

briefs

Joanne Little, a 20 year old black woman, faces a first degree murder charge for defending herself against a white man who tried to rape her.

Clarence Alligood, a guard at the Beaufort County Jail in North Carolina, was found dead in Little's cell, where she was waiting the outcome of an appeal on a breaking and entering conviction. Alligood was found naked from the waist down, except for his socks, and there was clear evidence of sexual activity.

Little was alone in a cell block guarded by white males. She states that Alligood entered her cell and attempted to rape her, carrying an ice pick which he kept in his desk.

After fatally wounding him with the pick, Little fled her cell and was aided by a stranger who hid her in his two-room shack. Eight days later she gave herself up.

The state medical examiner was prepared to support Little's story, but was not allowed to testify before the grand jury. The state denied funds for expert investigation of the case, and the trial judge has denied a motion to change the trial location to a less prejudicial area.

The right of women to defend themselves against rapists, and the treatment of women prisoners in general, are both substantive issues in the case.

Little's attorneys are working without fee, but funds are desperately needed to mount an adequate defense. Contributions can be sent to: The Southern Poverty Law Center, 119 S. McDonough St., Montgomery, Alabama, 36101.

Eastport, Maine: The school board here has settled with a schoolteacher for back pay, after she was forced to either resign or take an unpaid leave of absence when she became pregnant.

According to Gary Libby, of the Maine Human Rights Commission, the school policy violates the state law against sex discrimination. Libby said the school system here has agreed to change its policy, but 19 similar cases are still pending in other parts of the state.

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Address Correction Requested

FIRST CLASS FIRST CLASS

from the staff

Let's have no more tearing of hair and rending of clothing. Nettles will be back next issue (as well as a longer one of these anonymously written From the Staff columns.)

What happened, you see, is that our eyes were bigger than our appetites. We all "aye'd" a 16-page first anniversary issue. But right now, after nearly two weeks of layout, with a staff 2 1/4 (the fraction being the multi-talented but anonymous Nettles author), even with the help of friends, we cannot endure the other week of layout that the larger issue would take.

Susan Lundquist, our erstwhile layout person, has departed with regrets (hers and ours) for sunny Montreal and thence The World. Gerri Merola, staff generalist (we run a loose ship) has decided on semi-retirement (also with mutual regrets). And here we sit, up to our pinfeathers in high hopes and frustrations.

Deciding what to leave out of an issue is in many ways more difficult than preparing what to put in. We've had enthusiastic (and hugely appreciated) responses to our poll, but we are forced to wait till next time to include any of them. This will, however, give procrastinators time to send theirs in.

We do want to extend our hands to those who have contributed support--written and/or financial. You deserve thanks for giving us the extra energy we've needed for this issue.

With the loss of Susan and Gerri, we're actively looking for new staff. The independent time involved depends on you. The general structure calls for a meeting a week, all the hours you can give for two weeks every other month (layout), a tolerance for vulgarity under stress, and some ability. The only cash involved is that which we occasionally find ourselves supplying to cover part of our expenses.

So, with wishes for a warm spring, we leave you for a few weeks. Next issue, more poetry, poll responses, Womanbriefs, and, if you can wait, the well-intentioned and sometimes well-received Nettles.

--Anonymous

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MAINE FREEWOMAN'S HERALD

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maine freewoman's herald



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Cover photo by Susan Lundquist

page 9 photo from *Children & Their Mothers*.

inner front photo: unidentified. Can you help?

SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Kay, Joanne, Bob, Tom,
Dannie, Brooks, and Randy

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INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

118 years ago, on March 8, women demonstrated in New York against the 12-hour work day and low wages. 67 years ago, on the same day, women marched in New York for child care and the end of sweat shops. On March 8 of this year, women gathered in Portland with demands for day care and the right to work.

What significant changes have there been one century later? The 12-hour work day has been shortened, but wages are still substandard and child care is denied. For many the problem is no longer bad working conditions but *no* working conditions, and it is the poor woman that is affected. She can now vote, attend college, and own property, but she cannot feed her own children.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR

1975 has been designated by the United Nations as International Women's Year (IWY). It is the year of Equality, Development, and Peace.

The UN states as one of its IWY goals the "equal participation of women and men in all policy-making and administrative positions."

The US Center for International Women's Year suggests that people "find out for themselves what the UN and the US are doing to help governments advance the status of women abroad." The articles inside should make clear what these things are and illustrate US/UN definitions of equality, development, and peace.

"Equality" of women, however, does not mean parity with rich men. "Development" does not mean industrial expansion with all its subsequent plundering of human lives and land. "Peace" does not mean napalm and secret wars and peace-mongering.

Another goal of the UN/IWY is to "recognize the importance of women in developing and strengthening world peace." But first we must recognize that there *is* no world peace and that women did not create the atom bomb, napalm, or poison gas.

Off our backs has come out with the statement that International Women's Year is anti-feminist and as feminists we must denounce it and counteract its plan.

But instead of using crucial energy in counterattacks, perhaps we should take the matter into our own hands. Turn their objectives and definitions into our own. Work for equality to mean equality of food, money, and land; for development to mean the *freedom* to develop; for peace to mean the immediate cessation of all human exploitation -- in its more barbaric form of torture and bloodshed and in its camouflaged form of poverty, physical and psychological oppression.

We can do it! There is no choice *but* to do it.

It's easy to say, "the men did it, let them fix it," or, "it's not a feminist priority," or, "what can one person do?" But one person, combined with another, combined with many, can change the world.

In 1917, on International Women's Day, the women textile workers in Russia began a nation-wide strike that ended the Tsarist reign one month later.

We can do the same. We can make International Women's Year the time to end US oppression abroad, the time to make our country remove its vicious claws from the necks of our Third World sisters.

We can also make IWY the time to think about our own economic position and feminist priorities. For 118 years now the poor woman in this country has been making the same demands. Let us listen to her and respond!

announcements

April 17 is National Food Day. The Maine Food Day Coalition is planning activities in local food coops, schools, and churches, as well as a Maine Food Day Manifesto paper. Do something in your community. "Plant a seed for change." Contact Randy Curtis at the Maine Land Trust, 725-7047; Mike Schaaf at the Fed. of Coops, 623-1722, or at his home, 865-3629; or Frank Schiller at ULI, 622-7931.

An UNEMPLOYMENT RALLY will be held in late April or early May. The unemployment rate in Maine is currently 10.6% or about 45,000 workers without jobs. The rate of underemployment (which includes those forced to work part-time and those who make extremely low wages) is at least 30% or about 130,000 people. For information, contact Russ Christensen, Citizens Committee on the Maine Economy, 725 Union St., Bangor. 947-0272 (home) 581-7801 (office).

The New England Gay Spring Festival will be held May 2-4 at the Un. of Mass. in Amherst. Workshops, speakers, dance, picnic. Write for information early. Student Homophile League, RSO#368, Murray D, Lincoln Campus Center, U. of Mass., Amherst, Mass. 01002.

Spruce Run, an organization to help women with children in marital crisis situations, needs volunteers. Spruce Run in Bangor has an office at 44 Central St. Phone: 947-0496. Spruce Run in Portland will hold an all-day training session at Public Safety Headquarters on April 12. Contact Maggie Smith, 774-9090, or write PO Box 727, Brunswick.

The Rite of Spring, a women's festival of music, softball, volleyball, and good times, will be held May 23-25 at Camp Alice Merritt, East Hartland, CT. \$10 for weekend, less if cannot afford. Registration must be in by April 30 so write now to Women's Rite of Spring, c/o Liz Enagonio, 134 Evergreen Ave., Hartford, CT. 06105.

Blue Spruce Child Care Center has openings for children (0-6 yrs.) of low-income working parents in the Freeport area. For information call 865-4393. The center needs toys and money, too!

The Alliance of Women Artists, a new group in Portland, has obtained a building for studio, office, and meeting place at 156 Danforth St. The group of 10 women hope to provide a supportive work environment for women artists. For information call Karen Marchetti at 774-8489, Barbara Koch at 773-0859, or Penny Rich at 767-2577.

Balancing Act, the anthology of Maine women's writing compiled by the Portland Women's Group, is now at the publishers. To order your copy send \$1.95 to the Portland Women's Group, Box 7355, Downtown Station, Portland.

MOMMA, a group for single parents, meets again on Wed., April 16. 7 p.m. 1037 High Street, Bath, 443-9004. Please come.

The UMO Women's Group announces the following events:

April 10: planning meeting for a women's cultural magazine. Please come. 10:30 am, 201 E. Fernald Hall. Graphics, photos, poetry, fiction, non-fiction welcome.

April 11: he Anh Tu will speak on Women in Revolution in Viet Nam. 7:30 pm, 120 Little Hall.

April 29 & 30: Educational Alternative Expo. Blanche Boyd, poet, author, and a founder of Sagaris Feminist College will talk on the need for a feminist alternative to education. She will also do a poetry reading. For time and places contact Linda Monko, 581-2586.

The Office of Women's Programs and Services is building a resource file of women's literature. We would like interested women to submit work to be shared with other Maine women and added to this file. Write: 201 E. Fernald Hall, Orono, Me. 04473.

This is the third and final part of Maine Women and the Mental Health Business. The names of all women patients, ex-patients, and women in therapy have been changed. Parts One and Two discussed patriarchal definitions of mental illness and "healthy" female behavior, differences in treatment for women and men, drug victimization, and a comparative look at women and men seeking psychiatric assistance. Back copies available through Freewoman's Herald.

maine women and the mental health business

(Part 3)

by Miriam Dyak

At this point it seems necessary to draw some conclusions about mental health care for Maine women and indicate some directions for the future.

