, paternity leaves, etc. Under this legislation a maternity leave could be split or combined with a career break to produce a maximum continuous leave of 6 months. Tying the benefit for career breaks to the cost of living is also suggested. (*Ministère de l'Emploi et du Travail*, 53-54 rue Belliard, 1040 Brussels. Tel.: (+32 2) 235-5111)

CORPORATE CARECHES: The Minister of Finance, Philippe Maystadt, has asked the Finance Administration to consider ways to encourage employers to set up daycare facilities on the premises to attract more women. The project would include a system of daycare charging the same rates as the Office of Birth and Childhood (ONE) and allowing the companies to deduct their burden of the cost from their profits. The rules of operation and inspection of these facilities would be the same as for other daycare centres. According to the Minister, this project may be put into effect very quickly. (*Ministère des Finances*, 12 rue de la Loi, 1000 Brussels. Tel.: (+32 2) 233-8111)

SEX-BASED DISCRIMINATION: The French-speaking National Council of Belgium Women (*Conseil National des Femmes belges*) celebrated the tenth anniversary of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women by examining Belgium's enforcement of this convention. The conclusion is that men continue to monopolise many sectors, whether in education, labour unions or management organisations, or companies, where unequal treatment persists. The CNFB is thus calling on associations, individuals, the media and public powers once again to become more familiar with this Convention and improve its enforcement.

In addition, the CNFB adopted a motion on 27 November 1989 (sent out to all political decision-makers in Belgium) demanding that the Convention implementing the different articles of the Declaration of Children's Rights be given the force of law. At the same time the CNFB expressed its disapproval of the fact that the Convention allows a State to send a 15-year-old child to war and does not set a minimum age for child labour.

EMPLOYMENT: TRAV'ELLES intends to set up a job search service for women consisting of all of the materials and support they need to find a job. This, plus the guidance of a counsellor, will help to break down the isolation surrounding them in their searches for work. (TRAV'ELLES, 29 rue Blanche, 1050 Brussels)

ART AND COMPANY CREATION: Women's Day is celebrated in Belgium on 11 November. In 1989 Belgium's women chose to highlight the creation of businesses by women. The aims were to display the work of purely artistic creators through an exhibition of paintings, sculptures and photographs and to examine the problems of "women and the creation of businesses". This was the major subject of a round-table discussion attended by representatives of European and international bodies dealing with local employment initiatives and vocational training and women entrepreneurs wishing to share and compare their experiences. The outcome of the round table was clear: While the number of women on the labour market in Southern Europe has risen considerably in recent years and the number of women running businesses doubled between 1980 and 1989, women still have too little access to general sources of aid. Nevertheless, the European Commission's Equal Opportunities Programme adds has added credibility and given a degree of recognition to business creation by women in the eyes of banks, the public and the media.

GETTING AROUND THE LAW: After the Antwerp Labour Court's ruling (six years after the fact) against an employer who had fired a pregnant woman without legal grounds, issue 400 (2 October 1989) of *Aktuele Voorinformatie*, a magazine for personnel managers put out by CED-Samson, contained a piece advising executives to camouflage the reasons for firings. If necessary, the article suggests terminating the contract immediately and paying the employee severance pay.

PUBLICATIONS:

- * *Femmes des années 80 - Un siècle de condition féminine (1889-1989)*, published by Academia. This review of 100 years of changes in the status of women considers the law of 13 December 1889 on female and child labour, the social commitments of women and the feminist struggle, the breakdown of female inmates in Belgium, and many other aspects of women's lives yesterday and today.
- * *Magdalena* recounts the birth and experiences of the first international movement for women's experimental theatre. The first festival, which was held in Cardiff in 1986, was a great success. Thirty women from a variety of countries staged their works at this festival. This well-documented book illustrates the event and develops various subjects, such as power, related to the theatre and the status of women.
- * The country's Dutch-speaking Socialist women have just published a report on the current state of the pensions scheme. Several leading political and labour union figures offer their opinions on this subject. The themes that are developed include the legal problems of the end of a career, the opinion of the Minister and Office of the Secretary of State for Pensions, and the possibilities of early retirement and old-age benefits from a European perspective. ("*Pensioenleeftijd voor vrouwen*", *EXTRA SV INFO*, *Socialistische vrouwen*, Keizerlaan 13, B-1000 Brussels. Tel.: (+32 2) 513-2878)

D E N M A R K

EQUAL TREATMENT: The adoption of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women by the UN in December 1979 was one of the starting points of a series of international strategies for equality. In December 1986 the Danish Government adopted "The Action Programme of Denmark for Equality between Women and Men". In 1988 the Nordic Council adopted another action programme called "Action Programme for Cooperation among the Scandinavian Countries in Equal Treatment Matters for 1989-93". As the nineties get into gear, the National Council of Danish Women (*Danske Kvinders Nationalråd - DKN*) has expressed its desire to see the principle of male/female equality put into effect. This objective has been included on the agendas of both national and international meetings. The European Community will adopt its Third Action Programme for Equal Opportunities to this end, the Nordic Council will take a stand on the opportuneness of holding a Nordic Conference on women in 1993, while the *Folketing* (Danish Parliament) will draft a report on the success of the Danish programme for male/female equality.

One can already say that Danish women's struggle for equality has borne fruit. They have been able to make specific demands as to the future and influenced various the relevant national and international bodies. However, the struggle must go on so that official decisions are backed up by the will to achieve true equal treatment in all areas. The DKN urges the real implementation of the various action programmes for equality to meet the following demands: equal pay, equal chances of promotion, more childcare facilities, family leave, access to information, and female representation - of all women, regardless of their origins - in all segments of society. (*Danske Kvinders Nationalråd*, Niels Henningsensgade 8, 1153 København)

MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS: Danish law gave women the right to vote in municipal elections in 1908. In the municipal elections held on 21 November 1989, one out of three candidates was a woman. Nevertheless, female representation on the city councils rose only slightly (from 23.7% in 1985 to 26.2% in 1989). A total of 1,242 women were elected by 275 town councils, and women now sit on every town council in Denmark. The figures have improved slightly for the departmental councils, too. In 1989, 29.4% of their members were women, compared with 28.6% in 1985. The People's Socialist Party has the largest number of councilwomen (36.6% of the total), followed by the Radical Left (33%) and the Social Democrats (28.8%). The Christian People's Party trails with only 10.9%.

NORDIC COUNCIL'S BRYT PROJECT: The Nordic Council lies behind the BRYT project to eliminate sex-based discrimination on the labour market, which was adopted in 1985 for four years. In December 1989 the project's general manager, Drude Dahlerup, and five national directors met in Reykjavik, Iceland, to report on the project's effectiveness.

The BRYT project proved to be the driving force behind projects to develop and test means to put an end to labour discrimination in all five of the Nordic Council's Member Countries, i.e., Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. It revealed that sex-based discrimination in the labour market was very pronounced, but also gave rise to a number of solutions based on analyses and the results of experimental projects. The project covered a number of discrimination-related problems, such as sexual bias in the labour market, differences in pay, the need for new teaching methods in both basic education of young people and refresher courses for adults, the situations of unemployed women, the status of women writers, women in management, etc. The BRYT project concludes that the sex-based cleavages in the labour market continue to be powerful factors and the main problem lies in the fact that the predominance of women or men in a given area of activity or profession leads to a split labour market in which the activities of or professions exercised by women have less status than those traditionally set aside for men. BRYT has also generated some very interesting reports in this field. (Drude Dahlerup, *Institut for Statskundskab*, Aarhus Universiteirt, DK-8000 Aarhus C. Tel.: (+45 6) 130111)

MEETINGS: In October 1989 the officers and representatives of the National Council of Danish Women (DKN) met with Denmark's women politicians. The opening address, which was given by the Minister of State for the Folketing, and catalogue of laws presented to the assembly sparked a number of comments from women's organisations. The DKN tackled the following subjects slated for discussion in the coming parliamentary session: training for the preparatory exam for higher education, equal treatment for men and women with regard to employment and maternity leaves, daily compensation for illness and birth, social aid, childcare schemes, the law

on job placement agencies and unemployment insurance, the law on the abolition of the scholastic and vocational guidance council, and the law on public health.

CHANGES IN THE FATHER'S ROLE: The Danish Institute of Social Research has decided to analyse men's roles in the family. Two studies are under way, one on the relations between family life and work and for which 1,600 men and 1,600 women were questioned, the other on how men use parental leaves. The Institute has also undertaken a project on "the father's changing role". So far it appears that close to 50% of the male respondents feel that working part-time is the ideal solution when their children are small.

PUBLICATIONS: The latest issue of *Lige Nu*, which is published by the Council for Equal Treatment, features a series of articles on men. It includes articles on the Institute of Social Research's studies of male roles and some articles on the Nordic seminar currently taking place in Norway.

Useful address for all of the information in the section on Denmark:
Danske Kvinders Nationalråd, Niels Hemmingsensgade 8, 1153 København.

FRANCE

CONSTRUCTION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY: Every six months the Presidency of the European Community is filled by one of the Member States in turn. During the French Presidency, which ended on 31 December, a major role was played by Elisabeth Guigou, Presidential Advisor on monetary affairs and international economics and the head of the "European Unit" since 1984. Guigou contributed in particular to advances in three major areas, namely, the Single Market, the Social Charter and the reactivation of the work on an economic and monetary union (EMU). The Guigou report, which was drawn up in close collaboration with a group of high-level experts, should serve as a basis for discussion at the Intergovernmental Conference on EMU that will take place in June.

MODERNISATION POLICY: Michèle André, Secretary of State (Junior Minister) in charge of Women's Rights, has spent months working out a basic policy to underpin the modernisation of the State. Several schemes concerning the structure of the central administration, the appointment of women representatives in parts of the country where they are lacking, and other areas have already been implemented. As part of the work to set up an effective action plan, André would like to strengthen her ties with associations at all levels so as to increase the efficiency of steps taken to help women once the functions of each structure and the interactions among the different entities have been defined. Finally, and most important, the role of the Secretary of State's Office will be to show that the place of women in the civil service is a central element of the logic behind renewing government service. The monthly women's rights newsletter (*Lettre des Droits de la Femme*) put out by her office is a key means of communication that establishes a permanent link between this government body and French women.

