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C A F R A

N E W S

NEWSLETTER OF THE CARIBBEAN ASSOCIATION FOR FEMINIST RESEARCH AND ACTION.



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eedback

Editor's Note

1992 ushers in the countdown to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) to be held in June 1992, Rio de Janeiro. Worldwide, women have been working towards getting their perspectives heard and acted on, realising that despite their long involvement in protecting the environment, and the fact that women are often the worse affected by environmental degradation, women have been largely left out of the decision making bodies which will chart the earth's future come June.

In this issue, *CAFRA News* brings perspectives on Environment and Sustainable Development from the CPDC, DAWN, the Global Assembly, and the World Women's Congress for a Healthy Planet.

The impact of the women's movement in the Caribbean is reflected in the meetings (p.23, 24, 32), IWD celebrations (p.20) and the increasing activities of other NGO's. And indeed throughout the world, the impact of the women's movement from the many conferences (p. 32), and books being printed (p.34) is being felt.

The office has moved (see p. 30), and for a week or so we had neither phone nor fax services. Our apologies to everyone who tried unsuccessfully to contact us during that time.

CAFRA News is in the process of evaluating itself, so we

hope readers will be kind enough to fill out and return by mail our **CAFRA News Readers Survey**. Your opinions will help us chart the future direction of the newsletter.

*In sisterhood,
Rowena.*

Women prisoners

Best wishes for 1992. I just received my personal copy of *CAFRA News* and as usual found all of the articles and information very informative. I find it extremely useful in keeping me informed about what is happening in the Caribbean.

I particularly enjoyed reading the article on women prisoners. The findings corroborated with information I had obtained while doing some research on health among black women living in Canada. The majority of black women incarcerated are in prison for petty crimes mostly related to poverty.

Please accept a complimentary copy of *Words are What I've Got* which is a collection of writing of new literate adults from over 50 countries (refer to p. 34).

*Sincerely,
Pat Rodney
Literacy Liaison Officer
International Council for Adult
Education (ICAE).*

Debt Crisis

As a Barbadian woman, Christian and poet I would like to offer an opinion on the economic, social and political conjuncture in which my country finds itself right now.

Like all economics, the crisis in which we find ourselves is not real but imagined, and in economics the imagined brings about a fearsome reality. We now imagine a foreign exchange problem and ergo, there is. But what if the IMF were to lend Guyana \$150 million to repay Barbados for the CMCF (Caribbean Multilateral Clearing Facilities) debacle, would we have a foreign exchange problem? I think not. But the IMF will lend us to pay Japan, and lend Guyana to pay U.S. creditors, it will never lend Guyana to pay Barbados, or Barbados to pay Trinidad & Tobago.

We imagined that we were little England and so we acted. The levels of living in Barbados, for her size, resource base and productivity are remarkable, and ironically the loss of status as an economic and political power of England in the 60's and 70's finds parallel in Barbados in the 1990's.

The underground economy has kicked in with a vengeance in Barbados. The loss of foreign

exchange is like a wound which is a loss of confidence in the future, exacerbated by the millions that are now being sewn to the insides of dresses and spirited out via business deals.

Barbadians marched in their thousands and all the region was surprised, except Barbadians. There are two scenarios in this country: we could have a coup, and that would not surprise me, or we could make a success or reconstruction without petro-dollars. I hope the latter because my people are bigger than they imagine.

I imagine that we will pull out of this in two years. I imagine even the Prime Minister of Barbados, Mr Erskine Sandiford, will regain some status - his reaching out to Patrick Manning, the new Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago is a master stroke. I imagine we will change the parliamentary system of Government of Ministerial privileges and prizes. I even imagine more women/feminists, holding political power in Barbados as we now hold administrative and quasi-economic power.

After all, I is a poet, and a Christian and a woman. I must imagine a future.

Respectfully
Margaret Gill



Stiwena

I received the last two issues of *CAFRA News*, my compliments on the newsletters. I would like to take this opportunity to write a bit about my neighborhood organization Stiwena.

"Stiwena" is a neighbourhood organisation located in the south of Paramaribo city, Suriname. It organises activities, such as films for children, lectures and meetings for adults. It consists of a management body and departments of youth, women, elderly, and social services. The women's department is co-ordinated by myself, Mechtelly Tjin-A-Sie, CAFRA member. It is the women's department which takes care of most business. For example if the youth organises an activity, it is the women who cook, serve, and

ensure the smooth running of activities.

The six year civil war in this area has resulted in increased unemployment, and a consequent increase in crime. Women face many problems exacerbated by the fact that there are no authorities specifically geared towards addressing women's needs. There is a high rate of illiteracy especially among women, making it difficult for them to obtain employment. It also means that Stiwena cannot use written material as a source of information and must go from home to home to meet and exchange information with women. The fight here is not just against violence and the law but against poverty.