Since the first parts of this article were published I received several letters of support from women who have had experiences with clinics and hospitals in Maine. One woman writes, "There it is--right there in black and white. When a woman is so fucking down that she can't see straight, there is absolutely no one she can turn to." I would like to tell her and others now there are places and people to turn to (though still a limited number of them) and there are plans and hopes for more such places in the future.

So far we have seen that the attitudes toward and treatment of women in clinics and hospitals mirrors that of a society in which women are childlike, second-class citizens. That is to say, each staff person brings her/his own attitudes to work with her/him, and they are rarely able to prevent a woman from returning to a repressive situation (especially if she is poor and has little education).

In some ways the hospital and clinic, particularly Augusta Mental Health Institute, seem a little less repressive toward women socially than the community in which it operates, but in other ways the therapy or hospital situation only perpetuates the status of the woman patient as a weak, sick, help-seeking member of society. Other aspects of therapy and hospitalization such as abusive and misinformed use of drugs victimize men and women equally, but the victimization takes different forms according to different sex-role expectations of the patient.

Beyond that, the primary problem for the ex-mental patient, male or female, as seen by all the people and groups I talked with, is the negative attitude of the outside community in Maine toward all people who have been hospitalized or had therapy. This leads to a tremendous difficulty in finding jobs and housing and sometimes also keeps the patient from returning home; this difficulty often recreates the causes for breakdown and helps to account for a high rate of recidivism in our mental institutions.

In this respect women suffer especially, in that therapists are likely to see their return to 'normal' life as less crucial than in the case of a man who must continue with a job or career in order to be considered well. Also, since a drugged woman can still do housework with a considerable (if not higher) degree of efficiency, it is not so obvious to her family and community that she is still sick--espe-

cially in a society where women are thought of as inherently less healthy than men.

Rice and Rice in their article on the "Implications of the Women's Liberation Movement for Psychotherapy" put forth a number of alternatives to the present methods used in the mental health system. They see "the need to train therapists to fill a greater number of roles: 1. As experts on the growing body of research into sex differences and the psychology of women

(training would then include an evaluation of "personal sex-role bias").

2. As open proponents of alternative lifestyles and sex roles. It is much easier and more comfortable to silently support the status quo under the guise of neutrality than to encourage 'deviance'. Yet the active supporting of 'deviance' may be precisely what is needed to effect a more healthy behavioral pattern and social identity for today's woman. 3. As community agents for social change. In terms of the numbers of individuals that one could help, or the influence for social good that one could effect, sitting in an office doing psychotherapy will perhaps never accomplish what getting out of the office might. Working in caucuses, lobbying for legislative change, educating the community, and working with influential groups and with lay groups are likely to be where the ways and means of change lie. Young professionals in a variety of fields are choosing this route increasingly."

Rice and Rice also comment that "therapists must be prepared to recognize and even to suggest other more viable alternatives to psychotherapy when appropriate. A woman with role conflict might well make more progress in a consciousness raising group with other women, and would benefit by a referral to helpful agencies or individuals."

In fact, they are dubious that at this time a male therapist (and they discuss the urgent need to train many more female therapists) can be of any help at all to a woman. I would not be quite so pessimistic. Before I moved to Maine I had what I would term a successful (if not ideal) experience with a male therapist, and I interviewed at least one woman who is currently in a good situation with a male therapist in the Brunswick area.

Phyllis is a divorced feminist lesbian in her late twenties living with her lover and young daughter. She has had several unpleasant encounters with therapists in the past and is aware that good, non-sexist counseling is hard to find.

She was very much on her guard when she sought counseling a short time ago to help her deal with her difficult relationship with her mother. She called a woman she knew at the clinic and explained that she wanted to see someone who was not prejudiced against lesbians and would not dismiss her problems as part of her homosexuality.

Phyllis feels being a lesbian is an important and positive part of her life rather than problem; and she says, "I finally learned not to let someone lay a trip on me. When I'm having trouble with my mother, then I am having

trouble with my mother, it does not mean I am having trouble with my sexuality!"

The woman in the clinic recommended a male therapist who passed Phyllis' high standards and has been helpful with her problems. "It's not that he has just not expressed a negative attitude toward women and homosexuals, but that he is aware of our oppression. He has not made a point either of proving his heterosexuality or maleness to me either. He has treated me like an equal, which really surprised me as my past experience with therapists is that they are very patronizing."

At one point Phyllis' therapist did become very defensive with her on a subject relating to male and female conditioning, and she walked out on him; but he came back and apologized for his behavior several days later, admitting that he had felt very threatened. Phyllis feels he has "helped me to view my relationship with my mother in a more honest light. He can listen to me rationalize, see the validity in what I am doing and then focus right back down to the beginning of it again. He really hears me when I talk; that is, he doesn't decide what my problem is, but lets me work through a process of my own."

Phyllis admits she does not know if her therapist would be as helpful to another woman, and it is obvious to me from the interviews I conducted that a strong, feminist woman such as Phyllis will be able to guard against sexist treatment from a therapist much better than a more naive person.

One partial solution would be a feminist counseling group and Nan Stone, who was involved with the Emotional Counseling Group at the Women's Center in Cambridge, Mass. in 1973-74, is in the process of trying to organize a similar feminist counseling group for women in the Brunswick area.

The Cambridge group consisted of about 15 to 20 women who trained themselves. The only requirement for women who joined the group was that they have previous experience counseling or being counseled (a longer training period was required of those who had not had this experience), and they used their shared experiences as primary material for their training.

Other resources were professional women who came occasionally to give sessions on specific topics (e.g. Gestalt therapy), and the research group members did into current psychiatric publications. The initial training period was 6-8 weekly sessions, but all counselors were required to continue attending these sessions in order to learn more and help each other all during their involvement with the group. All counseling was free of charge.

According to Nan, such a group operates on the premise that there are societal as well as personal reasons for women's problems and tries to "help a woman stop blaming herself and see the beauty inside her." Part of the philosophy is that "the counselor gets as much out of the whole process as does the counselee," she says.

Nan herself came to the program seeking help and found the therapy there "a very equal kind of thing," where both she and her counselor talked about their problems until her counselor told Nan she had gained a great deal from the sessions and suggested that Nan train as a counselor with the group. "The fact that a woman came to me for counseling did not mean she was weak or more messed up than I was, just that at this time in her life she needed more support and another time she could give support to me or someone else."

Nan continues, "The counseling program steered away from professionalism and professionalism as much as possible. The socialization received in professional training is hard to break through, though we did establish close contacts with a few radical women professionals. That meant we could recognize the value of what we ourselves had to give each other. It gave me a confidence in myself as a counselor I had not had in five years of counseling with other groups."

Another part of the group's philosophy is "never putting up fronts". Nan explains, "If something baffled me I would admit it and ask the counselee for ideas or go to the group. If I was tired or just not really getting into a session, I wouldn't pretend not to be, to be on top of it all."

Although the Emotional Counseling Group did receive some hostile reactions from male therapists in the area and from some women who felt mistrustful of non-professional help, they did not run into any legal difficulties as they did not charge for their time and energy. And, it was not long before church groups, hospitals, community organizations and other therapists began to refer women to them, particularly other liberal-to-radical therapists in the area who were overlooked. Other professionals were also helpful in prescribing tranquilizers for some counselees, although the group tried to avoid drugs, in general.

Nan is quick to say that such a counseling group is by no means a total answer, though it obviously remedies a lot of the faults of establishment therapy. "We referred women to professionals when faced with a problem none of us could handle, and in spite of all the bad things about institutions I feel that sometimes they are useful."

None of the therapists or institutions I encountered in Maine had a "total answer", though some were not ready to admit it. None had any real answer (or beginning of one) to the problem of insanity (as opposed to helping people solve their problems), and none had the capacity to deal with such insanity in any way other than massive doses of dangerous drugs. I found little evidence that any of these therapies allowed or helped the patient to pursue her main purpose for being in the institution--to experience and understand her 'madness', her life, and the world around her.

In fact, the majority of people working with the patient seemed threatened by insanity and ready to control it at every step. This situation is perhaps comparable to that of our prisons where so much energy is directed toward harassing the poor and "blaming the victim", that no real progress has been made in dealing with a Boston Strangler or a Charles Manson.



photo by Kay Lucas

Meeting of the Women's Counseling Service

Progress will be made toward genuinely helping the insane when therapists stop having to work with hundreds of people whose problems could be dealt with in other ways (primarily by social change) and when our mental health system promotes mental health for all people equally, and actively combats those societal values and roles which create mental sickness and emotional problems.

The Women's Counseling Service is being organized in Brunswick to meet the needs of area women. The group of 8 women setting up the center see it as an alternative to oppressive therapy situations.

The group believes emotional problems are often shared problems because they relate to the conditions of the society we all live in, and that sharing our personal struggles helps us to discover what needs to be healed in ourselves and in our culture.

Office space and money for a telephone are needed, and any ideas and contributions would be greatly appreciated. Please contact Mirian Dyak at 725-2784 or Sylvia Young at 389-2447 during the evenings after 7 p.m.

This in turn means that the training of therapists and counselors will have to involve the question of the therapists' mental health as well as that of the counselee. I hope it will mean also that we will see a turn away from professionalism, from the "Psychiatrist as God" hierarchy, an increase in non-professional women-helping-women, and an end to the professional male egoism which has led to patronizing attitudes, too much detachment, inhuman experimentation with all kinds of methods and an over-dependence on drugs.