MARITAL VIOLENCE: A national information and consciousness-raising campaign on the problem of marital violence ran for three weeks in November. The campaign, which was instigated by Michèle André, Secretary of State (Junior Minister) in charge of Women's Rights, had three major objectives, viz., give women a chance to speak out, trigger action in the

field and foster solidarity. The means to achieve them? A sober, effective television announcement giving the number of a television help line |(16-1) 45 84 51 51|, 700,000 posters displayed in public areas, and a tour of France by André to meet with both the victims of violence and councilwomen.

The estimated incidence of marital violence, based on the number of calls for help received by the police, is chilling. More than 2 million women in France are the victims of physical, psychological or sexual violence in the home. The fear of reprisals and shame are the major reasons for their silence, but these women are also gagged by current attitudes and feelings of failure and guilt. Yet, if these women can talk, they are acknowledged, they exist and very quickly decide to cope with the difficulties linked to their situations. These difficulties are legion: lodging an official complaint, searching for housing, finding a job (battered women often do not have vocational skills), etc. France does not currently have any legislation that refers specifically to marital violence. Consequently, an interministerial group has been set up to carry out concerted action in line with the policy laid down by the Secretary of State's Office. Moreover, the bill to reform the criminal code includes explicit references to marital violence and the sentences for such misdemeanors will be increased in the case of blows or wounds inflicted by the victim's companion or spouse.

This is a very important step, for it proclaims that these types of violence actually exist. This finally gives the women who denounce them credibility. We hope that this action will prompt further action, so that this scourge that likewise knows no boundaries will disappear for good.

EQUAL TREATMENT: A study published jointly by *Groupement d'intérêt public* (GIP) and the National Scientific Research Council (CNRS) in November 1989 shows that unequal treatment between men and women continues to exist in State undertakings entrusted by the State to provide a public service or perform work of general interest (*entreprises publiques à statut réglementaire*) while being subject to private law, despite these undertakings' progressive images. These undertakings, which are some of the largest employers in France, have very few women employees, and those that they do have tend to be concentrated in the lowest-paid job categories. These undertakings make few efforts to try to solve the problem of such inequality; a failure to act tends to be their most widespread attitude. In a period characterised by stable or dwindling staffs, a damper on hiring, and the introduction of new technologies calls for stricter hiring criteria, it is time to pay special attention to training and/or changes in the job choices of such companies' female employees. Such are the recommendations to be found in an article on on-the-job inequality in such public service companies ("*L'inégalité professionnelle dans les entreprises publiques à statuts réglementaires*") published in issue 34 of the *Bulletin du GIP* (15 Nov. 1989) (GIP, 26 Boulevard Richard-Lenoir, F-75011 Paris. Tel.: (+33 1) 48 07 05 85)

EDUCATION: "*Elles ont osé...et après?*" (They dared...and afterwards?) is the title of a survey of 323 girls who had chosen science or technology majors at the *Académie* of La Réunion that was conducted in 1986 by a delegation of the Réunion branch of the National Office of Information on Education and Jobs (ONISEP). Forty-six of the girls were in long courses of study (to prepare the *baccalauréat*), while the remaining 277 were enrolled in shorter courses leading to *brevêts professionnels* or certificates of job qualification. What were the experiences of these girls, who went against the prevailing mentality and chose majors traditionally reserved for boys? The findings differed according to the

type of education chosen. The girls in the first group were very enthusiastic, highly appreciative of their education, and convinced that they had made "the right choice" and embarked on a path that would lead to a job. In the second group, 60% of the pupils were completely satisfied. The reservations concerned physical difficulties inherent in this type of education, the long hours, and the circumspection shown by some of their male classmates. When the decision to join these sections were the fruit of the pupils' lengthy, mature thought, the experiences were very positive. (ONISEP, 80 rue Rolland Garros, BP 305, F-97467 St-Denis Cedex. Tel.: (+33 1) 41 07 71)

Kidnapping: One of the highlights of the "Families of Europe without Borders" colloquium held in Paris in December 1989 was the talk given by Marie-Claude Vayssade, MEP. Vayssade has been serving as a mediator in the kidnappings of children of broken marriages involving citizens of different countries (at least one of whom is an EC national) since 1987. In her opinion, the outlook is not bright if decisions are not made to fill the legal vacuum in this area in the twelve Member States, and efforts must be made to speed up the procedures for remanding the children and choosing the court with jurisdiction over the case. She wrapped up her talk by calling for measures to produce "a more integrated family law". As President Mitterrand has stated, in the context of the European Commission's social action programme and given the rising numbers of international couples, the public powers and Community institutions must promote rules that apply to family duties.

PRIZE: Simone Lemaire, honorary President and chairwoman of the Association of Women Restaurant Owners and Chefs, ARC (*Association des restauratrices cuisinières*), has just created a competition, also called ARC, open to all women working as restaurant chefs or studying in hotel schools. Ten finalists will be selected on the basis of the recipes that they send in and the final round will take place in Vichy on 24 April. The jury, which consists mostly of restaurant owners and chefs who may not take part the contest, will include a few men "who are not too hostile to women".

ARC was founded in 1975 to put an end to "five centuries of French gastronomy without women". Today it has 80 members. This initiative deserves to be better known throughout the European Community. While women tend to do the cooking in the home, the profession not only fails to reflect this reality, but is traditionally a "male profession". (Simone Lemaire, ARC President. - Le Haut-Tourne-Bride à Busset - F - 03270 SAINT-YORRE).

DISCRIMINATION: To ensure the complete respect of women's rights of dignity, citizenship and political decision-making, the Alliance of Women for Democratisation (*Alliance des Femmes pour la Démocratisation*) demands that a law to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women be drafted, adopted and enacted without delay. The Alliance's action, which was launched in September, reflects the indignation of countless Frenchwomen following the violent sexist attacks against Simone Veil, Michèle André and many others in 1989. (*Alliance des Femmes pour la Démocratisation*, rue de Lille 5, F-75007 Paris. Tel.: (+33 1) 4548-8380)

Erratum: A mistake was made in the phone number attributed to the association *Pour une éducation non sexiste* in Women of Europe N° 61 (p. 4). The correct number is (+33 1) 4548-8605.

G E R M A N Y

FAMILY PROTECTION: At its convention in Bonn in November '89 the German Women's Council (*Deutscher Frauenrat*) submitted a detailed report on the changes that have occurred in Germany with regard to protection of the family. The *Frauenrat* expressed its pride in and solidarity with the women of East Germany and hoped for collaboration marked by reciprocal understanding. In a Resolution addressing the Government and political parties, the *Frauenrat* urged the adoption of effective legislation to help young people, enforcement of national childcare laws and guarantees of these laws' enforcement. In view of the coming completion of the Single Market, the *Frauenrat* called for the mandatory creation of minimum social standards and implementation of the "policy of women's right to equality" article of the EC's Social Charter.

EMPLOYMENT: The above-mentioned council's Steering Committee met in Bonn in January to discuss the work of women's associations over the last forty years ("forty years of Article 3 of the basic law; forty years of work by women's associations"). The *Frauenrat* released a statement on its priorities for the nineties to the press, in line with which Brunhilde FABRICIUS, the Council's first president, demanded that the Government finally implement a federal action plan for women. The *Frauenrat* also demanded that the Federal Government allocate at least 30 million DM to carry out the institutional policies of women's professional organisations. Brunhilde Fabricius further regretted the fact that the equality programme, although backed by guarantees, was not yet in effect in numerous sectors and senior positions. The Council called for permanent social security and equal opportunity in the job market through improvement of the policies being conducted in this area. Its objectives for the nineties are greater representation of women at all levels of political, cultural and economic power; increased membership; and working with the women of the GDR and other East Bloc countries. With regard to specifically Community affairs, the *Frauenrat* attaches great importance to the formation of the European Women's Lobby, which it sees as a means of ensuring that important women's issues will not be neglected.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION: In announcing the contest set up to encourage companies to conduct policies to help women (flexible schedules, aid for returners, training, etc.), Lower Saxony's Finance Minister, Birgit Breuel, said, "The companies that act to encourage women will be singled out and rewarded, and these examples will lead to others. The winners will be rewarded in March 1990 with the sum of DM5,000 (each)".

GENETICS: The advances made in genetics and artificial insemination raise serious ethical problems. The Federal Government's bill on the protection of the embryo is designed to limit the manipulation of human lives. Nevertheless, this is not enough. The proposed law raises the critical questions, but does not provide any answers. Specific regulations covering all of the angles of this delicate problem must be adopted. The German Women Farmers' Association (*Deutscher Landfrauenverband*) feels that vigilance is required in the interest of doctors and families to ensure the respect of human life and given the consequences of such actions on the lives of children born with the help of such methods. Other priorities cited by this association include banning the production of embryos for purposes other than the treatment of sterility; banning the storage of embryos; and subjecting the couples concerned to medical and psychological examination. (*Deutscher Landfrauenverband*, Godesberger Allee 142-148, 5300 Bonn 2. Tel.: (+49 228) 378051-2)

CIVIL SERVICE: The public administrations of Schleswig-Holstein are going to provide the setting for the implementation of a series of active measures for the protection of women. This initiative stems from the "Directive for Female Equality in Schleswig-Holstein" that was just adopted by the government of the Land (State). These measures will make adequate female representation a reality in most civil service jobs (e.g., in schools, police stations, state hospitals, the courts, etc.). In commenting on this, State Minister Gisela Bohrk said, "We have just taken a decisive step towards the elimination of discrimination between women and men in the civil service."