In its attempt to find solutions to the many problems facing this neighbourhood, Stiwena has provided shelter for women and children abandoned by their men, food and clothes (especially for babies), medicine for the sick, and people who have suffered through fire or accidents. To address the problems of unemployment and poverty, Stiwena has also organised dress cutting and sewing courses, a horticultural project, provided information on health and sex, and programmes in singing, dancing, and art.

Mechtelly Tjin a Sie
Suriname

Earth Summit 1992 -

by the Caribbean (NGO) Policy Development Centre (CPDC)

At the present environmental problems are being addressed by the official world community in neat, compartmentalised divisions, with intensive trade-offs being made. In this framework the South, with less material resources to facilitate participation, and the world's poor, the majority of whom are women, are likely to emerge significant losers. However, the Earth Summit has the potential for making decisions which will fundamentally shape the relations between North and South, rich and poor, men and women, people and Nature, in the coming decades. Any opportunity afforded to bolster South representation and the voices of the NGO community and women, must be grasped. The Summit will provide an opportunity for groups from the South to influence world opinion, leaders and policy-makers and create and strengthen networks with NGOs and activists.

The major environmental problems faced by the Caribbean are marine pollution, loss of bio-diversity (for example, the destruction of coral reefs which are the chief source of marine bio-diversity and a critical element in tourism), deforestation, soil depletion from the commercial 'dumping' of agrochemicals and the resulting pollution of water resources, and the increasing poverty perpetrated by the promotion of a growth model centered on the accumulation of

profits divorced from the welfare of people. In a context of very small size and delicate eco-systems, the potential impact of global environmental problems (such as global warming on sea level rise, where the majority of the populations live within a few miles of the coast and tourism is a major activity), is devastating. Climate change can also affect the capacity of our region to feed itself. Over-consumption in the North and among the materially wealthy of the South, debt, and World Bank policies of structural adjustment are reinforcing poverty in the region and hastening environmental degradation.

While as NGOs we cannot speak for our countries, our experience working with people on the ground has shown clearly that development policies need to be reviewed, and the heavy focus on economic growth must be altered. More attention will need to be given to human development and natural resource management. Women must be empowered and actively and effectively involved at all levels of decision-making.

There must be an end to over-consumption and greed by the materially wealthy in the North and South. The global environmental problems cannot be solved in a context of "my country, "your country". There need to be a global change in values away from the materialist and exploitative



value system now dominant. The structural adjustment policies need to be revamped in the interest of human centered sustainable development. The debt must be accepted as unjust, and the evaluation of debt made in longer-term historical perspective which would help us to see more clearly that the supposed creditors are in fact debtors who have plundered the resources of the South over hundreds of years and continue to do so at an increased pace in the present. In the absence of a historical ecological audit with a long-term balance sheet, the North has managed to perpetuate the view that the South is a debtor, and under this guise continues the plunder of resources in capital, human and natural forms.

*Prepared for the CPDC by
Rosina Wiltshire and
Joan French.*

C harting a regional position for UNCED

Caribbean NGO Strategy Meeting on UNCED, Mangrove, Barbados, Feb. 24-25, 1992.

In preparation for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), scheduled for Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June, Caribbean non-governmental organisations (NGOs) met to discuss their hopes and strategies for the meeting known commonly as the Earth Summit.

The Brazil conference is being proclaimed as the most significant global conference to date, scheduled to bring together decision makers of all countries of the world and several hundred groups and agencies. But while political leaders and environmentalists have hailed the conference as a

forum of hope, Caribbean NGOs have expressed major reservations about the conference's ability to arrive at solutions in line with the needs of Third World peoples.

Critical Issues

CARICOM and governmental representatives as well as NGOs agree that the conference's agenda has been dominated by the concerns and perspectives of North America and Europe, and that the concerns of Third World countries have been marginalised. From the perspective of the Caribbean NGOs present, the critical issues were the cancellation of debt to help countries to address environmental issues effectively, change in the trade and militarisation policies and practices of northern governments and industrialists, consumption

patterns of the rich, and the elimination of poverty which is primarily the result of inequitable access to environmental, financial, and other resources by the region's people.

According to the NGOs, unless these critical is-

ssues are addressed, the economic and social deterioration of the region will continue, and indeed deepen, as the region falls more and more into the clutches of structural adjustment policies which put control into the hands of the rich and destroy the livelihoods of the poor.

NGOs marginalised

The NGOs expressed disappointment that few Caribbean governments had prepared position papers for UNCED, and that only in Belize and Barbados had there been any serious consultation with NGOs in the process, despite the 1991 CARICOM recommendation that NGOs be recognised as social partners in the governmental consultative process. There was particular dissatisfaction that no regional CARICOM position was being taken to the conference, and it was felt that this would weaken what little negotiating power the Caribbean might have, given the fact that the region was already marginalised at the international level.