Above all, we need a change in attitude on the part of the whole community toward the person who has had therapy or institutional treatment. We have all had problems we could not deal with alone and we need the ego strength (and here women are ahead of men generally) to admit that and not condemn it as a weakness in ourselves or in others.

Women in the community (and the same goes for people on welfare, homosexuals, etc.) need to share information about good and bad therapists in order to protect each other from damaging experiences with sexist counselors and put greater demand for fair treatment from the Mental Health Business.

Sisters help each other and help yourselves.

A Case In Point

Doris (her name and other details of her story have been changed in order to protect her) was born and has lived most of her life in Bath, though she spent some time in Florida and really likes it there. She is 29 now and has two small girls. Her oldest child, a boy, by her first marriage lives with his grandparents. Her second husband, Paul, is divorcing her.

Paul is the quiet, hard-working type who only raises his voice to yell at his wife and kids when they are doing something wrong and says little the rest of the time. He expects Doris to stay home and keep house; he does not want her to have a job and he never wants to go out with her.

Doris is bored. She has no car, no way to get out, go shopping, see her friends. "It only takes me a couple of hours to do the housework, and then what am I supposed to do? I never was this nervous when I had a job. (Her hands shake so much she can hardly light her cigarette.) I could put the kids in a day care center if he'd let me get a job."

Doris and Paul agreed that she should have one night out a week, but Doris likes to drink and dance and have a good time when she goes out, and Paul with all the self-righteous rage of the double-standard male (it's acceptable for men to go out with the boys--i.e. women are supposed to accept it) is suing for divorce. Naturally everyone is on his side; Doris

has way overstepped the boundaries of the female role.

She is in the unfortunate position of having all her relatives, friends and neighbors against her. Unfortunately, because the doctors and social workers diagnose her problem as hysterical paranoia ("it's all in her head") and prescribe tranquilizers, mood modifiers and sleeping pills for her "nerves".

To compound her problem Doris had to have all her teeth out several months ago and can't get the money from her husband to have new ones put in.

(Doris is on Medicaid with her children who are from her first marriage to a man who "drank and beat her up a lot and who doesn't send support. They get AFDC; but welfare doesn't pay for new teeth.)

Then Doris fell and fractured a bone just below the knee. The doctor, keeping her past history of nerves, hysteria and hysterectomy in mind, put her in the psychiatric ward of the local hospital and didn't bother to double check the X-rays.

"You know how women are, always complaining about something, always wanting attention -- give them some tranquilizers and keep them quiet" seems to be the prevalent attitude. Doris hobbled around for a week before she convinced the doctor to check the X-rays. He commented sarcastically that he "had X-rayed the wrong end." Finally he found the break and set the leg with no apologies. He recommended that she stay off it for several days but made no suggestions as to what she should do with her kids.

Doris is the kind of women mental health and welfare workers insist will drain you of your energy. "Oh don't get involved with her; she'll call you up night and day, come running to you with all her problems." This is the direct result of welfare women being kept down politically and emotionally at the level of a child; but the agencies that treat women like children do not want the responsibility of dealing with a child-like person. One social worker I spoke with insisted "You can't help women like Doris." The agency tends to pass the buck or do nothing -- Doris first contacted me because an agency gave her my name!

I found Doris to be a really nice person, desperate for help but reluctant (as most of us are) to ask for any. What I did find to be emotionally draining and physically exhausting was not Doris' demands but trying to deal with totally unsympathetic agencies, lawyers, doctors -- the Establishment.

The person leading Doris's therapy group at the hospital could not understand why Doris had a hard time finding a sitter and transportation, or why she could not talk about her problems just because one of her neighbors was in the group too. There was no sympathy for Doris' feelings of inadequacy following her hysterectomy -- Doris' panic is reasonable considering she is losing her main function as a woman, reproduction and sexual attractiveness, and her husband rubs it in by commenting frequently that he would like to have more children of his own.

(con't on page 11)

Permission Or Pregnancy

by Mary Faux

Existing Maine family planning laws read, "Family planning services may be furnished to any minor...who may suffer, in the professional judgment of a physician, probably health hazard if such services are not provided."

Rep. Eugene Churchill (R-Orland) has proposed an amendment to the legislation which states that services may be furnished only to a minor who has the consent of a legal guardian.

Rep. Dorothy Laverty (R-Millinocket), will file a second bill shortly which would require parental knowledge (rather than consent) of birth control services to minors. Laverty's bill may also require minors seeking birth control to be interviewed by a psychiatrist, before receiving services. At press time, the final draft of the bill had not been prepared.

According to Harland Goodwin (D-South Berwick), chairperson of the Health and Institutions Committee in the state legislature, there will be no committee report on Churchill's bill until after a public hearing on Laverty's bill in late May.

A public hearing on Churchill's proposed amendment was held in Augusta before the committee. Shirley Hanson, a school nurse, testified that she was against the Pill and the IUD as methods of birth control. Churchill said he was against the Pill and against any increase in the rate of venereal diseases in the state. As one observer at the hearing said, "We would be hard put to find anyone who was for the increase in venereal disease."

The committee was told that while the incidence of syphilis and gonorrhea had gone up over the past few years,



the increase was due, in part, to more efficient reporting methods and a concentrated effort by the Dept. of Health and Welfare to uncover VD cases.

Some fathers testified that parents must decide whether or not their daughters should be furnished with family planning counseling and medical services.

Many parents wish their children could feel free to come to them and talk about birth control. But what happens to the many teenagers who are unable to go to their parents? Should they be deprived of responsible information? The proponents of the Churchill amendment refused to deal with this entirely.

At the hearing, the opponents of the amendment came well-armed. They told the committee that there is an average of 47 deaths per thousand live births among 15-year-old mothers in Maine, approximately twice that of mothers in older age brackets. Testimony was given that pregnancy is the largest single cause of school drop outs among teenage girls, and there was evidence that approximately 440 abortions had been performed out of state on Maine women 17 and younger.

After all the evidence was given, the question boiled down to "Do parents give their children consent to be sexually active?" Without lack of consent, many young people in their teens do have sexual intercourse, and no amount of moralizing is going to alter that fact.

The legislation is harmful to young people in general, but particularly to young women, because most of the young people asking for counseling and medical help are women. As one opponent to the legislation said, "Do boys ask their Dads before they buy condoms?"

Anyone wanting further information on the bills can contact the Health & Institutions Committee at 289-2979.

AN OPEN LETTER:

"I'm a man and I'm gay"

The following letter is in response to my article "Open Letter to a Friend" (Oct.-Nov. 1974 issue) which explored my friend Lynn's relationship with Ed, a gay man.

Dear Sandy,

After many false starts and a few pushes from Meg, I've decided to write this as a reply to your very excellent "Open Letter to a Friend".

Among the wealth of misinformation that's been fed to society in the past about gay people we've all heard the one that goes "all gay women are man haters", quoted no doubt by the same person who says you can always spot a Lesbian a mile away because she inevitably:

- Wears a leather jacket and motorcycle boots.
- Saunters around muttering "Fuck The Old Lady" type comments.
- And probably has a name like Dora Dieseldyke.

Equally assinine is the "fact" that "all gay men hate women" stated expertly by someone whose only contact with homosexuality took place in the colorful and often bizarre districts of Greater Sunday Paper, and has as much truth to it as the stereotype which describes me as living for those moments when I can:

- Don a pink lace party frock.
- Opera length pearls (of course, they're real, my dear).
- Slip into high heels.
- And swish down Main Street. Coyly.

Bull shit, right? But unfortunately there are still too many people who don't realize it.

Figuratively, Ed and I are the same person; I'm a man and I'm gay. If I wanted to, I could probably "pass for straight". I too, need the love, understanding and friendship that women can give. I feel sure this was the reason, in part, why Ed was attracted to Lynn; she treated him like a person; a friend.

You began by saying, "If Ed is gay, I'm afraid I can't help." This is the only statement in your whole letter that I disagree with, because you did help.

First, you must have helped Lynn, as much as anyone other than Lynn herself could. She couldn't possibly have been unmoved at the total truthfulness and complete sincerity of the letter.

Secondly, I'm sure you've helped Ed, no matter how indirectly. Should he marry Lynn, eventually he'd become miserable and make her life even more so. In the end, he'd probably kill that part of Lynn that attracted him in the first place. Yes, she should "forget Ed", for his sake as well as her own.

You've helped me. You voiced a concept that I've tried for a long time to grab from my heap of "Inner Feelings" and put into my cabinet of "Self Knowledge". That "He can see you as a friend, a human entity that is complete and separate from himself" is obviously why I can love Anne or Meg or Nancy. Or even as far back as Ruth, who was my high school Lynn.

And you've helped both Ed and I. At times it's extremely difficult for a male homosexual to have really close friends. Other gay men see a sex object. As do many women (like Lynn); the "Once-you've-done-it-with-me-you'll-be-a-real-man" type. Straight men are too often afraid they'll be seen as sex objects (they probably sometimes are); or much worse, want to when they aren't; the "What-do-you-mean-you-don't-want-to-me-you're-a-queer-ain't-you" type. These are the same people who

believe the misinformation and stereotypes which I hope you've helped dispel by describing your own thoughts and feelings. And your own anticipation of the future.

Perhaps those people have now been helped also. Helped to re-examine their own attitudes about homosexuality, maybe even to recognize homosexual tendencies in themselves, which are in all people to a greater or lesser extent. But at least helped them to start thinking about themselves. As you hoped Lynn would do.

In a logical, forthright and down to earth way, you've refurbished and made pertinent (and personal) the basic truth philosophers have tossed around forever. We must know and love ourselves before we can know and love others. This should not apply only to Lynn. Nor only to women. But to all people. Because the lives of all people will benefit, equally, when we can be accepted and loved; can accept and love each other for what and who we are; "human entities", waiting to share all the experience, creativity, friendship and love we have in us.