RETURNERS: The Federal Government's pilot project for women wishing to return to work began today in Gelsenkirchen. Women who want to go back to work after rather long career breaks will now be able to receive specific training adapted to the labour market's needs. This initiative is the brainchild of the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs and the Office of the Secretary of State for Male/Female Equality. The children of women who wish to receive such training will not be forgotten. The Federal Government has earmarked DM1.2 million for this project and participants will receive subsidies of DM500 a month to cover childcare costs and other family needs. The Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs has earmarked the sum of 4 million Deutsche Marks for the implementation of this project. (*Presse-und Informationsamt der Landesregierung Nordrhein-Westfalen*, Manesmansufer 1A, 4000 Düsseldorf. Tel.: (+49 211) 837-1226 or 837-1405)

G R E E C E

POLITICS:

* The new, three-party coalition, Greek government - formed after 10 days of negotiation following the November elections - has been declared "universal". This definition is unacceptable, for half of the population is not represented. All of the ministers are men. The Coordinating Committee of women's NGOs and the political parties' women's sections have expressed their disapproval in letters to the Prime Minister, Xenophon Zolotas, and the leaders of the political parties, a stormy press conference at which the presence of all of the countries' women Parliamentarians testified to Greek women's unanimous determination to defend their rights. The public has not remained indifferent to the problem, as shown by the string of commentaries, articles and interviews in the press. The president of the Left/Progress Coalition, Mr. Florakis, also gave the Parliament his opinion: "It is strange," he said, "that we do not have a single woman minister." PASOK's women MPs wrote a letter of protest and Nea Demokratia's women MPs met with the party's leader, Mr. Mitsotakis, for the same purpose. The only effect of this general mobilisation was the appointment of Martha Handrinou-Mathiopoulou as General Secretary of the Ministry of Justice.

* In contrast to the national Government, the Athens Town Council has elected three women to high office. They are Elie EVANGELIDOU, Chairwoman, Sofia Georgana-Karagianni, Vice-Chairwoman, and Sofia Mouratidou, General Secretary.

EMPLOYMENT: In Greece, 1.4 million women, 63% of whom are married, work outside their homes. They make up 35.49% of the working population. On average, working women are younger than working men, have a higher cultural background, and have more progressive opinions and aspirations. The other side of the coin is that women make up 53% of the unemployed. This information was released at the Second Pan-Hellenic Congress for Health and the Economy.

HEALTH: Liz Mestheneou and Ellie Ioannidou, both sociologists, have released the first conclusions of their study of Athens dwellers' attitudes towards AIDS. Briefly, men and women have received the same information about AIDS; women overestimate the dangers of contamination; a large number of women feel that the virus does not affect them; and only 33% of the women respondents make sure that their partners use a condom; 61% feel that this is the man's responsibility.

TRAINING: The Research and Study Centre of the town of Volos has developed a videocassette training method under a training programme for women. The aim of the centre's scientists is to promote traditional craft techniques. Mrs. Zakhos-Papazakhariou, the head of the Centre, would like to get in touch with people in charge of similar initiatives in order to exchange views Europewide. To support this project, she asks all individuals or entities able to provide financial or material aid to contact her at the following address: IRIS, Volos Municipal Research and Study Centre, Dimarchiou Volou, Greece.

TEENAGE GIRLS AND PREGNANCY: The number of teenage pregnancies in Greece has risen sharply. They accounted for 5.4% of all pregnancies in 1985. In 1989, this figure had doubled. This trend also applies to abortions: In 1985, 28.6% of the abortions reported in Greece were performed on women under 18. These alarming figures were cited by Dr. Kreatsas at the First Congress of Preventive Medicine in Athens.

ART: Two Greek sculptresses, Lida Papakostantinou and Vasiliki Tseloura, won prizes at the 20th Biennial of Sao Paulo, Brazil. The Da Vinci International Prize for the Arts, awarded at M.I.T. (Cambridge, Massachusetts), was conferred on the Committee for the Acropolis. Eva Touloupa, curator of the Acropolis Museum, received the prize on the Committee's behalf.

I R E L A N D

RULING: The US Supreme Court has just announced the creation of a 2.3 billion-dollar trust fund to process claims for compensation from about 150,000 women worldwide who allege that they suffered injuries, including infertility and abnormal births, as a result of using the Dalkon Shield IUD manufactured by A.H. Robins. About 600 Irish women will now be able to proceed to the final stage of legal claims against the US company. The Council for the Status of Women says that the Court decision is a victory for women that has been achieved mainly by women themselves and their organisations. SCW Chief Executive Carmel Foley has also criticised the US manufacturer and Ireland's Department of Health for taking no steps either to inform women of their rights to claim or to assist them to do so. The first payments from the trust fund will probably be paid in the coming year.

CHILDCARE: The lack of childcare facilities drives some women into part-time work or out of the workforce altogether, thus drastically limiting their economic independence, according to Carmel Foley, CSW Chief Executive. Speaking at the recent launch of the Association for Legislative Reform in Childcare, Foley noted that the first CSW's 1972 recommendation that all new housing estates have childcare facilities has not yet been heeded - 17 years later! Employers have also so far failed to see the advantages of providing daycare in the workplace. (CSW, 64 Lower Mount Street, Dublin 2. Tel: (01) 615268).

SOCIAL SERVICES: The CSW has called on the Justice Minister to give the Family Mediation Service adequate resources to continue its vital work, now that the Taoiseach (Prime Minister) has promised to continue the service. "Mediation services are a lifeline for couples whose marriages have broken down and who want to avoid court proceedings," the Council's Chairwoman said. The Family Mediation Service urgently needs a full-time secretary and needs to set up services all over the country, according to the Council. (See address above.)

HEALTH: The Letterkenny Women's Centre was founded in November 1987 to work for improvements in the health and well-being of women in County Donegal. In April the LWC opened a family planning clinic, the services of which are growing. The Centre offers a series of courses and discussions. It also houses a library and a daycare centre. The LWC's 88/89 annual report is very encouraging. It points to the creation - thanks to its members' commitment - of a number of women's centres offering health, social and educational services. The LWC's future projects include the creation of a Complete Well Woman Check-up Clinic, organisation of support and first aid groups and broadening of its course offerings. (The Women's Centre, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal, Ireland, Tel.: (074) 25985.)

ART: Women's art is the most important thing to have happened in the art world since cubism, according to Pauline Cummins, Chairwoman of the Women Artists Action Group (founded in 1987). One of WAAG's aims is to give women a place to display their work, meet and exchange information on women's art. Following the lead of American and British women, its members are involved in searching out employment opportunities to enable women artists to gain confidence in themselves and their abilities. WAAG has set up a data bank on the work of more than 100 women artists and recently joined a European network of women in the arts. The group's aim is to lay the foundations of a strong and steadily growing female presence in the arts.

EQUAL TREATMENT: The Chairpersons of the Northern Irish and British Equal Opportunities Commissions and Employment Equality Agency, meeting in Dublin recently, called on the Irish Government during its Presidency of the EC to promote constructive and practical policies to encourage women's contributions to the paid labour market. Joanna Foster (GB), Mary Clark-Glass (NI) and Catherine McGuinness (IRL) urged the Irish Government to use this opportunity to make real progress on issues affecting the equal participation of men and women in the European labour market and enable both to balance work and family commitments more effectively. They emphasised the need for a Community focus on quality childcare provision in order to facilitate women's entry on to the labour market and access to vocational training. (Kevin Foley, Information Officer, Employment Equality Agency, 36 Upper Mount Street, Dublin 2. Tel.: (01) 605-966).

APPOINTMENT: Professor Dervla Donnelly has become the first woman President of the Royal Dublin Society in its 258-year history. Professor Donnelly was nominated by the outgoing Chairman and is a leading figure in European science policy. The RDS is a major institution in the life of Dublin. It is the venue for many cultural and sporting activities and hosts the Royal Dublin Horse Show each year. (RDS, Bausbridge, Dublin 4. Tel.: (01) 680-645)

PUBLICATIONS: Attic Press has published two more books in its handbook series for women. Separation and Divorce Matters for Women, by lawyer Dervla Browne, deals with the various legal aspects of marital breakdown, including qualifications for legal aid, how to obtain a separation agreement, and maintenance, matrimonial property and barring orders. Body Matters for Women aims to show women how to live a fit life. The author, Aine McCarthy, discusses what fitness is and proposes self-assessment tests for fitness. There are also chapters on diet and nutrition. (Attic Press, 44 East Essex Street, Dublin 2. Tel.: (01) 716-367)

WOMEN'S RIGHTS: Carmel Foley, the Chief Executive of the Council for the Status of Women, has called on the Taoiseach (Prime Minister) to establish without delay the promised second Commission on the Status of Women. Addressing the seminar "The Price Women Pay for Equality", Foley said that the new commission was needed to tackle such injustices as the concentration of women in low-paid jobs; the social welfare system's definition of women in relation to men ("unmarried mother", "deserted wife", "widow", "prisoner's wife", etc.); the lack of childcare facilities; discrimination against women in access to financial services, sports and recreational facilities; barriers to women's participation in public life; and underfunding of women's organisations. (CSW, 64 Lower Mount Street, Dublin 2, Tel.: (01) 615-268)

I T A L Y

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY: Equal opportunity and affirmative action have been the subjects of numerous bills of all sorts put forward in Parliament. From now on, a sub-committee of the Chamber's Labour Committee will focus all of its attention on a unique text proposed by MP Tina Anselmi, Chairwoman of the National Committee for Equal Opportunity. Her strategy to achieve equality between men and women at work is built around eleven main points: the purpose of the law; financing of affirmative action, especially that achieved by vocational training; indirect forms of discrimination; the creation of a national committee to implement the principles of equal treatment; the appointment of "Equality Advisors"; the reports that undertakings with more than 150 employees must submit every two years; the Minister of Labour's report to Parliament; the budget; etc. (*Commissione Nazionale per la Parità fra uomo e donna, Presidenza del Consiglio dei Ministri, Palazzo Chigi, 00187 Roma*)

ABORTIONS: In his report on the effects of Law 194 (legislation authorising abortions that was launched by Parliament in 1979 and adopted by a referendum in 1982), Health Minister Francisco De Lorenzo reveals that the number of abortions has fallen steadily to 179,193 (this is down 6.4% from 1987). More abortions (76,330) were performed in the North, where the spirit of the law appears to be better understood; 47,063 were performed in the South, 39,119 in the Centre and 16,681 on the islands. The Minister underlined the need to give priority to health information on family planning and contraception. Italian women still seem to lack maturity in

choosing their means of birth control (coitus interruptus, poor understanding of the menstrual cycle, etc.). The Minister will aim his next campaign at female minors. The Secretary of State (Junior Minister) for Health is Elena Marinucci. Her important contribution to getting this law passed is well known. (*Ministero della Sanità, Piazzale dell'Industria 20, 00144 Roma*)

POLITICS:

* Following the recent elections in the commune of Rome, Beatrice Medi (Christian Democrat) is the new Deputy-Mayor (*Prosindaco*) of the capital. She is the first woman to hold such a high office in the local government.