Plans for the Forum

The NGOs decided that while they would make whatever efforts were possible to influence the national



Women in Action, 88/4

positions being taken by governments even at this late stage, more was likely to be gained from the information to be shared at the mammoth Global Forum being organised by the NGOs parallel to the Earth Summit. The decision was taken for Caribbean NGOs participating in the Forum to co-ordinate their efforts in order to better present a Caribbean regional position, and to jointly organise a cultural event and exposition in Rio to focus on environmental issues from a Caribbean perspective. Caribbean NGOs will also take steps to promote effective reporting to the people of the region on the issues emerging from the Forum and their importance for the Caribbean. The NGOs will also hold a meeting after UNCED to review Caribbean participation in the NGO Forum as well as the Earth Summit, and to plan strategies for co-ordinated NGO action after UNCED, including collaboration with governments and CARICOM.

The two day conference was attended by representatives from the St. Lucia-based, Caribbean Environmental Health Institute (CEHI), The Centre for Resource Management and Environmental Studies, University of the West Indies, The Barbados government, and national and regional non-governmental organisations based in Barbados, Belize, Jamaica, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Trinidad and Tobago,

and Guyana. The meeting was organised by the Caribbean (NGO) Policy Development Centre (CPDC) in collaboration with the Caribbean Conservation Association (CCA) and the DAWN (Development Alternatives with Women for a

New Era) Third World Women's Network, all of which have their headquarters in Barbados. The relatively new CPDC, set up to strengthen the work of Caribbean NGOs on policy issues, will act as co-ordinating agency for the decisions taken at the meeting in relation to Caribbean NGO action before, during and after UNCED. ¶

Population & Environment

Policy statement prepared by concerned scholars participating in a workshop on Population and the Environment. The workshop was convened by the Social Science Research Council (SSRC), the International Council for Social Science Research (ICSSR), and DAWN.

In the current debate on the causes of environmental degradation, population growth is portrayed as a central variable. This concept, however, is not supported by research findings. Instead, extremes of wealth and poverty, leading to overconsumption by some and the erosion of livelihoods for others, skewed distribution and use of resources, and patterns of human settlement (including urbanisation), have demonstrated a stronger relationship to environmental degradation than population size *per se*. In addition, macro/global economic

strategies and policy decisions are increasingly affecting both people and the natural environment. These findings are supported in study after study across a wide range of social and environmental conditions.

It has been repeatedly demonstrated that fertility is determined by cultural and socio-economic factors such as women's economic autonomy, legal and political rights, education, and access to reproductive health services and health. Fertility decline is also related to the improved survival chances of offspring. However, general erosion of livelihoods as a result of global economic and political forces, and resulting national policies, are increasingly undermining women's access to health services (including family planning services) and education.

In this regard we can examine the

implications of current practices on the environment:



Trade Liberalisation:

Even though trade liberalisation free of state regulation is being increasingly favoured, market forces cannot be relied upon to protect the livelihoods of people or the health of the environment.



Global responsibilities:

The global community (including NGOs and international institutions), national and local governments have an obligation to protect the environment and to help ensure that the livelihoods of present and future generations are sustainable.



Extractive industries:

These industries which include mining, logging and petroleum extraction, tend to disrupt the physical as well as social environment. To deal with their disruptive effects DAWN recommends that:

- an international data base of the social, economic and environmental effects of these industries be established and be available to local communities;
- governments commission studies on the social and environmental impact of extractive industries;
- extractive industries must comply with an international code of ethics which should be incorporated into all concessions and contracts.



The **environmental and human effects** of intensive agriculture, transformative industries, and military activities be critically assessed.



Guidelines and regulations for promoting sustainable agriculture (that is, agriculture whose technology has the least harmful effect on the environment) should be developed and disseminated by international organisations, national governments, and producers' associations.