And Sandy, you've helped.

Brooks Fowles

Dear Brooks,

You've helped, too--by responding in an open and honest way, and by sharing your experiences with myself and others. And also by offering your friendship and support. Thank you.

Sandy Lucas

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Four Women In Five Scenes

I

My life is filled with women.
Even in my dreams they move about me,
gowned and masked, hidden in shadows.
We elude each other by day,
mistake each other by night.
Only in fragments, mosaic pieces, are we revealed.
Beneath layers of gauze and veil and paint
our minds stretch out in endless corridors,
our unsuspecting hearts, like tangled gardens,
can burst without warning into bloom.

And from that unfathomed within,
an innerness I swim above, mystery moving in darkness,
came my daughter, another woman,
still open to me like a clearing under the sun,
delighting in this mysterious life.

All of them women.
Is it that our fierce tenderness
drives men away?
As if our openness
closed something in them,
made distances yawn out between us.
I feel them tighten in my presence, put up their guard.
They hide themselves behind jokes and empty laughs.
We touch facades, evade each other.
All my friends are women.

When the rains come we huddle around an oval table,
picking at chipped paint with ragged nails,
exposing old wounds as our mothers might have displayed
the soft treasures of their hopechests.
Are we somehow proud of these scars,
these sufferings we embrace with our lovers?

On the edge of my teacup I see the brink of a chasm.
It is myself I reveal in this unfocused intensity
that stirs the air around us.
I know myself unraveling before these other eyes.
Something is being given,
some knowledge they have of me growing in their minds,
mysterious, elusive phantom, bearing my own face,
my movements.
How am I to recognize myself in the tiny reflections
of these six eyes?
How solid I appear to them,
how real:
dependable, like this table,
reliable, as this very cup,
which seems a chasm to me, opening up,
where the tea leaves lie soggy,
waiting to be read.

II

We talk of men. Always of men.
You have had husbands, lovers.
They have left you cold, buried your fire beneath layers of ice.
You feel nothing, locked into your aloneness.
And the great sea we gladly dissolve into
looms up in your mind as a terror, a kind of death.
And yet you know what Anais says,
that woman is a mermaid with her tail dipped into the
unconscious.

And you know your vastness, the power you have chained.
Your pain is so little, you forget, so small.
Photographs of other women holding tiny bodies,
dying children.
They are not our children.
Bodies of dead men,
mangled bodies once so desired.
They are not our husbands.
You want to remember.

III

This leads to talk of social change,
the revolution that is to come.
You have your rhetoric, but the blues still swim in your head.
You search out the oblivion of drink and smoke
to smash a state of mind, your own woman's heart,
thinking it a cultural disease.
You fight yourself, the softness in you,
the need for others' softness.
And fighting yourself, you blame your paranoia on the pill.
A sadness grows up behind your eyes.
You hold your heart back to keep it whole,
beyond fantasy,
taking no chances.

IV

We talk of solitude, the hermit carrying her lamp.
You think me strong for living with a man.
I think you strong for living for yourself.
But for you solitude is protection,
a defense against the invading world,
which comes like tentacles, pulling at you.
A little wall between people does no harm,
to keep things a little hidden, each one a little apart.
And yet I love those hidden songs in you,
the ones you sing only to yourself,
the ones we hear only if we listen
after all the words have ceased.

V

We, all of us, care for our plants,
tending them as they grow under our watchfulness.
They reproduce forever, any one piece,
even broken off from the whole,
can bring about her own resurrection.

Agnes Bushell
Portland

Photograph by W. Cobb, courtesy of off our backs



Judith Camus, guest speaker,
York County NOW Chapter

political repression in chile

article and photos
by Sandy Lucas

On September 11, 1973, the socialist-elected government of Salvador Allende was violently overthrown by a military coup. Thousands of people were killed. The National Stadium held 10,000 people captive.

On September 30, 1973, Judith Camus and her North American husband fled Chile. Because of their active support during Allende's presidency, their lives were in immediate danger. His parents sent plane tickets and they were able to escape. Most of their friends and co-workers were imprisoned or killed.

Now, a year and a half later, the military junta is still in control of the Chilean government. Political parties, elections, and the Congress have been suspended.¹ Thousands of political books have been seized and burned.² Military guards have been placed in every classroom to monitor "education".³ Over 100,000 persons have been fired from jobs for political reasons.⁴ All union activities have been banned and strikes outlawed.⁵ Communication systems have been seized; anti-junta publications have been suspended and offices closed.⁶

Thousands of people have been taken prisoner and held in some 30 jails and concentration camps (estimates range from 10-50,000 people).⁷ Political prisoners are held without trial, without knowledge of charges, and violently tortured.

This widespread torture was the topic of discussion at a recent meeting of the York County NOW Chapter. Judith Camus was the guest speaker and for several hours she shared with us her experiences in Chile before, during, and directly after Allende's presidency.

Camus has been in exile from her native Chile for over a year now. Her concern is to tell others about her Chilean sisters and brothers in prison, with the hope that we Americans will respond to the urgent need for international protest and intervention.

Her assertions of extreme torture, continued executions, and political repression are not exaggerated or made up. The conditions in Chile are well-documented by many groups, including the Organization of American States (OAS), the United Nations, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), the International Commission of Jurists, Amnesty International, the U.S. Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners (USLA), and the Chicago Commission of Inquiry into the Status of Human Rights in Chile.

In a 175 page report recently released by a five-nation investigative team of the Organization of American States, the Chilean government was charged with "extremely serious vio-

lation of human rights, including extensive torture of political prisoners."⁸ The team registered charges of "every kind of sexual aggression, including rape, the use of electric current applied to the most sensitive areas of the body; and beatings and torture in the presence of prisoners' husbands and companions."⁹

In the report by the Chicago Commission, methods of torture (documented by personal testimony and eyewitnesses in Chile) include electronic shock, fingernail extraction, beating with gun butts, knife slashing, cigarette burns, sexual abuse, and rape.¹⁰

In the report by the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, the documented testimony of a 23 year old woman is as follows:

"They arrested me in my house and beat me in front of my mother. The next day they took me... [in a truck]...to the Air Force communications center...Right there in the truck they beat us with clubs and rifles...then they took me into a little room. There were several men there, I don't know how many, who formed a circle around me, then raped me, and beat me senseless.... later they burned me with cigarettes...later they let me rest because I fainted...when they saw I wasn't saying what they wanted me to say, they took me to a place called 'Picana' where they applied electric current to my most sensitive places, especially my genitals. Later they put me in cold water and gave me more electric shocks. Then they let me rest again.... One thing which I forgot to tell you is that they keep you naked from the moment you enter the base and they don't give you anything back. I am in danger coming to speak to you. I have only left the place where I am hiding twice. The first time I was nearly arrested."

"How did you get here this time?"

"Thanks to a companero."¹¹

The Women's League states that they saw this woman's scars from electric shock and the cigarette burns on her body. Her knees were so swollen from beatings that she could hardly walk.

Women political prisoners are doubly victimized. They are mass raped, sexually abused, several have had live mice entered into their vaginas.

The Women's International League for Peace and Freedom gained access to the women's prison, El Buen Pastor (translated "The Good Shepherd"). They saw wounds and scars from cigarette burns; they heard story after story of sexual abuse and torture.¹²



More recently the International Commission of Jurists (a private agency of lawyers from 50 non-communist countries) testified before the U.S. House Committee on Foreign Affairs that the Chilean government was considering the establishment of work camps for more than 600,000 young people whose parents supported the late President Salvador Allende.



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THE PROOF: Documentation, Sources of Reference, Notes

1. New York Times, 9/13/74
2. Newsweek, 10/8/73
3. Report by the Chicago Commission of Inquiry Into the Status of Human Rights in Chile, 1320 East Madison Park, Chicago, Ill. 60615. The Chicago Commission is made up of 12 people, including college professors, ministers, and lawyers, of varying political views and religious beliefs. The report and documents are available at above address for \$1.50 plus 50 cents mailing.
4. "according to Gen. Pinochet, himself", in the report by the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, (WILPF), Chile: State of War, an Eyewitness Report, 1213 Race St., Phila., Pa. 19107. Documentary evidence results from a 15-day trip in Chile by a 6-woman team. Visit with escort to 2 detention centers; denied access to other prisons.
5. Chicago Commission Report. "Union leaders have been imprisoned, harassed, killed, or forced into exile." (IV, 4). "Several union members have been picked up at random and shot in the presence of other workers, for example 11 railway repair and maintenance workers in San Bernardo."
- WILPF Report
6. Chicago Commission Report. "Copies of shut down papers have been removed from historical records and libraries."
- WILPF Report
7. Chicago Commission Report.
- Amnesty International investigation, New York Times, 9/11/74
- OAS report, New York Times, 12/10/74
- WILPF Report
8. New York Times, 12/10/74. The team was from Uruguay, Argentina, US, Brazil, and Chile. Visited various prisons, but denied access to ones reportedly worse. 12-day trip; transcripts of tape-recorded interviews.
9. Ibid.
10. Chicago Commission Report. Torture, (c).
- WILPF Report
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. New York Times, 11/20/74; cf. New York Times, Sept. 1, 5, 8, and 15 1974.
14. New York Times, 12/5/74; Chilean ad 12/8/74. cf. 12/1/74, 12/15/74
15. New York Times, Chilean ad 11/17/74; 12/10/74. cf. Chilean ad 11/24/74; 10/16/74.
16. New York Times, Chilean ad 11/17/74; cf. 12/5/74; 12/15/74
17. Chicago Commission Report.
18. Ibid.
19. Ibid.
20. Chile: The Hard Facts, information pamphlet put out by the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, 1213 Race St., Phila., Pa. 19107. Available for 5 cents.