* Major changes have come about in Italy's political and social landscape over the last few years due to women's growing involvement in roles that normally have been kept for men. To evaluate their specific contributions to politics, the International Federation of University Women (IFUW) and Italian Federation of Women University Graduates (FILDIS) held a colloquium on "When Politics is Woman" (*Quando la politica é donna*, at which women holding offices in national or European government examined the common denominators of the female political experience in the light of their own experiences. (*Federazione Italiana Laureate e Diplomate Istituti Superiori di Grado Universitario, Via San Michele del Carso 4, 20144 Milano*)

DECISION-MAKING POSTS: The Italian electric power company ENEL still leads the (partly-)State-owned companies in terms of the number of women in management. The statistics given below are excerpted from the report "*Dall'Università all'azienda*" ("From University to Business"), compiled from the responses of 5,000 young Italian women selected from the lists of Italy's recent university graduates of both sexes. Theoretically better armed than their counterparts, but actually fairly ignorant of "the rules of the game", recent women graduates have great difficulty getting to the top. According to the Italian Confederation of Executives (*Confederazione Italiana Dirigenti d'azienda* (CIDA), only 4,765 of a total of 144,576 managers are women. Even in the firms where women make up 20% of the personnel, only 3.3% of them fill key positions - with salaries that are 10% lower than those of their male colleagues.

In three years (1986 to 1989), the number of women appointed to managerial positions at ENEL has risen 39% (23 in 1986, 32 today). Nevertheless, the dividing line between women and men in the company has not blurred. 1,600 men hold important jobs, and the 14 women engineers have literally lost among their 1,265 male colleagues. These are the main statistics culled from the colloquium "*Pari opportunità e azioni positive: quale futuro?*" held in Rome by the National Committee for Equal Opportunity in ENEL. (*Commissione Nazionale per le pari opportunità nell'ENEL. Chairwoman: Ada GRECCHI, Esq., Via S. Giovanni sul muro 9, 20121 Milano*)

PROSTITUTION: Social Democratic Deputy Antonio Bruno's proposal to hold a referendum to abrogate the first three articles of the Merlin Law has sparked great emotion in feminist circles. This law, which was adopted in August 1958, decreed the closing of the so-called *case di tolleranza* (hotels for prostitution). Bruno feels that this legislation has failed to achieve its goals and prostitution has risen noticeably in the intervening years. Italy's feminist movements recognise the law's imperfections and possible changes that could be made, but oppose its abrogation, which they consider would be a step backward.

MALE/FEMALE EQUALITY IN UNIVERSITY EDUCATION: The Law School of Trieste University and Women's Advisory Board of Trieste have joined forces to offer a course on the status of women in the Italian legal system (*Corso sulla condizione femminile nell'ordinamento giuridico italiano*). The classes will be taught by teachers from Trieste's *Atheneum* (high school) and will cover such topics as sexual equality in the Italian Constitution, abortion, the status of women at work and vis-à-vis the social security scheme, male/female equality in the Community's institutions, etc. (*Consulta femminile del Comune di Trieste*, Carla MOCAVERO (Chairwoman), Via Don Minzoni 16, 34124 Trieste)

DIVORCE: The number of legal separations in Italy has tripled since 1971, rising from 11,796 to 37,030. Since 1985, the country can claim 50,000 couples a year. Very often, the separations are requested by the woman. The trend is stronger in the industrial North, while the South remains more faithful to tradition. The number of divorces has also more than doubled over the last decade, from 12,606 in 1981 to 30,715 in 1988. Most of the divorcees (74%) married very young (under 25). More than half (58%) of the couples that split up were formed before the spouses were 25 years old.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE: According to the latest statistics from the Central Administration of the Criminal Police (*Direzione Centrale di Polizia criminale*), 628 rapes were perpetrated in Italy over the last 11 months of 1989, which averages slightly less than 60 rapes a month. The figures are well below those of 1988 (865 reported rapes). Sicily leads with 82 cases, followed by Campania (70) and Latium and Lombardy tied for third with 66 cases each. No rapes were reported in Val d'Aoste. Gang rapes are common, explaining the higher number of rapists (741) than victims (628).

WAR ON DRUGS: Padua has become one of the most drug-ridden cities in Italy, with 8,000 addicts for a population of 250,000. Some 20 drug-related deaths were reported in 1989, while many parents have seen their children reduced to prostitution to get their daily doses. Given the authorities' inertia, the women of Padua have organised, like their sisters in Genoa and Naples. They join the nightly carousels of cars that revolve around the prostitutes and try to discourage their children's potential clients. A delegation of mothers from a number of towns went to the Senate at the end of the year to obtain more State intervention. Drugs led to 791 deaths in Italy in 1988 and 679 for the first nine months of 1989. Italy leads the Western European countries in the death rate due to drugs.

EDUCATION: The region of Emilia-Romagna and Regional Committee for Equality between Women and Men have developed a model of a game for boys and girls, called "The Race to Happiness" (*La corsa alla felicità*), that is built around the themes of the differences and equality between the sexes. It is part of an international UNESCO campaign against sexist stereotypes. The game's originality has won it the patronage of the European Commission, Italian Labour Ministry and Equal Opportunity Commission of the Minister for Public Education. (*Assessorato Lavoro e Formazione professionale*, Viale Silvani 6, 40122 Bologna)

CULTURE: *Arcidonna* is an organisation founded in 1985 to give more credibility and guidance to women's cultural achievements. Founded by 26 women, it now has 5,000 members organised in 80 autonomous circles with a common denominator: promoting women's accomplishments. These circles are located all over the peninsula, particularly in small towns and in the South. Their great freedom of action explains the diversity of their activities, e.g., a daycare centre in Rome and a publishing house (*La Lune de Palermo*) founded in Palermo in 1986 that has already published 22 books and sponsors a literary prize for women. In addition, in the wake of its

third congress (Rome, December 1989), Arcidonna has thrown itself into the struggle against sexism in school books. A working group composed of teachers, writers and intellectuals from different countries is studying the question. It proposes inviting textbook publishers to a round table discussion to drum up support for the idea of conducting a survey to assess future generations' attitudes to these sexist stereotypes and setting up a data bank on work that has already been carried out in this field. (Arcidonna, Viale Giulio Cesare 92, 00192 Roma. Tel.: (06) 316-449)

CINEMA: PANDORA, the European Network of Women Cinematographic and Audiovisual Production Professionals, was founded on 11 November 1989 in Florence. The network operates like an agency. It proposes, filters, organises, publicises and establishes contacts between the initiatives of European women working in the audiovisual field and expresses the point of view of women in all consultations with the European Community. (Paola Paoli, *Laboratorio Immagine Donna*, via Aretina 98, 50121 Firenze. Tel.: (55) 661852. Violaine De Villers, *Université des Femmes*, la Place Quetelet, B-1030 Brussels. Tel.: (+32 2) 219-6107)

PUBLICATIONS:

- * A recent issue of *Minerva* contains a special section on the laws that guarantee women's rights. From the first bills to be put forward in the 19th century to the current state of legislation, this special issue is testimony of the political and social contributions of the women's movement. (*Minerva*, Anna Maria Mammoliti, Editor-in-chief, Viale Giulio Cesare 151, 00192 Roma)
- * The *Centro di studi storici sul movimento di liberazione della donna in Italia* (Women's Liberation Study Centre) recently presented a book on Lina Merlin (1887-1979), member of the Constituent Assembly and three-term senator. We are beholden to her for, among other things, a law to protect women from being fired without grounds upon getting married (a practice designed to duck out of paying statutory maternity benefits). She also fought to have brothels closed down (law of 1958). (*Lina Merlin - La Mia Vita* by Elena Marinucci, Casa editrice Giunti)
- * *ISTAR* is a magazine devoted to problems linked to maternity and giving birth, e.g., overmedication, respect for female physiology, women's demands and the responses of the medical profession, and science and nature. It is published twice a year by the Centre for the Study of Natural Birth (*Centro studi per la nascita naturale*) of Venice. The first issue contains the World Health Organisation's complete list of recommendations in respect of giving birth and postnatal care and contributions by some eminent international experts. (Antonelle Barina, Santa Croce 1892B, 30123 Venezia. Tel.: (041) 524-0938).
- * The Milanese Women's Action Centre (*Centro Azione Milano Donne*) has just published a brochure with some very practical answers to the questions that women ask about their rights vis-à-vis the family, work and society. (*Come riconoscere e far valere i propri diritti in famiglia, nel lavoro, nella società*, CAMD, Viale Tibaldi 41, 20136 Milano. Tel.: (02) 832-4067, 832-3775).

- * The Office of the Alderman for Vocational Training (*Assessorato alla Formazione Professionale*) of Puglia has been offering training courses for women since the 1986/87 academic year. These courses give them access to traditionally male professions and fields in which women are under-represented. The *Assessorato* has just published three brochures explaining the different types of training and giving activities reports for the end of 1987. (*Progetto Donna dalla parità alle pari opportunità, Assessorato alla Formazione professionale, Ufficio studi e programmazione*, c. da Macchia Lazzone 19b, 70026 Modugno)

POETRY: *Dietro i muri notturni la speranza/Atrás dos muros noturnos a Esperança* (Behind the night walls of hope) is the title of the latest (bilingual) collection of poems by Mercedes La Valle, well-known poetess in Italy, her native country, and the Portuguese-speaking world. Mercedes La Valle has spent her entire life spreading Brazilian literature and poetry in Italy through the publication of translations of Brazilian authors, e.g., an anthology of 100 years of Brazilian poetry (*Um século de Poesia Brasileira*). She has received the order of the Southern Cross, the highest distinction granted by the Brazilian Government, and has been described as "Brazilian by right of conquest". In Portugal she is also known for her translations from Italian, in admirable alexandrine verse, of the great epic of Portuguese literature, *Os Lusíadas*, by the 15th-century poet Luis De Camoes. Before this latest collection Mercedes had already published several other works - *Mensagem, O Meu canto do Brasil na Itália, Não Há Mais Mãos* (Messages, My Song of Brazil in Italy, There are no more Hands), all in bilingual (Portuguese/Italian) editions.