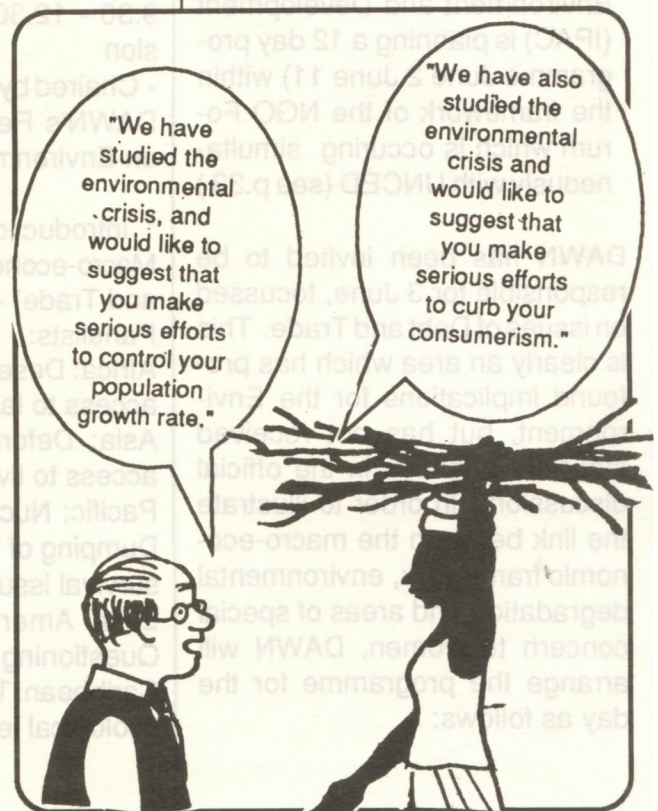


Macro-economic forces, such as debt, structural adjustment programmes, financial and trade flows and agreements, as well as national government intervention (with bodies such as the IMF, World Bank, etc.), should be reassessed to mitigate the damaging effects these forces are having on the natural environment and the livelihoods of the poor.

To promote sustainable development it was recommended that:

⇒ The definition of “**environmental problems**” and **management of local resources** be carried out democratically so that local communities can influence and use state regulations and policies which are there to protect their access to resources.

⇒ **Women** must have greater **access and entitlements to key services**, e.g.. education, employment, child care, health care, reproductive health services, and to equal property and legal rights.



⇒ women must have a stronger role in **decision making**.

⇒ Women and men must be allowed to have **greater access to information on environmental damage** caused by the industrialised products and processes (foods, medicines, lighting, ventilation, etc.) they use or encounter regularly

⇒ **Environmentally sound and sustainable forms of development and technology**, including transfer of environmentally-appropriate technology must be promoted by all bodies in society. To allow this, innovative measures must be developed and implemented with respect to national income accounting systems, taxation and legislation.

⇒ Values which have led to **over-consumption** must change. A concerted effort to bring about this change must be part of the local, national and global communities. A new ethic has to be promoted. One which attaches greatest importance to caring for people in harmony with the environment. ¶

DAWN's participation at the NGO Forum: Brazil 1992

The Women's International Policy Action Committee on the Environment and Development (IPAC) is planning a 12 day programme June 2 June 11) within the framework of the NGO Forum which is occurring simultaneously with UNCED (see p.33)

DAWN has been invited to be responsible for 3 June, focussed on issues of Debt and Trade. This is clearly an area which has profound implications for the Environment, but has not received sufficient attention in the official discussion. In order to illustrate the link between the macro-economic framework, environmental degradation and areas of special concern to women, DAWN will arrange the programme for the day as follows:

9.00 - 9.30 a.m. Registration

9.30 - 12.30 p.m. Panel/Discussion

- Chaired by Dr. Rosina Wiltshire, DAWN's Research Co-ordinator on Environment

* Introduction: Overview of the Macro-economic framework (Debt and Trade) - Rosina Wiltshire

Panelists:

Africa: Desertification - Women's access to land and food

Asia: Deforestation - Women's access to livelihood

Pacific: Nuclear Testing and the Dumping of Toxic Waste - Health survival issues

Latin America: Urbanisation - Questioning the price of progress

Caribbean: Tourism - Cultural and ecological jeopardy

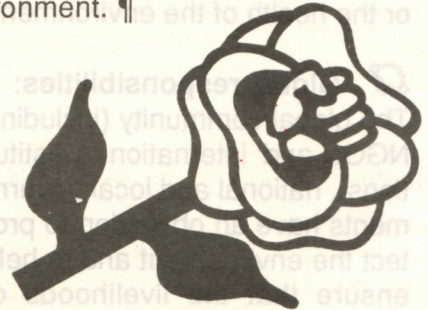
12.30 - 2.00 p.m. Lunch break

2.00-3.30 p.m. Regional workshops (in which the full range of regional environmental concerns will be discussed and Networks promoted)

3.30 - 5.00 p.m. Final plenary: Reports from regional workshops

Participants to the Conference and the Forum who are interested in attending are encouraged to contact the DAWN Secretariat in advance (the Secretariat is located in Barbados, but after 1 June may also be contacted in Rio through IPAC's Desk/Secretariat there).

For further information, contact: Peggy Antrobus, General Co-ordinator, DAWN, c/o WAND, UWI School of Continuing Studies, Pinelands, St. Michael, Barbados.



Women's Ecological Movement, Belgium

P artners in Life

Global Assembly of Women and the Environment, Miami, U.S.A., November 4-8, 1991.

Two hundred and eighteen successful grassroots projects, concerned with the global issues of water, waste, energy and environmentally-friendly systems were presented by women from all regions of the world at The Global Assembly.

The Assembly also received the conclusions of four Regional Assemblies held in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific and the West Asian/Arab regions.

Recommendations on the issues of water, waste, energy and environmentally-friendly systems are summarised below:

Energy

Energy consumption will define the environment of the future. Women have power as consumers to determine the future types of energy systems. Availability of adequate energy supplies benefits women in their traditional tasks and gives them time to engage in other, more productive and educational activities. Conservation of energy starts in the household and is often related to tasks women predominantly perform. Success stories show that women have developed new approaches to environmentally

sound energy production in rural areas and better conservation of energy everywhere. The objective is to take this experience into account in designing environmentally sound energy policies.