21. New York Times, 2/21/73 (before the coup).
22. "Similar" in the sense that budgets were tight and some of the usual "necessities" had to be forgone; dissimilar in the sense that real poverty with any of its desperation, hunger, and pain was far from an actuality.
23. Chile: The Hard Facts. The military was still in the hands of the upper and middle class.
24. Chile: The Hard Facts.
25. Chile: The Hard Facts. Immediately following the coup, the U.S. recognized the military junta, resumed economic aid, and ended the credit blockade.
26. Chile: The Hard Facts.
27. New York Times, 9/8/74. See also, Sept. 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 16, 19, 21, 24, 27, 30; Oct. 9, 16, 17, 22, 23, 31; Nov. 1, 9, 17; Dec. 3, 13, 29 (1974). Jan. 15, 38 (1975)
28. New York Times, 10/16/74.
29. New York Times, 10/16/74. As a result of this disclosure, Rep. Michael Harrington has filed suit against Henry Kissinger and the CIA, citing 65 points of alleged CIA violations. See New York Times, 12/28/74.
30. WILPF Report.
31. Ibid.
32. Compare the junta's statement that they fought to protect free institutions from marxist regime (NYT, 11/24/74) with the CIA's statement that "it was our duty to preserve institutions which we call free" (NYT, 10/17/74).
33. Some would also equate the political systems. If the U.S. would go to such measures in Chile to protect its interest, what must it do in this country?
34. off our backs, vol. 1V, no. 3. March 1975. pg. 6.
- WILPF Report
36. Congress recently appropriated 25 million to Chile in economic aid, but cut out administrative request for military aid. Pres. Ford signed the bill, stating he regretted that the "modest" program of 16-20 million in military aid had been cut. "Although I share the concern of Congress for the protection of human rights and look forward to continuing consulting with the Chilean government on this matter, I do not regard this measure as an effective means for promoting that interest." New York Times, 12/31/74.
37. The US Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners requests that copies of messages be sent to their office at USLA, 156 Fifth Ave., Rm. 703, N.Y.C., N.Y. 10010.

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Niall MacDermot, Commission Secretary General, testified that the junta plan called for "vast programs of reforestation and land reclamation using those juveniles judged to need 'rehabilitation'." ¹³

The Chilean junta staunchly denies the proposed work camps; ¹⁴ the use of torture and political imprisonment; ¹⁵ the placement of guards in public and private schools. ¹⁶

Ads placed in the New York Times deny the charges as "grotesque inventions" and attempts to discredit "those institutions which fought for liberty against the Marxist regime."

The Chicago Commission Report states: "Anyone who does not uncritically accept the pronouncements of the Junta is regarded as an enemy. Their vilifications range from the United States Senate ("infiltrated by Marxists"), Senator Edward Kennedy ("agent of international communism"), to the Ford Foundation ("not only infiltrated but controlled by Marxists, including admitted communists." (La Segunda, Dec. 20, 1973) ¹⁷

During interviews with Junta representatives, the Chicago Commission states that representatives "felt most assured that...[they could]...present obviously transparent lies with utmost impunity." ¹⁸ "It is clear that the Junta is bewildered by the fact that anybody might actually be concerned about the status of human rights in Chile." ¹⁹

Who are these sick, demented men? Just what exactly happened in Chile to cause the countless deaths, the continued bloodshed, the calculated torture?

The military coup resulted from U.S. economic and political involvement, upper class and military coercion, and the growing discomfort of the middle class.

Under the programs of the Popular Unity government (the coalition of parties headed by President Allende), land and wealth were redistributed to benefit the poor. Worker's wages were increased, and health services, schools, and day care centers for the poor were established. ²⁰ Over 400 businesses, factories, and corporations were nationalized.

[Chilean photos from the movie "Campamento"]

The upper class remained basically unaffected by the redistribution programs. Because Allende's methods were bloodless and the process was slow, the upper class still enjoyed a high and indulgent standard of living. As one wealthy student put it, "Before we starve to death everybody below us does." ²¹

It was the middle class that directly experienced rising living costs with less money, finding themselves in a "similar" position to the poor. ²²

This growing discomfort of the middle-class resulted not so much from the redistribution programs, but from a deliberate economic blockade by the United States.

Under Allende's programs, American corporations and interests were nationalized and we retaliated by trying to create economic chaos.

All aid programs to Chile were ended, except for military aid which was increased. ²³ The U.S. Export-Import Bank, which had given Chile \$600 million in the last 25 years denied new requests and discontinued old loans. ²⁴ The World Bank, led by the U.S., refused all new loans. ²⁵ ITT offered \$1 million to the CIA to topple Allende. ²⁶

In September of 1974 it was learned that the CIA spent \$8 million between 1970-73 in an effort to bring down the Allende government. ²⁷

More than half of the money was used to provide benefits to anti-Allende strikers in the three months preceding the coup. ²⁸ (It should be noted that the strikers were of the middle class. They included professional health workers and doctors opposed to socialized medicine; middle class business men, etc. The truckers strike was one of truck owners, opposed to nationalization of transportation).

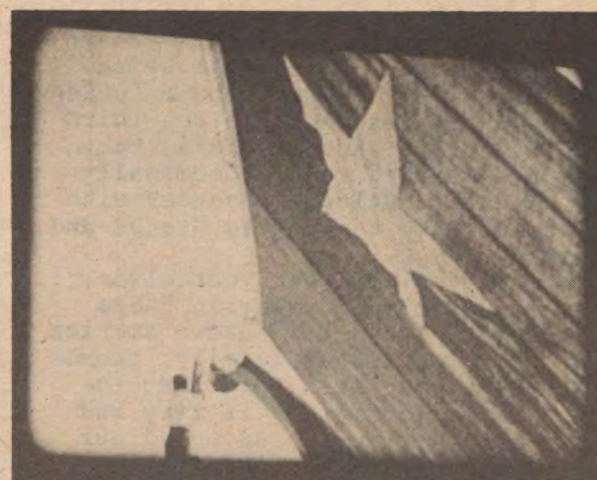
According to the New York Times, the CIA financed opposition groups. Its rule of thumb was apparently to throw its weight behind the strongest source of opposition to the Allende government. ²⁹

The significance of these events goes far beyond their effect on the lives of 10 million Chileans. ³⁰ The decisive role played by the United States government, multinational corporations and international banks in subverting this one, small democratically-elected government has enormous implications for methods of future struggles. ³¹

The situation in Chile was and is a war between the wealthy and the poor. Allende attempted to change the system that equates 'freedom' with 'arbitrary power'; ³² to change the system that allows one person to live in comfort at the expense and oppression of another.

He was not trying to reduce the middle or upper classes to a level of poverty. The Popular Unity was trying to distribute the superfluous wealth and land to those in need.

No one, however, of the middle or upper classes voluntarily offered their excess land or wealth. Every economic and basic human right restored to the poor had to be pried from those more fortunate.



The struggle of the poor extends the world over. The social and economic conditions in Chile and the U.S. are similar. ³³ The land and the wealth is in the hands of the upper and middle classes while the poor suffer from hunger and malnutrition, and die of starvation.

It was the Chilean woman of the working class that was most helped by Allende's Popular Unity. Free obstetrical and pediatric care were the right of all Chilean women; factories with more than 30 employees were required to have day care centers; a three month leave with pay was allowed when children were born. ³⁴ It was her middle and upper class sisters that organized into the group called Poder Feminino (Women Power) and carried out the famous March of Empty Pots against the Allende government. ³⁵

During the discussion that evening at the York County NOW meeting, pressing questions wanted to know "How can we help" and "What can we do to stop the torture?"

We learned that we could register protests with our senators, representatives, and with the Chilean junta [see end of article]. But perhaps those questions were best answered by the other question asked that night: "What can people do in this country to bring about some of the changes that the Popular Unity worked for in Chile?"

What You Can Do

- Write your senators, representatives, Box 488, Brunswick, Maine, to receive a copy of the international petition protesting the condition of women political prisoners in Chile.
- Write to Chilean officials protesting the violation of human rights in Chile and urging the immediate release of all political prisoners. ³⁷

General Sergio Arellano
Ministerio de Defensa
Santiago, Chile

Embassy of Chile
1736 Mass. Ave., N.W.
Washington, D.C.

Senores Junta Militar
Santiago de Chile

- Write to the Freewoman's Herald, Box 488, Brunswick, Maine, to receive a copy of the international petition protesting the condition of women political prisoners in Chile. Obtain as many signatures as possible.
- Respond with a financial contribution to Judith Camus' letter (see page 11).

--Think about your own economic position and relationship to oppression. (Are you as poor as you profess?) Write to the Maine Land Trust, Box 116, Brunswick, Maine, to learn about the concept of land trust. Share some money with a group or organization working to bring about social change. Get involved.

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POPULATION CONTROL: whose right to be right?

The problem is not the excess of population, but the excess of exploitation.

Judith Camus

The right to use birth control is a partial answer to the problem of the participation of the woman in the construction of a more human way of life, and modern woman has come to realize she has real control in planning her family.

Not all women have this choice. Women in underdeveloped countries, Blacks, Chicanas, Puerto Ricans, and poor women in the U.S.A., too, are being forced to use birth control or sterilization.