L U X E M B O U R G

POLITICS: At a recent central district congress of Social Christian women, Viviane Reding, National Chairwoman, brought up the absence of women in the new Government. The Social Christian women had an excellent score, for all six of those who stood for election were elected. Nevertheless, the Social Christian Party did not feel the need to include them in the negotiations or the new Government itself. (*Femmes Sociales-Chrétiennes*, 4 rue de l'Eau, 1449 Luxembourg)

SHORTER WORK WEEK: Ingrid Kurz-Schert, German unionist and the head of transport fare policy within the DOC, spoke about this issue during a conference held by the National Federation of Railroad Engineers, Transport Workers and Luxembourg Civil Servants and Employees (FNCTTFEL). In her talk she developed her theory of the need to reduce working hours in response to the deregulation of scheduling that was being urged by employers. According to the FNCTTFEL, this phenomenon is extremely topical in the Grand Duchy. The trend towards more flexible work schedules is aimed at increasing the competitiveness of Luxembourg's enterprises within the Single Market, but is unfortunately achieved at the worker's expense. (*Fédération Nationale des Cheminots, des Travailleurs du Transport, des Fonctionnaires et Employés luxembourgeois*, 63 rue de Bonnevoie, 1260 Luxembourg)

WOMEN'S STATUS: A Department on the Status of Women was set up within the Ministry of the Family a few months ago, under the direction of Cécile Greisch. As a result of this administrative restructuring, the Women's Labour Committee, formerly part of the Labour Ministry, has been transferred to the Ministry of the Family. One of Greisch's first actions was to organise a meeting for the representatives of the National Council of Women and relevant Minister. Her prime concern is to abolish dual taxation, a tax scheme that hits low-income women and those in the process of divorce particularly hard. Over the next few months Greisch also intends to draw up full reports on the situation of housewives and the labour market and launch a study of the current pension scheme. (*Ministère de la Famille, Département de la condition féminine*, 14 avenue de la Gare, 1610 Luxembourg)

IMPROVING WOMEN'S IMAGE: The Bettembourg branch of "Young Mothers" has written to the executives of RTL-Plus protesting the poor image of women that is projected by this stations' broadcasts. Women are too often portrayed as sex objects, especially in the New Year's broadcasts, which were watched by a great many children. The association demanded that the television station change either its programmes or their titles. The protest has met with no reaction so far. (*Jeunes Mamans*, Andrée Steichen-Georges, 24 rue Marie-Thérèse, 3257 Bettembourg)

SOLIDARITY: At a recent press conference held by the Luxembourg-Nicaragua Solidarity Association, three Nicaraguan women representing the Committee for the Defence of Peace and Life gave testimony on the atrocities committed in the name of the civil war. The press conference was attended by various journalists and political figures. (*Association Solidarité Luxembourg-Nicaragua*, 93 rue de Strasbourg, 2561 Luxembourg)

THE NETHERLANDS

PROSTITUTION: According to a study commissioned by the Ministry for Social Affairs and Employment Opportunities as part of its policy to fight sexual violence, prostitutes apparently make little use of government aid services. According to the investigators, this is the result of their negative experiences when they deal with various social agents. Many prostitutes also deny or minimise the importance of their problems, as the very nature of their work requires them to repress their mental or physical problems. According to a survey of 60 prostitutes, 39% of them had been raped and, in 15% of these cases, the crime was committed by a stranger. In 50% of the rapes the women were also subjected to other types of mistreatment. 43% of the respondents asserted that they had never been forced to turn to prostitution. Other findings of this study are equally alarming. For example, barely 11% of the women are satisfied with the courts' attitudes and one-third complain about the police's behaviour towards them (this is one of the reasons why the women do not lodge complaints). Mrs. Ter Veld, Secretary of State (Junior Minister) for ..., filed this report with the Parliament and asked that major changes be made in the area of assistance for prostitutes.

PRIZE:

- * The Joke Smit Award, a government prize for emancipation, will be awarded for the third time in 1990. It will go to the individual, group or government body that has most contributed to improving conditions for women in the Netherlands and consists of an award of 10,000 guilders and a work of art. The names of nominees must be sent to the Secretariat of the Emancipation Policy Coordinating Office of the Ministry of Social Affairs (Joke Smit Award, 20801, 2500 EV 's-Gravenhage)
- * The local administration of Doordrecht awarded its first Emancipation Prize recently to a teaching establishment in recognition of its active recruitment of women and girls for technical education and the quality of its work with these students. The prize consists of an award of 2,500 guilders and a trophy.

MATERNITY LEAVES: Two studies commissioned by Groningen's women farmers point to the urgent need for legislation on pregnancy and maternity leaves for Dutch farm women. The Netherlands has no legislation that covers the specific cases of women who help on the farm, unlike other European countries where they can invoke the protection of various regulations. The Netherlands' women farmers currently have only one solution - to sign up with an insurance company. (For more information, contact *Boerinengroep*, postbus 265, 6700 AG, Wageningen. Tel: (08370) 10500)

PENSIONS: Dr. Iris de Veer, Representative of the Council for Emancipation, pointed out in the wake of a recent day of reflection on pensions and equal treatment that, despite legislation to ensure equal treatment for men and women, we will have to wait another 40 years before a Dutchwoman can claim a pension equal to that granted to men. Currently, three-quarters of women between the ages of 50 and 60 are living on minimum incomes! (*Emancipatieraad*, Luterse Burgwal, 10, 2512 Den Haag)

NUNS AND FEMINISM: A group of nuns from Tilburg recently provided financial support for the completion of some feminist projects, saying, "We want women to be independent." The Women's Party, *Vrouwen in de Bijstand* Committee, *Vrouwen Telefoon*, South African Women's Studies Fund, and other women's organisations are among the beneficiaries of this aid.

DAYCARE: Since January 1990 the workers at Heineken Breweries have crèches at their disposal. The company chose to use the childcare services already located in rural areas rather than setting up facilities at its plants.

ALIMONY: The bill to limit alimony payments will include the possibility of extensions. Currently, alimony is paid until death or retirement. Under the bill, alimony payments will be limited to twelve years once the divorce is registered with the town hall. Under some circumstances, the judge will be able to extend the payments for up to twelve more years but, as recent debates in the first Chamber indicate, this extension will probably be granted most sparingly. In any event, the beneficiary (usually a woman) loses all rights to alimony when he/she turns 65, at which point he/she is eligible for an old-age pension and part of the spouse's pension, based on the number of years they were married. In the case of childless couples married less than five years, the alimony will be paid for the same amount of time as they were married.

Alimony and old-age pensions are divorced women's main sources of income. The alimony bill is closely linked to another bill concerning the granting of pensions. It still has to go before the second house of Parliament. It will not apply to separations that began before 27 November 1981. This means that a large number of women who devoted themselves to their roles as housewives will be unaffected by the new law. (*Stichting Landelijke Ombudsvrouw*, Postbus 11666, 2502 AR Den Haag. Tel.: (070) 324-7766)

P O R T U G A L

ELECTIONS: Only five of the 305 mayors elected in December's municipal elections are women, despite the fact that 18% of the candidates were women. The five in question are Maria De Lurdes Breu (PSD), re-elected mayor of Estarreja; Maria Irene Barata Joaquim (PSD), elected in Vila de Rei; Maria Santos Chambel (PS), re-elected in Sardoal; and Graciete Santos Baião and Maria Emilia Melo Sousa (both CDU), re-elected in Alcacer do Sal and Almada, respectively.

UNEMPLOYMENT: The female unemployment rate in Spain is twice that of men and women enjoy much less job security. The female employment rate rose from 13 to 39.5% over the last 25 years (this is three times as fast as the increase in male employment). Nevertheless, only 6% of working women are in senior and middle management positions and highly-skilled jobs, compared with 14% of working men. These and other issues were covered at the recent seminar on "Women and the Labour Market - Vocational Training for 1993" that was held by IRIS, the European Network of Vocational Training Schemes for Women, in Portugal.

TOURISM: Women account for half of the workers in the hotel and tourist industry in the North of the country. According to an industry trade union report, 49% of the 16,374 people working in this sector in the North in 1987 were women. The percentage is currently slightly higher. (*Sindicato dos Trabalhadores da Industria e Hoteleria, Turismo, Restaurantes e Similares do Norte*, rua D. Joao IV, 224, 4000 Porto)

SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN: The Movement for the emancipation of Portuguese Women, UMAR, held a debate recently on the problem of the lack of daycare facilities and kindergartens in Portugal. The relevant authorities' announced intention to transfer the crèches run by the State to private social service institutions has prompted UMAR to alert the public to the need for a comprehensive policy for young children backed up by specific allowances. (*Movimento Pela Emancipação social das mulheres portuguesas*, Apartado 5357, 1708 Lisboa Codex)

TRADE UNIONS: The Federation of Railroad Trade Unions has set up a Women's Committees modelled after that of the General Confederation of Portuguese Workers (CGTP - IN) (the latter approved the creation of its own Women's Committee at its national congress).

WOMEN IN AGRICULTURE: The Association of Portuguese Women in Agriculture, AMAR, held a meeting in Lisbon that tackled the situation of women in agricultural undertakings and agricultural technical support services. The meeting provided an occasion to share experiences and exchange information about the association's work. (*Associação de Mulheres Agricultoras Portuguesas*, Calçada Ribeiro Santos 19, R/C, 1200 Lisboa)

COMMENDATION: The Women's Democratic Movement (*Movimento Democrático de Mulheres*) singled out a women's collective for farm reform for distinction in order to underline women's rôles in the development of Alentejo (a farming region in the South), the integral use of regional resources and the strengthening of democracy. MDM also commended Clementina Carneiro De Moura, a well-known figure in the Portuguese women's movement, for her talents as a painter, teacher, and craftswoman (lacework, embroidery and patchwork). (MDM, Avenida Duque de Loulé, 111, 4°, 1000 Lisboa)

NEW TECHNOLOGY: The Committee on the Status of Women, Institute for Employment and Vocational Training and Ministry of Education have launched campaigns in schools to inform parents, students and teachers of the new technology training schemes that are available to them. For more information: *Comissão da Condição Feminina*, Avenida da República 32/1°, 1093 Lisboa Codex.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS: The Committee on the Status of Women has released several publications on women's rights (see below), including a guide to women's rights that provides legal information on the family, education, work, nationality, social security and health. The Committee has also promoted the circulation of a regular update on national and international legislation to the country's town administrations.