Findings & recommendations

Governments should evaluate energy policies in terms of total energy systems including the mi-



Logo for Global Assembly

cro-systems managed by women in the home as well as their role as consumers and should take into account their views and preferences.

Priority must be given to reducing dependence on the use of fossil fuels particularly in view of their contribution to global atmospheric change. A greater threat to the survival of the Planet is posed by

nuclear power and its associated wastes.

Water

Availability of water of good quality is an essential human need, but one that is not adequately met. Provision of water is essential to human settlements and requires cost-effective solutions. The objective is to ensure the provision of safe water for all.

Findings and recommendations

Governments should give priority in the allocation and protection of water supplies to the needs of people over other uses. Technologies should be developed and disseminated that are inexpensive, universally accessible and easy to install and maintain. Designers of all water supply and sanitation systems should be required to consult women who are the primary users in the home.

Waste

Waste is a lost resource, dangerous to ecosystems and to health. The success stories show that women have found ways to deal with waste economically and safely, whether by recycling or responsible consumer behaviour. They have also shown that uncontrolled dumping of toxic wastes, nationally and internationally, can be resisted and

stopped. Waste should be reduced by development of cleaner production technologies.

Findings & recommendations

Recycling and environmentally sound waste management should be institutionalised by national policies and local programmes. Disposal of toxic wastes anywhere should be strictly regulated.

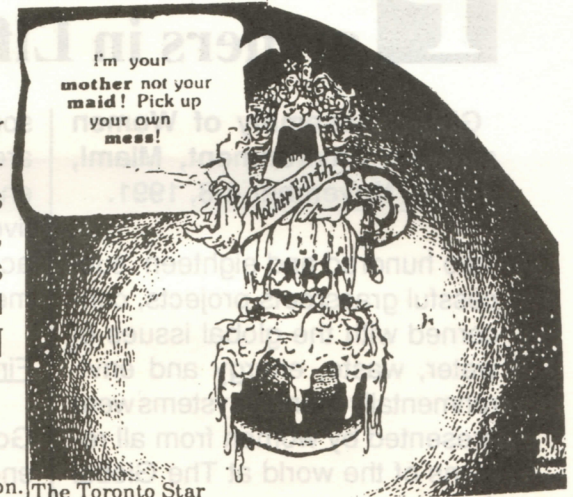
Environmentally-friendly systems

New, cost-effective environmentally friendly systems and the re-introduction of effective indigenous methods can reduce waste production and protect natural resources. Women as consumers are a powerful force for research and development of such technologies, as demonstrated by the success stories.

Findings and recommendations

Women should use their rights as consumers to influence Governments and the private sector in the development of appropriate technology. Women should also endeavour to take environmentally friendly decisions and actions in their every day lives in their place of work, and in their local communities.

Governments should provide for this protection and careful administration of the community's natural resources and patrimony, in particular those identified as crucial at the local and global level, such as genetic resources. ¶



Artist: Peterson. The Toronto Star

Brazil's Street Children

CAFRA members in Trinidad and Tobago have been inquiring about the response of the Caribbean women's movement to the plight of Brazilian street children who are allegedly being killed by "death squads" in order to clear the streets of Brazil for UNCED.

This situation was raised at the World Women's Congress in Miami, and DAWN had requested that UNICEF carry out an investigation, they have issued the following self explanatory letter to the Deputy Executive Director of UNICEF.

March 26, 1992
Mr Richard Jolly,
Deputy Executive Director,
Programmes, UNICEF
3 United Nations Plaza,
New York, N.Y. 10017,
U.S.A.

Dear Mr Jolly,

Regarding the plight of street children in Rio de Janeiro, the situation becomes more alarming as the date for the Earth Summit approaches.

You will recall that the WANDs Tutor/Co-ordinator, Ms Peggy Antrobus in her capacity as General Coordinator of DAWN had requested an update on steps UNICEF had taken (in her letter to you dated 11 March 1992).

We are extremely concerned - to the point where we feel we must make a public statement on the matter. Since any such statement would need to be accurate about the follow up action you've taken since the Miami Women's Congress, we would like to hear from you even if, for some reason, you've been unable to take action. Please let us have the information by return fax.

Yours Sincerely,
Nan Peacocke
Publications Editor

New Generation Leaders

The New Generation leaders were a group of young women, 18-25 years old from all over the world who attended the assembly. The objective of inviting young women to the Global Assembly was to allow them to gain exposure to women/environment/development issues, and networking.