We frequently hear the term "underdeveloped" in reference to the Third World countries (Africa, Asia, Latin America), meaning that economically they haven't developed together with the powers like the United States and Europe.

Many of you must ask yourselves, "Why the underdevelopment in these countries?" Let's take Latin America as an example. Traditionally, people in the U.S. have been told that the Indian in Latin America is lazy and dirty, and that we Latins spend our time taking siestas or dancing the conga. That we are ignorant, incapable, and don't have any ambition. And furthermore, that the reason for our underdevelopment and poverty is that we have too many people in Latin America.

The real reasons for our underdevelopment are quite different. A look at history clearly shows that the economic gains of countries like the United States or European nations is a product of the extraction of natural resources of the Third World. A striking example in history is the bounding industrial development of Great Britain, which was obtained with all the resources and human beings taken from the Americas, and with the resulting death and suffering of millions of Indians.

Latin women suffer from a traditional culture that has changed all our real values. For many generations we have grown up with a series of myths that are not truly ours--myths that have been imposed by the dominating and oppressing cultures. These cultures have made us believe that the Indian civilization was inferior to that of European invaders.

Before the Spaniards arrived in Latin America, the native woman participated much more in her society than the Spanish woman did in hers. With the Spanish conquerors, the Catholic church and its feudal system, the Indian civilization suffered a shattering setback.

The superiority in armaments and technology that Europe had was determinant in the defeat of the Indian civilizations. This superiority in armaments and technology continues to be the determinant force in the exploitation of our economy.

This force enables U.S. private corporations to continue reaping their largest profits in the Third World, and gives the United States access to a disproportionate share of the world's resources.

How can a country which accounts for 5.5% of the world's population, and consumes 40% of the world's natural resources, have the nerve to blame the Third World countries' poverty on supposed overpopulation.

A case in point is the American colony of Puerto Rico, where investors obtain a 28% return on invested capital (twice as high as in the United States) while the average wage of a Puerto Rican industrial worker is 1/2 to 2/3 lower than the North American level. At the same time, the cost of living in Puerto Rico is 25% higher than in North America.

In Latin America, where foreign exploitation goes back a hundred years, North American capitalists have consistently maintained staggering profit rates. During the 1950-60 period, they directly invested \$3.8 billion, but withdrew \$11.5 billion.

The North American investors don't think or care about the well-being or the independence of Latin American people. They are not interested in ending our malnutrition, illiteracy, hunger or poverty.

Every time we try to rescue our natural resources in order to achieve our own development, we are interrupted by the direct or indirect intervention of the military forces of the United States government. Examples of this are the invasion of the U.S. Marines in Santo Domingo in 1965 and the overthrow of the Popular Unity Government in Chile in 1973.

In this unjust distribution of wealth, the growth of the population in these countries represents a threat to the security of the few rich countries that control the resources and means of production. "Reckless population growth without parallel economic growth...makes for a constant lowering of the standard of living. Such a decline, with its concomitant mounting poverty and hunger inevitably delivers a population to some kind of ism, whether it be communism, fascism, or Pan Arabism, and wears them away from democracy."

"The so-called demographic explosion, sooner or later will become the revolutionary explosion." Conscious of this fact, the United States government, in cooperation with corporate expansion into the Third World, tries to maintain economic and political control over these countries by developing preventive genocide via "family planning" as a weapon against the revolt of the oppressed.

Eduardo Galeano in his book *The Open Veins of Latin America* says: "In Latin America it is more hygienic, efficient and cheaper to kill the guerrilleros in the uterus, than in the streets or the mountain." The late President Johnson said: "Let us act on the fact that less than five dollars invested in population control is worth a hundred dollars invested in economic growth."

The U.S. State Department itself attributes all manifestations of misery in the world to numbers: "For the vast majority of families in the less developed countries, the possibilities of improvement of the welfare of parents and children are submerged by sheer numbers."

During the fiscal years 1970-74 the State Department's funding arm, the

(continued next page)

What we are afraid of is that the quality of our own life will deteriorate

— Germaine Greer

Behind the strident cries of the population alarmists, voices of women are being heard in protest. We are realizing what "population control" really means--some people imposing their ideas of how many others should be allowed to exist.

At a recent lecture in Portland, Germaine Greer talked about population control, its intentions, and its worldwide effects. "At this time," she said, "we are concerned by the rising of a new movement which seeks to destroy what little control many women have finally obtained. The population control movement presents a new danger to basic human rights, both in North America and in the Third World."

"We are involved in a situation where we talk of the imperviousness of certain peoples to the very idea of birth control. What we actually mean is that the people in question are resisting a notion of correct family size, and even a notion of correct standard of living, which is not theirs, but ours."

"We are afraid of the concept of overpopulation. We've been told that life will become more miserable as there are more of us, and our futures become darker. What we are apparently afraid of is that the quality of our own life will deteriorate. We are not afraid of having the quality of other people's lives deteriorate, because we are already letting that happen."

"Many people believe, you know, that poor people are ignorant, that their behavior isn't calculated, that they're somehow dim and sexual and in need of guidance, that they're incapable of understanding the simplest relationships. That even though they know how many hens they can run on a piece of land, and how many sheep, they don't know how many children they can feed on the produce."

"Some extraordinary blockage occurs in their heads, and they suddenly become helpless, or stand there having millions of children and saying 'Oh, help, help, Uncle Sam. Bring us food!'"

"Now American aid, in most cases, is the lending of money to poor countries in order to enable them to buy what we cannot eat, after we have stuffed ourselves with twice as much as we need to maintain life at its highest level... and four times as much as people eat in the rest of the world."

(continued next page)

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camus-

Agency for International Development, has increased the budget for population control from \$10.5 million to \$250 million. AID also distributes money to many "philanthropic" organizations that operate throughout the world. One of the biggest recipients is the International Planned Parenthood Federation, whose trustees include Lamont duPont Copeland of the duPont Chemical Corporation; Eugene Black, former chairman of the Chase Manhattan Bank, and George Kennan, cold war theoretician.

It is true that a great part of the world population either suffers of malnutrition or dies of starvation, but this is not because the world is overpopulated or because there aren't enough resources. The problem of our countries is not the excess of population, but the excess of exploitation.

In most of the Latin American countries we do not have too many people. On the contrary, we lack people. Latin America has one of the lowest population densities in the world. United Nations statistics show that Europe, for example, has a population density of 85 inhabitants per square kilometer, and Latin America only 9. According to the ones who say that underdevelopment is due to overpopulation, then Europe should be much poorer and underdeveloped than Latin America.

It's well-known that poor women in the U.S. and the Third World have been used as guinea pigs for pharmaceutical and medical experiments.

The two most effective contraceptive methods used today are the pill and the IUD (intrauterine device). The pill was initially tested in 1956 on Puerto Rican and Haitian women. In the Puerto Rican experiments, three women died of thrombosis and "The investigators told the reporters that they didn't study the cases since the women were in such malnutritional conditions that three deaths were very common in those cases."

The pharmaceutical laboratories are obtaining big profits from the pill and they have the U.S. government as their best client: in 1969, AID bought from Syntex and Wyeth laboratories oral contraceptives with a value of \$1,131,500 to be sent to the different clinics around the world. In 1969, AID sent contraceptives, including the pill, as a part of foreign aid for a value of more than \$7 million, in 1970, for \$9.5 million.

The other birth control method tested in the Third World is the IUD. Its use and testing has a double objective: controlling the population and perfecting the different IUD's so later they can be used and sold to the more affluent women.

Since 1961, the Pathfinder Fund has carried out an international program for investigation of the IUD, and has become the center for information about the latest IUD results. This program has been done with the cooperation of more than 100 doctors in 40 countries; and they have analyzed data from more than 40,000 women.

Women are being convinced to take the pill or have the IUD inserted in family planning clinics where they are shown films and slides of wealthy families, well-fed, well-dressed, and healthy-looking. The poor women are then told that if they start planning their families they will be able to have more food and better education for their children. Later, they are given the choice of the pill or the IUD.

The poor uneducated woman who lives in the favela, slum or villa miseria will do anything to come out of the horrible conditions she and her family are living in. The Medic Association of Guanabara, Brasil, denounced the Association for Wellbeing of the Family

(BEMFAM), financed by International Planned Parenthood Federation, for inserting IUD's and cutting the string attached to it to make the woman sterile."

Another major international agency for population control is the Population Council, which was initially established by the Rockefeller family. It serves mainly to finance research into such topics as attitudes of poor women in El Salvador toward contraception or the study of male attitudes towards fertility control by the School of Politics at the University of Sao Paulo in Brazil. In 1953, the Ford Foundation appropriated \$14 million for expansion of the Council's bio-medical laboratories used in fertility research.

One of the largest centers for training "family planning" personnel has been CELADE (the Latin American Demographic Center) in Chile. It has engaged in programs in the Central Valley of Chile demonstrating the IUD. There are smaller sub-centers of CELADE such as CESPO in Costa Rica.

In Columbia, the Rockefeller Foundation has put large sums of money into the ACFM programs (Association of Columbian Faculties of Medicine) for its Population Center, concentrating work at the University del Valle. The Catholic newspaper, *El Siglo*, wrote in a 1956 article that 40,000 Columbian women had been sterilized under the ACFM program. Small money payments, promises of free medical services, free lipsticks and artificial pearls were offered."



Straight sterilization is another well-known method in Latin America. The country that probably has suffered this method the most is Puerto Rico, where in 1965, 34% of the women between the ages of 20 to 49 years were sterilized.¹⁰ Indian populations have suffered the worst, according to Prensa Latina's Luis dos Santos (Jan., 1972). Efforts continue to relocate and eliminate the Indian populations in the Amazon as well as the States of Matto Grosso, Goias and Bahia. Of the almost 3 million Indians that once inhabited the Amazon Basin, 50 thousand survive today, persecuted by the landowners, the timber industries, and hunters who destroy their means of subsistence.