PUBLICATIONS:

- * *Mulheres Magazine* has been a huge success ever since it was begun in late October 1988. Its readers have sent masses of cards, letters and notes of encouragement to the staff. (*Mulheres Magazine*, Helena Neves, rua de Sao Bernardo, 14/1°, 1200 Lisboa. Tel.: 670-193/4/5/6/7)
- * The collection *Informar as Mulheres* (Informing Women) of the Committee of the Status of Women now contains 11 titles. The latest addition to the series is on sexual harassment in the workplace. It studies the different forms of sexual harassment, the people who engage in such scandalous behaviour, its effects on the victim's health and work, the recommended reactions, etc. (*Assedio Sexual no Local de Trabalho, Coleção Informar as Mulheres N° 11, Comissão da Condição Feminina, Av. da República, 32/1°, 1093 Lisboa Codex*)
- * N° 27 of the Status of Women Booklet series describes two late-19th-century pioneers in women's education, Bernardino Machado and Alice Pestana. It also reviews the improvements that they had proposed. (*B. Machado, A. Pestana e a educação da mulher nos fins do século XIX, Elizira Machado Rosa, Cadernos Condição Feminina N° 27, Comissão da Condição Feminina - see above*).
- * The Committee on the Status of Women has just published an extensive bibliography of studies, articles, laws and testimony on the status of women in Portugal between 1974 and 1988. (*A Mulher em Textos e contextos - um recenseamento bibliográfico, Cadernos Condição Feminina N° 26, Presidencia da Conselho de Ministros, Comissão da Condição Feminina - see above*)

S P A I N

PROMOTING EMPLOYMENT: The Employment Promotion Teams (*Equipos de Promoción de Empleo*) of Spain's Women's Institute (*Instituto de la Mujer*) were responsible for a series of sessions on job search strategies held in early October. These sessions were based on a technique called MABEM for *Módulo de Aprendizaje de Búsqueda de Empleo* (Job-Search Learning Module). MABEM is available to all interested women; they do not have to be on the dole. Its main aim is to provide guidance and all possible information about the job market. These teams' work is linked to the implementation of the measures adopted under the Plan on Equal Opportunity for Women 1988-90 and the development of the annual programme drafted by the Joint Committee of the Collaboration Agreement between the Ministry of Labour and Social Security and the Ministry of Social Affairs.

EVENTS:

* An exhibition of the work done by rural women - *Las Mujeres en el Medio rural* - was held in the Spanish Museum of Contemporary Art from 19 December 1989 to 25 January 1990. This exhibition showed the importance of these women, who devote most of their time to household tasks, raising the children and keeping the nuclear family in balance. The exhibits from the different Autonomous Communities reflected women's participation in the social and economic activities of the entire country.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES:

* Two school centres will soon be the sites of the Research/Action Pilot Plan for Equal Opportunities for Women in the School System. This is a two-year project drawn up by the Women's Institute to analyse the factors influencing young girls' choices of their future jobs. The findings will be used to refine perceptions of the behavioural changes needed to achieve true equality between men and women.

* The Directorate-General for Women and Council of the Presidency of the Community of Madrid unveiled the 1989/91 Plan for Equal Opportunity for the Women of Madrid to the media in December 1989. At the same time, they released the results of a study of the factors (educational, demographic, health, etc.) that have the most impact on Madrid's female residents. These different reports were given out the same day to women of various backgrounds (association representatives, union representatives, artists, entrepreneurs, etc.). (*Dirección General de la Mujer*, P° Castellano N° 60 6a, Planta. Tel.: 411-6560 - 411-6521 - 411-6401)

CULTURE: The writer Soledad Puertolas has won the *Planeta de Novela* Prize, one of the most prestigious literary awards in Spain. Soledad Puertolas is the sixth woman to have won the prize since its creation. The first woman recipient was the 1975 winner, Mercedes Salisachs. The Prize comes with a monetary award of 20 million pesetas.

SHARING RESPONSIBILITIES: The Women's Institute conducted an advertising campaign lately on the sharing of responsibilities called "*Reparto de Responsabilidades*". The main aim of this initiative was to stress the existence of inequitable sharing of tasks between men and women in Spain. The chief goals included the will to impose the idea that sharing responsibilities benefits all members of the family and the assertion that gender must by no means be the decisive factor in dividing up household

duties. The campaign also underlined the injustice of women's double workload, one at home, the other at work. This campaign to raise the awareness of the entire population involved the use of television adverts and announcements on the radio or in the press.

BIRTH CONTROL: The pregnancy rate in teenagers between the ages of 15 and 17 has risen considerably in Spain in the last few years, according to studies carried out in the various autonomous communities. This trend is partly explained by the lack of information about birth control methods available to the bulk of this population. Moreover, teenage girls rarely turn to the institutions with the means to perform abortions for unwanted pregnancies.

HEALTH:

* Many women's organisations and family planning associations are angry at the Spanish health administration's decision to stop the sale of the morning-after contraceptive, RU 486, and research being conducted on this pill's side effects in Spain.

* The work carried out over the last ten years by Dr. Jocelyne Leal's team at Ramon y Cajal Hospital in Madrid in connection with some American institutions appears to confirm the discoveries made in other countries and the feeling that computers and the electromagnetic fields that they produce may have harmful effects (higher miscarriage rates and more foetal malformations) on pregnant women who are exposed to such radiation for long periods of time.

ART: The Catalanian Women's Association is preparing this year's edition of the 50,000-peseta Donart Prize for women's artwork. The 1989 winner was the painter Lourdes Crespo.

THE UNITED KINGDOM

SMOKING: The HEA (Health Education Authority) has launched a 10 million-pound campaign to persuade young people, especially girls, not to smoke. The HEA says that the tobacco industry is refusing to cooperate in action to help cut illegal tobacco sales to people under 16 and points out that while fewer boys are taking up smoking, the statistics for girls are not so encouraging: 25% of 15-year-old girls smoke, versus just over 15% of 15-year-old boys. The campaign, which will include extensive press advertising and television public service announcements directed by top photographer David Bailey, will link non-smoking with success.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY: Sex discrimination complaints to the Northern Ireland Equal Opportunities Commission rose by more than 20% in 1988/89 compared with the previous year, according to the NI EOC's 13th annual report. The Commission's Chair and Chief Executive, Mary Clark-Glass, reported that women continue to be discriminated against with regard to appointments and promotion and warned that the rising number of complaints made by women highlights the need for strict enforcement of current laws.

The report also shows that equal pay has not yet been achieved, either. Women's salaries in Northern Ireland average barely 73.5% of those of their male counterparts (comparison of hourly rates). The EOC feels that fighting against unequal pay is a priority. Given the complexity of the procedures for lodging complaints, the EOC encourages alternative means of

achieving equal pay, for example, through the implementation of systematic non-discrimination policies and job assessment programmes in all sectors. The EOC is also in favour of an approach that unites unions and management, with direct links with the EOC. (The 13th Annual Report of the NI EOC is available from: NI EOC, Chamber of Commerce House, 22 Great Victoria Street, Belfast BT2 2BA.)

WAR ON PORNOGRAPHY: "Off the Shelf", the campaign to persuade news agents to stop selling magazines with pictures of naked women on the covers, recently targeted W.H. Smith, the major news agent chain. Campaigners, led by Labour MPs Claire Short, Dawn Primarolo and Alice Mahon, removed the offending magazines from a W.H. Smith branch in Central London. Claire Short told the shop manager, "We believe pornography threatens the safety of women and children. Time and again it has been shown that direct links between pornography and sexual violence exist." The manager promised to forward a copy of the "Off the Shelf" petition to his head office, but the magazines were put back on display as soon as the campaigners had left the shop.

PUBLICATION: In her fascinating new book, Women with X Appeal, a collection of interviews with 30 women in British politics, Lesley Abdela convinces us not only that we need more women in politics (which we knew anyway), but that women politicians work harder than men, are more serious about their work, and have little time for the extra-curricular gossip and glamour that appeals to so many male politicians. (Women with X Appeal, published by Optima, is available from Purnell Distribution Centre, Paulton, Bristol, BS18 5LQ. Price: 5.95 + postage and packing.)

WOMEN'S ALLIANCE: NAWO (the National Alliance of Women's Organisations), whose formation was announced in Women of Europe N° 60, had its formal launch with cross-party support in the House of Lords in December. NAWO already has a membership of 120 women's organisations representing some 4 million women, mainly in England. Jane Grant, NAWO's director, hopes for even more members and promises an organisation so formidable that no government will be able to ignore its demands. The launch was planned to coincide with the 70th anniversary of the day on which Nancy Astor became the first woman to take her seat in the House of Commons. (NAWO, 122 Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7PT)

TRAINING:

* For the past ten years, Women & Training (originally The Women & Training Group) has been addressing training issues to benefit women of all ages, ethnic origins and occupational categories. This independent organisation works with affiliated regional groups throughout the UK to encourage employers in the public and private sectors to improve training opportunities for women. It serves as a centre of information for educators, trainers and other specialised groups, holds conferences, runs workshops, and also publishes a quarterly newsletter, Women & Training News, that is widely circulated to employers, trade unions, education and training organisations and interested individuals in the UK and Europe. Women and Training News examines the latest practical approaches to women's training and development and contains information about events, new publications and training aids. (Women & Training, Hewmar House, 120 London Road, Gloucester GL1 3PL. Tel.: (0452) 309-330)

- * The City University's Centre for Continuing Education is offering three new courses for "women returners". Many employers are beginning to change their recruitment policies in response to democratic trends and advances in technology. The number of youngsters entering the job market is decreasing while the demand for highly-skilled personnel goes unsatisfied. As a result, older people, particularly women, are being encouraged to return to the labour force. "Professional up-dating for women returners", "Developing management skills for women managers" and "New technology for women managers" are short, part-time courses designed to meet such women's needs. (Dr. Stella Parker, Head of the Centre for Continuing Education, City University, Northampton Square, London EC1V 0HB. Tel.: (01) 253-4399 x3250)

CHILDCARE: National Health Service professionals, including physiotherapists, dietitians and X-ray technicians (85% of whom are women), are seeking childcare vouchers instead of regional salary supplements in their annual pay negotiations. The Department of Health wants to allow local health service managers to top up national salaries in regions where there are recruitment difficulties, but trade unions representing the professionals argue that childcare vouchers would be a more effective solution, as they would encourage working mothers to return to work.