Their document entitled- **Empowerment and Change: Youth Commitment to Action**, had this to say:

" Our world is in a state of crisis. The global ecosystem and its biological and cultural diversity are under threat. We, as young women and the inheritors of this crisis, express our anger about the current state of our world. We are angry, but anger is not enough. We ask for change, but asking is not enough. We have been inspired by the vision and commitment of the success story presenters, who have acted as catalysts in change. It is they who are our true leaders. Yet, the struggle for ecological integrity and economic and social justice cannot be the burden of only a few. Therefore, we call on everyone to take immediate action to reverse these global trends.

In formulating our document in the capacity of New Generation Leaders attending the Global Assembly on Women and the Environment, we moved from a position of turmoil and worked through a process of communica-

tion involving tears, fears and anger to a point of mutual, cross-cultural understanding. Through this, we gained a deeper understanding and appreciation of ourselves and each other. We emerged with a sense of common joy, confidence, respect, and strength. We recommend youth participation in fora such as these to achieve this important goal. For change to occur, partnerships must be formed between races, cultures, religions, classes, languages, and genders.

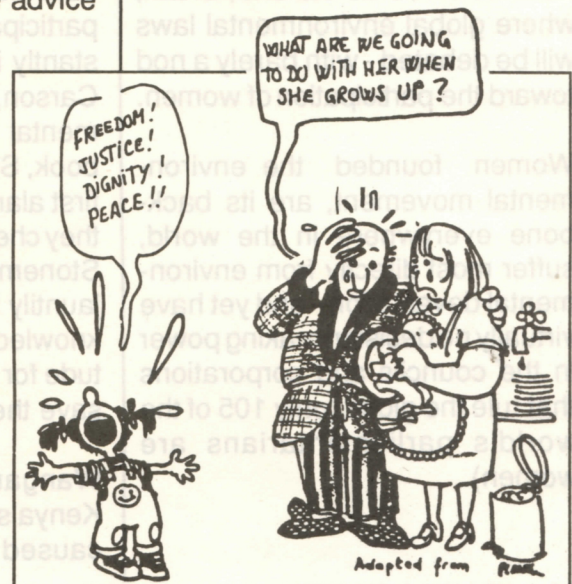
As young women dedicated to the preservation of the integrity of the earth's ecology and the advancement of the role of women in environmental management, we pledge to apply the knowledge gained from the Success Stories and dialogue of this Assembly in our personal and professional capacities to facilitate this change. They have demonstrated the validity of the advice that to act locally is to think globally. This is what we will carry with us. We intend to form a network of solidarity world wide to carry these stories forward through human-made boundaries of nations and cultures. Not only will we convey the stories which have been told here but we will also provide the space for stories which have not been heard. Our vision is that this

network will lead to a mobilisation which will bring global change.

To be successful, we must base our work on an understanding of the underlying social, political, military and economic systems which currently impede environmental justice. We will continue to work through established networks and to strengthen linkages formed among ourselves.

Our specific roles as participants in sustainable development will vary depending on where we are. We have learned, however that leaders are ordinary women with extraordinary perceptions of needs and determination for change. Our actions must be based on internalising this determination."

Young women: We have been inspired and enriched. Now let us rise up and act." ¶



Overview: The World Women's Congress

by Michele Landsberg
*World Women's Congress for a
Healthy Planet, Miami, U.S.A.,
November 8-12 1991.*

Overwhelming Success

In five intense days, participants at the first World Women's Congress for a Healthy Planet saw constantly between small, homey examples of women's environmental activism and the awesomely daunting spectre of the global power wielded by men.

The congress, rated an overwhelming success by participants, first germinated in the mind of Bella Abzug a scant year and a half ago. Abzug 70, an indomitable U.S. politician, activist and feminist leader, realised that the nations of the world were rolling merrily along the "road to Rio" - to the United Nations 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, where global environmental laws will be debated - with barely a nod toward the participation of women.

Women founded the environmental movement, are its backbone everywhere in the world, suffer most directly from environmental devastation - and yet have virtually no decision making power in the councils and corporations that rule the globe (only 105 of the world's parliamentarians are women).

The congress was a thrilling event. Women cabinet ministers from Scandinavia and Africa rubbed shoulders with tribal women from the threatened rain forest of Latin America. In plenary sessions packed with one dynamic speaker after another, in constant hallway caucusing and workshop debates, women forged new alliances and thrashed out a remarkably sophisticated analysis of the forces that threaten the Earth's very survival.

Heroes & Horrors

The five days were dense with both heroes and horrors. The participants cheered at the constantly invoked name of Rachel Carson, founder of the environmental movement, whose 1962 book, *Silent Spring*, sounded the first alarm about pesticides. And they cheered again when Marjorie Stoneman Douglas, 101, waved jauntily from her wheelchair, acknowledging the crowd's gratitude for her 50-year campaign to save the Florida Everglades.

Wangari Maathai, founder of Kenya's Green Belt Movement, caused ripples of excitement



Logo World Women's Congress

everywhere she went. Beginning in 1977, Maathai (a scientist and Kenya's first woman Ph.D.) has enlisted thousands of rural African women to plant 10 million trees.