These slaughters are related to the purchase of land by American companies for the exploitation of their minerals (especially radioactive ones). They are also related to the installation of strategic military bases and centers of colonization. Half of the Tupanuma tribe, located in the Amazon, were exterminated by mixing arsenic with the sugar they consumed. In the state of Bahia, members of the Pataxo tribe perished when they bathed in rivers, intentionally infected with bacteria.¹¹

Even if I have presented here a critical analysis of birth control methods in the Third World, I believe that birth control is a right that every woman has. Imposed birth control is not going to liberate a woman. We need to have a system where the distribution is equal, where the people have access to food and education, health care, houses, and day care centers.

Contraceptives shouldn't be used as an economic measure, but as an effective way in which the woman can participate massively into the working force. Cuba, for example, regards birth control as a matter of individual choice.

Fidel Castro explains that with socialist economic development, Cuba could support a considerably larger population: "The Cuban Revolution is not blindly against birth control. The size of the family is the individual decision of husband and wife as part of their human rights. It is the duty of the State to furnish them with the adequate means for having as many children or as few as they want. The Revolution is not scared by population increases and is not worried by a temporary drop in the birth rate.

"There are some countries that pretend that birth control is the solution, but the only ones who are saying this are the capitalists, the exploiters, because no one who understands what humanity can achieve through science and technology sets out to impose limits upon the number that can exist on the earth. This would be especially out of place in a country like ours where there is enough land to take care of a much greater number of people."

1. Joseph Hansen. "The Population Explosion", reprint of *Too Many Babies?*, (1960), (New York, 1970), citation of Dr. Allen F. Guttmacher, pg. 9).
2. "Para Saber Cuanta Gente Somos", Stycos.
3. Laurence Lader, *Breeding Ourselves to Death*, New York, p. 27.
4. Bonnie Mass, "The Political Economy of Population Control in Latin America".
5. *Ramparts*, June 1970.
6. *Ibid.*
7. The Foreign Assistance Program, *Annual Report to Congress*, N.Y., 1970, p.14.
8. The Pathfinder Fund, promotional pamphlet
9. Brazilian newspaper, Rio de Janeiro, December 3, 1971.
10. *Science for the People*, vol. 2, p. 7.
11. Bonnie Mass, op. cit.
12. *Ibid.*
13. *Science for the People*, vol.2, p. 12.

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"We lend money to the underdeveloped countries to buy our surplus, and then we graciously accept interest on the money we have lent them to buy it--the crumbs from our table.

"It's up to us to listen to what the women [of these countries] are asking for--not to try to impose upon them our standard of hygiene, not to try to impose upon them the dismal blueprint of our own poisonous society with its hopelessly exaggerated forms of consumption.

"My view is that feminism is the only policy that is positive enough to constitute a real amelioration of the condition in the Third World, and to end the fascist idea of population control.

"When I say that population control is a fascist idea, what I mean is that it does what fascist organizations or fascist state structures have always done. That is, to treat people at the level of the lowest common denominator of intelligence and moral responsibility.

"When we attempt to create the choices of people on any grounds because we think it's better for them, we are fascist, and if we tolerate it and--horror of horrors--if we tolerate it in our name, as feminism, that is the cruelest twist of all.

"It will be our liberty thrust upon us as moral suicide--nothing more or less. If it is true that the overpopulation situation is an emergency, and if we haven't got time to do things the right way, then in my mind it would be better that we didn't survive.

"There are worse things than death, and tyranny is one of them. And, worst, of all, is the tyranny that we may unconsciously be brought to commit ourselves."

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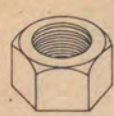
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nuts to bolts

by Gerri Merola

changing your oil

I don't know how many times the advertising media has warned me about keeping my skin lubricated. Let it go long enough, promised the beauty oracles, and your face will pucker, your hands will turn to lobster claws, and the calluses on your feet will scratch hardwood floors. I believed them, and they were probably right. My hindsight bitterness is most likely ungracious. But where were my oracles when I was deep moisturizing in hopes of eternally young elbows, complacently oblivious to my rapidly aging car? Because of them, I knew from moisturizing masques, cremes, and jellies, not from dipsticks, high detergent oil and transmission grease.

Yet most moving parts of my car need lubrication far more than do my knees: wheel bearings, ball joints, rear axles, transmissions, brakes, even door hinges. And most importantly, the engine, for without oil an engine will burn up before it goes two miles. I've seen the light, no thanks to Max Factor.

Motor oil puts a thin film between moving parts of the engine to keep them moving smoothly at high temperatures; it also ensures the seal between pistons, piston rings and cylinder walls, crucial for good compression. And motor oil constantly cleans the engine, carrying away such baddies as corrosive acid, sludge, varnish, carbon

deposits and slivers of metal. It also guards against corrosion and rust, and helps cool the engine. Detergent additives to oil also clean the engine, and "grab" contaminants too small to be trapped by the oil filter, suspending them so they can't harm the engine.

Eventually the oil becomes too contaminated to do its job, and it must be drained and replaced. Owner's manuals typically specify an oil change every 4,000 miles for older cars, less frequently for newer models. Check your manual, then adjust the mileage for your driving conditions. Cold weather, dusty roads, stop-and-go driving, slow speeds, and short trips all decrease the life of motor oil.

So...It's been 3,000 miles of hard winter driving. You're about to experience the joy of rolling in greasy oil (which, contrary to claims in detergent commercials, *nothing* gets out, so wear old clothes.)

For the oil-changing procedure, you'll need an open-ended wrench (typical size needed is 3/4 or 7/8 inch) or an adjustable wrench; an oil filter wrench; five-quart capacity pan flat enough to fit under your car; rags; a covered container for disposing of the oil; a funnel for pouring it; motor oil (check your owner's manual for the number of quarts and weight of oil required); a new oil filter.

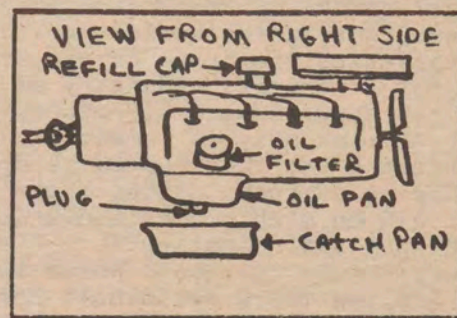
Run the car at idle until warm. If the engine is quite hot, let it cool down some to avoid nasty burns.

Crawl under the car and look just beneath the engine for the crankcase oil pan. It will have a plug on the side or bottom. (A warning here: Cars with automatic transmissions have the

transmission fluid pan and drain plug near the oil pan, though not under the engine as the oil pan is. If the draining "oil" is red, you've drained the transmission fluid. Replace it and start again.)

With your wrench, loosen and remove the oil pan drain plug (remember, most all screws remove counter-clockwise), positioning the pan directly beneath to catch the oil. After the oil drains, replace the plug and remove the oil filter with your oil filter wrench (again, screw off counter-clockwise). Some oil filters are reached from under the hood, so check ahead of time. Since the filter holds a quart of oil be careful removing it. (I once got a faceful of dirty Quaker State.)

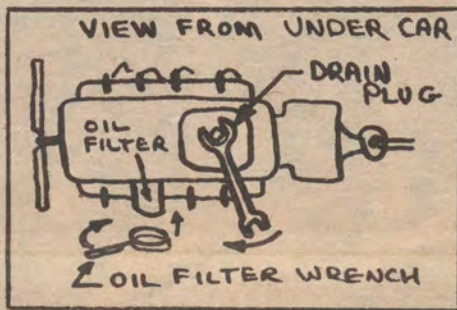
Wipe the surface which the oil filter screws onto. Before mounting the new filter, wipe a thin film of oil on the gasket to ensure a good seal. Then screw it in place by hand--no wrench this time. When the turning gets hard, tighten it down another 3/4 turn. That's it for under-the-car work.



Now open the hood and pour the new oil through a funnel into the crankcase. Be sure to add only to the full mark on the dipstick, as too much oil can burst seals. Most larger American cars take five quarts of oil (four for the crankcase and one for the oil filter); most smaller American cars take four (three and one).

Finally, let the engine idle for several minutes, then turn off the ignition and check the oil filter and oil pan for leaks. If necessary, tighten the filter or drain plug and observe again. Check the dipstick to be certain the oil reaches the full level.

Wash your hands.



in early April, and all pertinent biographical data will be stored, to be made available to the Governor in advance of all appointments.

All regulatory and advisory boards in Maine state government are being studied to determine the number of women currently serving as members and as chairwomen. At the end of the fiscal year the effectiveness of the talent bank project and its impact on the number of women participating in state government will be assessed, and recommendations will be made to Governor Longley as to its continuation, cessation, or expansion to include minorities and/or to match interested individuals with job openings in state government.

The final charge made to the Council in 1973 was to review Maine statutes in terms of their impact on women's rights. During this past year Judy Potter, member of the Council and professor at the University of Maine Law School, along with several law students, pored through Maine statutes and wrote an omnibus bill (L.D. 931, sponsored by Representative Mary Najarian) that would bring the laws of Maine into compliance with the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, to Title VII of the U.S. Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended in 1972, and to the Maine Human Rights Act.