POLITICS:

- * The Labour Party is asking its constituency parties to consider women-only Parliamentary shortlists to try to boost the number of women Labour MPs. The Party, which has compiled a list of women members seeking nomination, is worried that very few women are being chosen to fight winnable seats in the next election. It also expressed concern over the fact that there are only 22 female Labour MPs in the current Parliament.
- * The British Communist Party, until recently considered one of the most traditional CPs in Europe, has chosen Nina Temple as its new leader. A science graduate of Imperial College, University of London, Temple wants to form a broad alliance of the opposition against Thatcher and reduce the BCP's political isolation (it has had no MPs in the House of Commons since the fifties). Temple, who is in her thirties, intends to rely on a collegial Executive, so as to be able to devote some of her time to raising her two young children.

RELIGION: The synod of the Anglican Church has approved, by a two-thirds majority, the amendment allowing women to be ordained ministers, although they continued to be barred from other senior positions in the Church. This temporary decision must now be approved by the pastoral councils of Britain's 43 dioceses. The Anglican Churches around the world have adopted quite different positions on this issue. For example, in the United States women may be ordained bishops. There are some 1,200 women priests or ministers in the United States, Canada and New Zealand, despite the strong opposition that Pope John Paul II has expressed on numerous occasions.

CENTRAL AND EASTERN
EUROPE

The political and ideological boundaries of Europe are shifting, revealing new centres of interest and poles of attraction between peoples. In creating this new section, Women of Europe hopes to stimulate a flow of information, as it has done for Latin America, that will help us discover the realities and hopes of Central and Eastern Europe's women, who have remained in the shadows so many years. We shall try to shed light on their situations with the same care for conciseness and objectiveness that characterises our editorial line.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA:

- * Rita Klimova, press interpreter for Vaclav Havel (the Czech opposition leader who is now the newly-elected President of the Republic) in the heat of the revolution, has been named Ambassador to the United States. Klimova was expelled from the Communist Party, along with thousands of other Czechs, in 1968 after the Warsaw Pact troops put down the Prague uprising known as "the Prague Spring". In 1980 she began working with a few underground papers that demanded changes in the country's economic policy.
- * Vaclav Havel's Government boasts two other women besides Rita Klimova. They are Dagmar Beresova, Justice Minister, and Vera Caslavova, Social Affairs Advisor. Beresova, who was appointed on 7 December 1989, had the particularly delicate task of settling the question of an amnesty for the country's 37,000 prisoners. While awaiting the reform of the Penal Code, which will follow the June legislative elections, she has taken on the job of revamping the rules in the legislature.

GERMAN DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC:

- * Christa Wolf and Barbel Bohley of *Neues Forum* (New Forum) have called on their fellow citizens to stop the flight of skilled labour to the Federal Republic, for all hands are needed to right the economy and build a democracy.
- * The Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF) is hosting the 34th Session of the United Nations Committee on the Status of Women in Vienna from 26 February to 9 March 1990. This session will include the presentation of the Final report of the Forum for the 10th anniversary of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women that was held jointly by WIDF and the Czechoslovakian Women's Union. (*Internationale Demokratische Frauenföderation*, Unter den Linden 13, 1080 Berlin, GDR)
- * The Union of Women Entrepreneurs (*Vereinigung von Unternehmerinnen e.v.*) or VvU is asking East German women entrepreneurs and executives to join. This decision was adopted by the VvU's Board of Executives on 2 February. Seminars, conferences and company tours are planned to show the East German women how the market economy is run. The congresses that have already taken place in Fulda and Braunschweig kick off a series of conferences and meetings to air the wishes and needs of East German entrepreneurs. In this way, the foundations of steady, effective cooperation between women entrepreneurs from East and West will be laid. (*Vereinigung von Unternehmerinnen e.v.*, Postfach 51 10 30, 5000 Köln. Tel.: (+49 221) 375074)

* Renate Feyl, writer and journalist, began her struggle against censorship and the horrible conditions of women's existence very early. Since she began writing in 1977, most of her books are about women, for in her words, "90% of women work, receive meagre salaries, have the housework to do, etc. Up at 6 a.m., not in bed before midnight, they have no time for themselves." Many of her books were banned and she herself was dropped by a number of dailies because of her "revisionist" writings. Today she openly supports the New Forum for a "free and humanistic GDR."

HUNGARY:

* Despite the principle of equality for all citizens that is enshrined in the 1949 Constitution, Hungarian women have systematically been kept out of power and positions of responsibility. They can boast only one minister (the Minister of Health) and there are just a few women in Parliament and industry; management is almost 100% male. The electoral fever that has swept the country since the 1989 upheaval has encouraged the creation of independent women's organisations and women's sections within the political parties. The Union of Women Intellectuals and Entrepreneurs registered in January 1989. Next came the Society for Equal Opportunity and the Group of Mothers with Large Families. The political parties and trade unions (Social Democratic Party, Party of Independent Smallholders, People's Party, Federation of Free Democrats, Young Democrats (*Fidesz*) and Workers' Solidarity independent trade unions) have followed this lead. Some of the women's sections have already got down to work. For example, in September the Free Democrats' female wing organised a demonstration against the marginalisation and impoverishment of women. Government groups have likewise changed their structures and the new National Association of Hungarian Women has shaken off the Communist Party's control.

* The Stock Market that will open for business in Budapest this summer will set two records. Firstly, Hungary will be the first East Bloc country to set down the road to capitalism and a market economy since the end of World War II. Secondly, its director, Ilona Hardy, will be the first woman to head an institution of this kind. The 33-year-old economist will oversee a young staff of 15 mathematicians and computer scientists (average age: 27½ years). This group's primary objective will be to get their fellow citizens to think like investors, for the population, which has been kept in tight check for years, seems to have eyes only for property and Western goods.

ROMANIA:

Upon becoming First Secretary of the Romanian Communist Party in 1965, Ceausescu launched his country on a wild course to increase its population. The aim of his policy was to have the population (19 million) reach 30 million by the year 2000. To this end, all contraceptives and abortions have been illegal since 1966. Women and teenage girls had to undergo gynaecological examinations very early to check their condition. Women with unwanted pregnancies had no other course but to turn to back-street abortionists (in the worst of cases) or hand over their infants to State institutions. Under the rule of "the Genius of the Carpathians", the country had one of the highest perinatal or post-abortion maternal death rates in Europe. Infant mortality stood at 22 per thousand and the orphanages housed a total of 13,000 orphans under the age of 3.

Since the December 1989 revolution, abortions and birth control are legal again. The immediate result is that hospitals have been swamped with requests for abortions (between 40 and 80 per hospital per day) and the overwhelmed medical profession is calling for the urgent implementation of a true family planning policy.

SOVIET UNION:

How has *perestroika* (reform) affected women's lives? Women account for 53% of the population and are gradually becoming aware of their importance in the Soviet economy. 86% of women work, filling 51% of the country's jobs. 60% of the country's institute and university graduates are women. While less well paid than their male colleagues (women earn 2/3 as much as men on average), they are the driving force of the economy. Women are the ones who build the machines for Soviet industry; they are the ones who accept the most back-breaking work. Staying at home to devote themselves to running their households is a luxury that they cannot afford. Yet *perestroika* has seen the birth of a movement to send women back to the home. A bill put forward by Prime Minister Nikolai Ryzhkov in 1986 and increasing unpaid maternity leave to three years (in order to save the State millions) was overwhelmingly approved by the Deputies of all political persuasion. 85% of the country's working women oppose this law, which went into effect in December 1989 and cannot accept a programme of reform from which women are to be excluded.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING: The Commission of the European Communities has adopted two proposals by Vasso Papandreou designed to strengthen cooperation with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. The moves had to be made rather quickly in order to set up the projects this summer. The first one, called TEMPUS (Trans-European Mobility Programme for University Study) will guarantee the medium- and long-term development of higher education and training networks in these countries. The main purpose of the second project, the future European Foundation for Training, will be to help adapt vocational training in Poland and Hungary to the new market conditions.

STRUGGLE FOR PEACE: The Women's Peace School was held in Warsaw this summer to mark the 50th anniversary of the start of the Second World War. This event, which was sponsored by the Women's International Democratic Federation and Polish Cooperation Committee of Women's Organisations, was attended by representatives of various institutions and committees from Europe, the Soviet Union and the United States. At the end of this pacifist initiative, the women of the whole world launched an appeal to stop the expansion of fascist and racist movements and urging everyone to be on their guard and strongly oppose all manifestations of neofascism and racism. (International Democratic Federation of Women, Unter den Linden, 13, 1080 Berlin, GDR)

PUBLICATIONS: The Canadian magazine *Cahiers de la Femme* has just published an in-depth study of Soviet women. One of the chapters covers the effects of *perestroika* and *glasnost* on Soviet women, another one discusses women's rights and daily lives, and a third one gives portraits of some leading women. The study ends with a description of the teaching strategies used in the USSR and women's contributions to art and culture. ("Soviet Women", *Cahiers de la Femme* Vol. 10, No. 4, 212 Founders College, York University, 4700 Keele Street, Downsview, Ontario M3J 1P3)

NEWS FROM
WESTERN EUROPE AND THE WORLD

WAR ON DRUGS: EURAD (Europe Against Drugs) supports and participates in various initiatives against drugs. This organisation provides training for addicts' parents, works closely with treatment and rehabilitation centres, encourages people to search for outlets other than drugs, organises information sessions in the schools, etc. The EURAD Council is composed of representatives of organisations from Denmark, England, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and West Germany and cooperates with some Spanish and French associations. EURAD advocates a humane restrictive drug policy of prevention and early intervention called The Third Way. (Europe Against Drugs, Postbox 220, NL-1430 AE Aalsmeer)

KOREA: The International Association of Women Physicians, meeting for its 21st Congress in Seoul in September 1989, enstated Il-Ok Choo, M.D., of Korea, as its new President. Dorothy Ward of Scotland was elected alternate to the Presidency, meaning that she will become President three years from now, when the 22nd Congress is held in Guatemala in 1992. The Congress focused on cancer screening and prevention in women around the world. Three Georgian doctors attended the Seoul Congress. They were, with the representatives of the Soviet and Polish Associations, the first women doctors from the Western part of the East Bloc to join the International Association.