Marilyn Waring, the New Zealand economist who wittily dissected the "commodification of nature" by international business, won a standing ovation.

Dr. Rosalie Bertell, the Toronto epidemiologist and anti-nuclear campaigner, electrified the audience with her quiet recitation military assault on the environment, from supersonic flights to nuclear testing. "seventy thousand new chemicals have been dumped into the environment since the end of World War!1", she said, and "and most of them were created by the military to kill masses of people or to defoliate the jungles".

The military, she said, is the world's most dangerous ecological despoiler, yet it works in secrecy, while grass-roots women struggle in the civic arena to "clean up the mess".

The "mess" was documented over and over again, most vividly in individual horror stories:

- In a Malaysian village, where a Japanese consortium sold radioactive waste as "fertiliser" for home gardens and window-boxes, children are now dying of leukemia.
- In the Marshall Islands, women whose bodies are poisoned with radioactive fallout are giving birth to "jelly fish babies- living blobs of flesh with no limbs, eyes or brains."
- From famine-stricken Ethiopia came news that the country, once 60% covered with forests, has only 3% left.
- In the snow of Himalayan mountain peaks, scientists have found soot from Kuwait's burning oil wells.
- From Tibet came an urgent plea for help in stopping the suspected Chinese dumping of nuclear waste into Tibet headwaters, "threatening the seven great rivers of Asia."

- From the Argentine Andes, an indigenous woman whose soft musical voice riveted the audience, said "Sisters, as I speak to you, the blasts from oil exploration are rocking my mountain

- From Bhopal to Chernobyl to the "Triangle of Death" in heavily polluted Eastern Europe, women report birth abnormalities and high levels of sickness among children.

- On a coral atoll in the Pacific, where according to Marilyn Waring, "the French still insist that their nuclear testing has no effect on the food chain", women hang fresh fish like laundry on a line. They eat only those that flies land on; the others are discarded as too contaminated even for flies.

Grass-roots victories were noted and applauded - African women

who organised a co-op to manufacture simple water pumps; Mexican villagers who set up garbage collection; California women who helped save dolphins. But these tiny triumphs seemed frail indeed compared to the onslaught of industry against, air, earth and water everywhere.

'Cry out! Don't be polite!' urged Magda Renner, an activist from Brazil, choking up as she told of 300 homeless street children murdered so far this year in Rio de Janeiro. Ours is the age of global homelessness, she said, and 75% of the world's 14 million refugees are women and children.

Women are demanding an equal say in the Earth Summit because male-led technologies, wars and industries are killing the planet.



World Women's Congress: In the foreground, from right - Jocelyn Dowe, Red Thread, Guyana; Pamela Redwood, Youth League, Jamaica; Thobeica Mjolo-Thamaga, ANC, South Africa.



C. O'Neill, Match News

Commonalities

With the boldness of those who are spared the constraints and corruptions of power, the women of the South spoke truth to the North. Rebuking the complacencies of the First World (as it is pleased to call itself), they spelled out the fatal connections between the free market approach imposed by the North and the indebtedness, poverty and environmental destruction it causes.

"Sisters, I've travelled several thousand miles to tell you our story" said Leonor Briones, a professor at the University of the Philippines and president of the Freedom From Debt Coalition. In 1988, the Philippines paid \$2 billion interest on its debt to the wealthy nations of the North - and received a pitiful \$236 million in return. "It's foreign aid in reverse," exclaimed Briones. "And we are only one of 50 countries that annually pay the North \$50 billion more than we get."

Participants from the North were startled by, but sympathetic to, a resentment that swept the convention centre whenever the word "population" was mentioned. "A person in the North consumes 52 times as much meat, 115 times more paper and 35 times more energy than a Latin American," said keynote speaker Margarita Arias. Yet affluent environmentalists glibly call for population reduction only in the South, reso-

lutely ignoring over-consumption and over-production at home

Many rejected the idea of "development" altogether. An indigenous woman from the rain forest exclaimed: "We had our culture, our songs, our way of life. Now these civilised men are destroying us."

And Peggy Antrobus of Barbados summed it up neatly when she reminded us that "although we are divided by race, class, culture and geography, our hope lies in our commonalities. All women's unremunerated housework is exploited, we all have conflicts in our multiple roles, our sexuality is exploited by men, media and the economy, we struggle for survival and dignity, and, rich or poor, we are vulnerable to violence. We share our 'otherness,' our exclusion from decision-making at all levels."

The Congress at Miami was a giant step toward confronting that exclusion. Whatever happens at Rio, the urgency, power and determination sparked by the Congress will be felt around the planet for years to come.

Extracted from the 'Overview' of the Official Report of the "World Women's Congress for a Healthy Planet", by Michele Landsberg .

"Unless we challenge the institutions that have the power," said Dr. Bertell, "our local environmental efforts are like pouring water into a bathtub with no plug."