The Council is furthering its legislative activities by advocating continued funding for day care; the protection of minors' access to family planning services; affirmative action requirements for all government agencies, public schools, and quasi-governmental units; protection of the income of low-income women; and similar bills affecting Maine women. This action is being taken in response to the testimony offered at public hearings sponsored by the Council last fall.

Although all the age-old problems exist with the Council that exist with any volunteer body, i.e. it seems that only those with the time and the money can participate, Council members have been appointed for their demonstrated activity in programs that promote the status of women. This Council is trying to identify the real needs of women in this state that can be responded to by the Governor, the Legislature, and various governmental agencies, to work cooperatively with groups with the same concern, and to make some impact on enhancing opportunities for women.

In so doing the Council sees a need for individuals and groups with special needs and unique resources to know of each other's existence. The Council hopes to respond to this need for information sharing and coalition building not only through producing an updated directory of people and resources, and by making an ongoing effort to meet with groups and individuals about mutual concerns.

Women are encouraged to contact the Council with suggestions, questions, or observations by writing to the Governor's Advisory Council on the Status of Women, 193 State St., Augusta, Maine 04333 or by telephoning 289-3418.

Women's Council Report

by Anne Pomroy

The Governor's Advisory Council on the Status of Women, under the leadership of Patricia Ryan, recently appointed chairwoman, has resumed many of its activities. The suit filed by the Council and its executive director, Anne Pomroy, to maintain a staff with CETA funds has been withdrawn from the courts, and back pay has been given to Pomroy and former Council secretary Jacquelyn Cobb.

The Council on the Status of Women is not new. President John F. Kennedy urged the creation of commissions on the status of women in each state, and in 1964 Maine became the first state in the Northeast to form such a commission. The hiring of Cobb and Pomroy in January represented the first time that the Maine Council had obtained funds for staff support. Before the CETA grant and members' terms end in June, the Council hopes to complete its tasks outlined in 1973.

The first charge made to the Council was ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment. Although the ERA was ratified by the Maine legislature in 1974, the Council must continue its efforts in light of several bills now before the 107th Legislature to send the ERA out to public referendum, a step which is clearly unconstitutional.

A second mandate was to institute a method by which interested and qualified women could be identified to serve on advisory and regulatory boards within state government. To accomplish this, the Council began its talent bank project and has now designed an information brochure and a distribution system to reach as many Maine women as possible. Brochures will be distributed

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FOR SALE One used pedestal. Cheap. I found it cold and dehumanizing up there. Write MOM & Freewoman's Herald.

WANTED

WANTED: Woman or women with children or child to live with another woman and child in Augusta area. Please call Dianne McLaughlin at 622-4731.

PUBLICATIONS

Paid My Dues, a quarterly journal of women and music. \$4 subscription. Subscribe now! Woman's Soul Publishing, PO Box 11646, Milwaukee, WI 53211.

Maine Land Advocate, the newspaper of the Maine Land Trust and land reform movement. Mid-winter issue now available. 25¢ copy, \$3 yr. sub. Write: Advocate, Box 656, Bangor, Maine 04401.

Maine Gay Task Force Newsletter, 1 yr. sub. \$2. Published monthly. Write: M.G.T.F.N. Box 4542, Portland, Me. 04112.

Woman Spirit: A feminist quarterly. Published at equinox and solstice. Sample copy \$2; sub. \$6. Box 263, Wolf Creek, Oregon, 97497.

Maine Women's Political Caucus, a monthly newsletter to keep women politically informed. For sample copy write: Phyllis Austin, Elizabeth Rd., Fortune Rocks, 04405.

SERVICES

New England Action Research Collective slide show on "The Medical-Industrial Complex." Will show anywhere in Maine anytime FREE. To schedule phone Ed DeBery, 389-2125.

The Family Planning program of Waterville offers daily walk-in clinics to all women of child-bearing age from North Kennebec and Somerset Counties. Services free to low income women. Call 873-2122 or toll free: 1-800-452-8760.

AD RATES

Classified ad rates 25¢ per line, free to subscribers and women's groups (up to 7 lines). Deadline for June-July issue is May 12. Write to us about display ad rates.

Mental Health, cont'd

When Doris told about her early experiences with men--her uncle forcing himself on her from the time she was nine--no one helped her to direct her righteous anger at the men who had mistreated her. Instead Doris has been told she is a man-hater; a normal woman should be used to such manhandling.

The lawyer Doris picked could not see her hurry to get out of her home even though her husband was telling her he loved her one moment and yelling and throwing things at her the next, and the children were becoming as nervous and upset as their mother.

The doctor's solution was to give Doris a shot of Thorazine. I complained to the lawyer and said Doris needed to move and get support money rather than be suppressed by drugs. He had only talked with Doris once but assured me, "Oh, she's had that stuff before. Of course the case is confidential but I've had conversations with her you just wouldn't believe. There's nothing else I can do to help."

A welfare woman has no credibility. In fact, I am convinced that the vast majority of us would suffer mental breakdowns if we had to contend with even half of the hassles a welfare mother faces each day (another woman friend also tried to help Doris and gave up when she was having the same hysterical symptoms as Doris in trying to deal with her problems).

Several women involved in the women's movement helped Doris move out, find a new lawyer and doctor, and get some of the support she badly needs. Only a small beginning to rebuilding a strong healthy person, but perhaps just enough of a beginning to keep Doris out of the psychiatric ward at Maine Medical Center and Augusta Mental Health Institute.

LETTERS: about Viet Nam

Dear Friends,

A New Year full of hope is coming: the year 1975, an International Women's Year for freedom and democracy, for national independence and peace! On this occasion, we convey to you our warmest greetings.

And to you -- peace and justice loving women of the United States -- the New Year is bringing us great hope and confidence.

We are aware that you are thinking with indignation that on Jan. 27, 1975, the second anniversary of the signing of the Paris Agreement, US bombs are still exploding in Viet Nam.

In this International Women's Year, we hope that you will take effective actions to force the US Government to respect its signature on the Paris Agreement, to end its involvement in South Viet Nam, and to fulfill its obligation to contribute to the healing wounds of war in North Viet Nam.

We wish happiness to you and your families, best successes in your activities for your own interests and for Freedom and Equality of other nations.

THE VIET NAM WOMEN'S UNION

Maine Right To Choose

by Cathy Flynn

In January, 1973, just as the 93rd Congress was convening, the Supreme Court handed down its decision affirming a woman's right to abortion during the first six months of pregnancy.

It didn't take long, however, for us to realize that the court ruling had not settled the issue.

On the contrary, the compulsory pregnancy people launched a determined effort to nullify the decision with a constitutional amendment prohibiting abortion and legislative riders restricting abortion rights.

Besides pushing for constitutional amendments, the anti-abortion people were determined to set up all possible impediments to abortion, and especially to eliminate the spending of federal funds for abortions and abortion-related services.

Unfortunately, since only low-income families rely on federal programs for social services, the effect of the amendments is discrimination against poor women. It is the disadvantaged women who are thus condemned to bear an unwanted child, or resort to the back-alley butchery of a quack, or attempt a self-induced abortion by home remedy.

Because the battle will be hotter than ever in the 94th Congress, Maine Right to Choose was formed to educate the state's Congressional delegates to the urgency of supporting the Supreme Court decision.

Just as this issue of the Freewoman's Herald went to press, Maine Right to Choose sent its second mailing to 2,000 people statewide, urging supporters to write their congresspeople about this issue.

Maine Right to Choose held its first statewide conference March 22 in Augusta to plan strategies, elect officers and conduct activist workshops.

The pro-choice people are also planning to attend "Day of Outrage" in Washington D.C. on Mother's Day (May 11) to peaceably demonstrate for abortion rights.

If you can offer a car to the caravan going from Maine, or if you can help with advanced publicity in your town, please contact your local chapter of the National Organization for Women or write Lois Reckitt, state coordinator, 38 Myrtle Ave., South Portland, Maine 04106, (tel. 799-8744).

You can help keep abortion safe and legal. Join Maine Right to Choose and write for their past mailings and suggestions on effective action. Write c/o P.O. Box 102, Buckfield, Maine 04220 (tel. 336-3628). A fundraising drive is underway to help pay for the mailings.

1975!



1975 WALL CALENDAR
35" x 23" LIMITED SUPPLY
available from FREEWOMAN'S HERALD for a \$3 contribution

...about Chile

March 13th, 1975

Dear Friends,

Maria Elena is a Chilean woman. She is 32 years old and has an 11 year old son. She is presently living in Chile where the economic and political situation is one of fear and desperation for the majority of the people.

Her life has been very hard. She married young to a man who turned out to be very immature as well as irresponsible, and for many years she supported not only the child but him also. Finally she could no longer live with him and decided to separate. But women do not have the right to divorce in Chile, so she was left on her own to support the child.

Maria Elena didn't break. She worked hard, educated her child, and in the spare moments always studied something that would allow her to grow more.

One day she met a man with whom she shared the same feelings and beliefs. He was a father to her child, a companion, a comrade, a lover, a friend. He was involved in the struggle for the liberation of our people, and for that reason they killed him after the September, 1973 coup in Chile.

This happened a little more than a year ago. Maria Elena keeps on working, but her economic situation is really desperate, as it is for most of the Chilean people presently.

I thought of asking her to come here, near our family to work and have some support. To be able to breathe freely, to have her child educated and well-fed. I'm asking from everyone I know, and can reach, to help me raise the money for her ticket, the child's ticket and taxes and papers that she would have to pay for leaving the country. We need \$1,500. I know it's a lot of money, but with the help of all of you we can put it together. Reach your friends, your working groups, people you know who care for other people. Please help Maria Elena and her child to get out of Chile. Thank you very much.

Judith Camus
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