JAPAN: Takako Doi, 60, with a law degree from Kyoto Doshisa University, embarked on her political career some twenty years ago. As a candidate for the Diet (Parliament) she had to make a mark in the very conservative world of Japanese politics. Moreover, the fact that she is a single woman (98% of Japanese women are married) was an additional stone around the neck of a woman with ambition. Elected Socialist Party Chairwoman in 1986, she crisscrossed the country, instilling women with new confidence and gaining the support of almost all the opposition parties. She also waged a fierce battle against the scandals that have been the hallmark of Japanese politics and the laxism of the country's politicians. "Hurricane Takako" has galvanised Japanese women. A new generation of women in politics is taking shape. Thus, in the ultra-conservative province of Niigata a simple housewife, Kinuko Ofuchi, who stood for election for the first time (on the Socialist ticket), trounced her Liberal Democrat rival. Women won one-third of the seats in the July '89 municipal elections and 40% of the votes in the senatorial battles that were waged at the same time. Under Takako, the Japanese Socialist Party whipped the Liberal Party in July, putting an end to the latter's 34 years of domination. However, the Socialist Party failed to obtain a majority in the House of Representatives. It came away with only 136 of the 512 seats (this was still 53 more than in the previous elections).

SWITZERLAND:

* Geneva's Office for Equal Rights for Men and Women has released its 1989 activities report which shows that male/female equality is slowly but surely becoming a reality in the canton. For example, spouses now have to cosign their income tax declarations and the secrecy of tax information between spouses is now respected. The proposed child allowance law should reduce discrimination against women for, while the father continues to have priority as the recipient, the bill contains a series of derogations to this order of priority. A law to encourage academic study has also gone into effect. This law abolishes the upper age limits for eligibility for financial aid and considers homemaking and

childrearing occupations. Another important change in the canton's tax system consists of the separate calculation of the spouses' incomes when this is required by court decisions, etc.

The Equality Office has also taken on the problem of vocational guidance for girls. The figures show that girls restrict their horizons by concentrating on a small number of job choices. To try to make pupils and teachers aware of the opportunities available to them, the Office assembled an exhibition of European posters built around the theme "Do jobs have gender?" These initiatives have convinced students and teachers that girls can do most jobs just as well as boys.

LITERACY: The United Nations Organisation has proclaimed 1990 International Literacy Year and asked UNESCO to head the group of agencies and associations that will be involved in the year's festivities. According to UNESCO's statistics, 989 million people aged 15 and over, i.e., one-quarter of the world's population, are illiterate. Most of the illiterate are women. To tear down the cultural barriers limiting women's access to education, UNESCO advocates financial aid, support for the families of girls who participate in literacy programmes (in order to release the girls from their family obligations), and psychological help. The latter is necessary because most illiterate women are stuck either at home or in poorly-paid jobs with little hope of being able to improve their lot.

WOMEN IN THE ARMY: Fourteen of the sixteen member countries of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) have women in their armed forces. The Committee for Female Staff in the Alliances Armed Forces was created in 1967. The periodic examinations that it has carried out of the progress made in each country show four major factors that have had a major influence on the hiring of women in the armed forces, namely, national legislation, government policies, civic duties, and the conditions of armed service at home. The situations have evolved differently in the different countries. In Spain and Canada, legislative changes have resulted in a steady increase in the number of women in the army since February 1988. Countries everywhere are making efforts to recruit more women into their armed forces. Job opportunities have broadened considerably and the forecasted aging of the population in most NATO countries will encourage the armed forces to step up these efforts even more. It has not always been easy for the armed forces to adapt to an influx of large numbers of women, for this until recently all-male sector clings to its traditions. Today, there are more than 250,000 women on active duty and several thousand in the reserves. (NATO Review, October 1989)

CHILD LABOUR: According to the Barodia (India) Operations Research Group, there are 44 million children working in India. The division of labour according to the children's sex is very clear, whether they work in agriculture, the home or industry. All household chores are done by girls, starting at a very young age. In the unstructured industrial sector, some of the most back-breaking and poorest-paid jobs are kept for girls, whereas the tasks given to boys are closely linked to apprenticeships or training and are thus more worthwhile. In addition, factory owners are relying more and more on piecework given out to women working in their homes. In most cases, the wages that they receive for this work are so low that the women have to get their daughters to help. Girls work in their homes at their mothers' sides, but, whatever their jobs - housework or piecework -, neither parents nor employers consider them workers. In 1986 India adopted a law banning or regulating child labour that was aimed at keeping children under 14 away from dangerous jobs. Generally speaking, girls are not protected under this law, as they are not recognised as workers. The

national child labour policy concerns only those who are legally employed and thus, like the legislation, does not affect the vast majority of working girls. Moreover, government intervention that favours boys will probably strengthen parents' poor opinions of their daughters and possibly lead to even greater discrimination against them. (Excerpted from the International Labour Journal, 1989, Vol. 128, No. 5 - ILO Liaison Office, rue Aimé Smekens 40, 1040 Brussels. Tel.: (+32 2) 736-9916 or 736-9917)

PUBLICATIONS: A new newsletter, The Latest News, has just come out in the United States. Its purpose is to develop group strategies and list funding sources of interest to women in Africa, the Middle East, Latin America, Asia, the Caribbean and the Pacific. Each newsletter will contain the following information: funding sources, sharing of experiences, and information sources. (Alice Quinn Project, the Woman's Share, CTIF, 777 UN Plaza, New York, NY 10017, USA. Tel.: (1 212) 687-633)

Erratum: The English titles of a series of UNESCO publications were not available in time for publication of the last issue (see Women of Europe N° 62, pp. 34-36). They are given below:

Women and Development: Indicators of their Changing Role (ISBN 92-3-101893-0)

Women - From Witch-hunt to Politics (ISBN 92-3-102333-0)

Femmes au pays (available in French only)

The Effects of Rural-Urban Migration on Women's Role and Status in Latin America (ISBN 92-3-102047-1)

La femme africaine dans la société précoloniale - available also in Spanish (La mujer africana en la sociedad precolonial)

Women as Heads of Households in the Caribbean: Family Structure and Feminine Status (ISBN 92-3-1021047-1)

Women and Work in Uruguay (ISBN 92-3-102110-9)

Down with Stereotypes: Eliminating Sexism from Children's Literature and School Textbooks (ISBN 92-3-102380-2)

Jobs for Women: A Plea for Equality of Opportunity in Technical Education, Vocational Training and Employment (ISBN 92-3-102133-8)

L A T I N A M E R I C A

ARGENTINA:

- * The Women's Council of Buenos Aires Province was founded in May 1987 for the purpose of changing discriminatory behaviour towards women and encouraging women to participate in Argentine politics. In the interest of greater efficiency, the Council has divided its activities into several programmes, i.e., 1) the creation of municipal women's councils; 2) the implementation, with the Under Secretary of State for Women's Status, of programmes to inform cleaning women and domestic help of their rights; 3) the prevention of violence against women. Through its work, the Council bolsters the efforts made by the Under Secretary of State since March 1987 to have women taken into consideration as actors in the process of national development. (*Consejo Provincial de la Mujer*, Calles 12 Y 53, Torre 2, La Plata, Buenos Aires, Argentina)

- * This year, the seaside resort of San Bernardo, in Buenos Aires Province, will host the 4th Latin American Women's Meeting. The theme of this year's meeting will be "Assessment of and Outlook for Feminism in Latin America".

BOLIVIA: The Bolivian Feminist Movement reached adulthood in 1989. It took this opportunity to celebrate its achievements and the growing participation of Bolivian women in national and local affairs. During an official ceremony, the Coordinator of *La Mujer y la Plataforma de la Mujer* and members of the Chamber of Deputies' Women's Affairs Committee met for the ratification by Bolivia of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination.

BRAZIL: On 5-9 February 1990 São Paulo was the scene of a world congress of farmers (men and women) from all over. Thanks to the support of the European Commission's Women's Information Service, twenty young farm women from the EC were able to participate. The rapid introduction of new technology in agriculture, changing international trade relations, and presence of new producers of commodities call for thought as to the future of agriculture. The workshop topics included the international trade in farm commodities, the structures of professional organisations, unions and cooperatives; young farmers' associations; and the socio-cultural factors influencing work in agriculture. (Association of Young Farmers of Brazil - JA-BRESIL, Rua Basilio Machado 29, BR CEP 01230 São Paulo)

CHILE:

- * On 25 November 1989 various women's organisations and movements joined the women activists of *Mujer no llores habla*, a campaign against violence. The activities include the signing of petitions in support of this campaign, the distribution of leaflets, brochures and commemorative cards, and other massive expressions of support for the will to arouse public awareness of this painful problem. (*Fempres*, Autumn 1989)

- * The workshops of the Self-management Training Centre (*Las Talleres del Centro de Capacitación para la Autogestión*) held their first artistic meeting, called "Woman, Creation, Self-management", on 12 December. The aim of this event was to discuss the doubts and worries of women creators, as well as to provide them with a meeting place for artistic creation and generate solidarity among women workers. (*Fempres*, Autumn 1989)

ECUADOR: The International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA), whose headquarters are located in Colombia, has named Luzmila Rodriguez De Troya Vice-President for Ecuador. This is an important sign of recognition for one of the country's rare women lawyers. Rodriguez also stands out for her years of struggle for legal reforms for sexual equality and is currently Advisor to the Parliamentary Committee on Women, Children and the Family. She has already taken a series of steps to prepare for the next FIDA congress, which will be held in Cartagena in 1990. (*Fempres*, Autumn 1989)

MEXICO: The European Commission's delegation to Mexico (*Paseo de la Reforma 1675*, Lomas de Chapultepec, CP 11000, Mexico D.F.) was inaugurated in November 1989. This delegation joins the list of other Commission agents and offices in Latin America (Caracas, Brasilia, San Jose de Costa Rica, etc.). Abel Matutes, the EC Commissioner responsible for relations with Latin America, signed a framework agreement with two Mexican financial institutions - Banco National de Mexico and National Financiera - that lay down how a financial instrument to support joining EC-Mexican undertakings is to be used. The European Commission has also granted 6.24 million ECUs for the construction of a hospital at Iztalpalalpa and meet the needs for assistance of a hospital reconstruction programme.

NICARAGUA: An event has taken place that will have a major impact on politics throughout Latin America. Violeta Chamorro, leader of the National Opposition Union, UNO, won the recent elections and is the new President of Nicaragua.

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