"We have reached a critical point of no return," warned Margarita Arias, candidate for president of Costa Rica, noting that "something is profoundly wrong with our civilisation" when 10 million infant deaths could be prevented for the cost of five modern bombers. The world spends \$1 trillion annually on armaments.

The Women's Congress forged links among activists all over the globe. Plans were hatched, pressure groups organised, energies galvanised. Most important, a clear focus emerged that will shape the direction of women's environmental groups everywhere for years to come.

Saving Haiti's Environment:

the Haitian Environment and Development Initiative

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In August of 1991, the Aristide government named a special committee to begin research and work out the details of implementing a nationwide agrarian reform. A package of laws on agrarian reform had been introduced by the government to the Haitian legislature. Such a reform would have provided incentives for small landowners, poor peasants and agricultural workers to plant trees and help develop communal forests. Only 3% of Haitian land is currently now under tree cover and trees are being cut down at the rate of 115,000 a day. Therefore, land reform is key to developing a programme of massive reforestation, needed if Haiti is to reverse the ecological decline which has led to a vicious circle, consisting of:

- desertification of vast tracts of Haitian land because of the loss of nitrogen-fixing trees
- massive erosion and loss of topsoil
- drying up of river beds because of the combined effects of decreased rainfall, drought and erosion

Whatever the political conditions in Haiti, the work to prevent further ecological degradation which has already reached advanced

stages, needs to continue. Only a democratic and participatory government can guarantee that steps to reverse the further erosion of the land, arrest desertification, and provide incentives for reforestation, and the maintenance of communal forests are implemented systematically and in time.

While there is international support for the restitution of Jean-Bertrand Aristide, there is a growing concern among Haitians that should he return, Aristide will be forced to negotiate away major provisions of his social agenda. There is evidence to support the view that he might be reduced to becoming a figure-head for a government where corruption and theft of public funds are allowed to continue, and which blindly submits to environmentally-de-

structive economic policies. Sadly, many of these policies which have destroyed Haitian local agriculture, are being demanded by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, oblivious to their effects on Haiti's environment.

Haitian environmentalists and those in favour of a popular economic development path, are asking the support of the international community for the right of the Haitian people to implement the following social agenda which will allow them to save their country from becoming an "ecological wasteland." Such an agenda must be secured not only for Haiti but also for Latin America and the Caribbean as a whole. The Haitian Environment and Development Initiative, therefore aims to be part of a broader Pan American Environment and Development Initiative which calls for:

- **Constitutional order** - the restitution of the government of Jean-Bertrand Aristide, to preserve the constitutional order necessary to guarantee a peaceful and legal process toward land reform, massive



adapted from R. Templeton



adapted from R. Templeton

reforestation and other steps required to preserve Haiti's endangered environment.

— **Security** - support for the right of the restored Haitian government to pursue a social agenda which provides incentives for agrarian reform and the rebuilding of local agriculture, and for the right of this government to eliminate corruption and the drug trade, without being menaced by military elites or hostile foreign forces.

— **Debt reform** - forgiveness or cancellation of significant portions of the Haitian debt totalling 4285 million, in view of Haiti's dire ecological crisis. The investment of monies that would have gone to debt payments into social programmes, particularly massive reforestation and literacy.

— **The right to literacy** - as Haiti nears the 21st century, minimum educational standards are

required if the Haitian people are to participate effectively in economic development and environmental restoration.

— **The right to health** - A restored Haitian government should have the right to implement programmes which address hunger and malnutrition and protect its population from disease and epidemics.

*Originally titled, **A return to constitutional order and popular democracy is the only way to save Haiti's environment.***

For more information about the Haitian and Pan-American Environment and Development Initiative, contact: Haiti-Development, Box 769, New York, NY 10185.

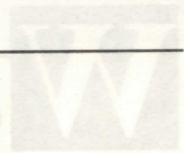
The Seduction of NGOs: a View from India

From the Newsletter of the Society for Participatory Research in Asia:42, Tughlakabad Institutional Area, New Delhi - 110 062.

The Government of India announced significant macro policy changes in the second half of 1991. These changes are the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) as promoted by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. India is one of the last significant citadels of (relatively) independent politico-economic policies which is now under the overall reign of this programme.

Several countries in Africa, the Caribbean, Latin America and

parts of Asia have already undergone such economic adjustments during the last 15 years. The experience of these countries clearly indicate that the SAP is essentially an instrument for solving the crisis faced by industrialised countries of the North. These policies extend the framework of global capitalism and market led growth, which have been practised with synthetic (induced) enthusiasm in the countries of the North under the leadership of Reagan and Thatcher. Even though this package is propounded as a necessary step for dealing with the economic crises facing countries of the South, the functioning of such policies in the USA itself clearly shows that they have not



succeeded in solving problems of poverty and deprivation.

Despite these experiences this singular model of economic enterprise is being propagated as the "only" alternative left for the unipolar world in today's contest.

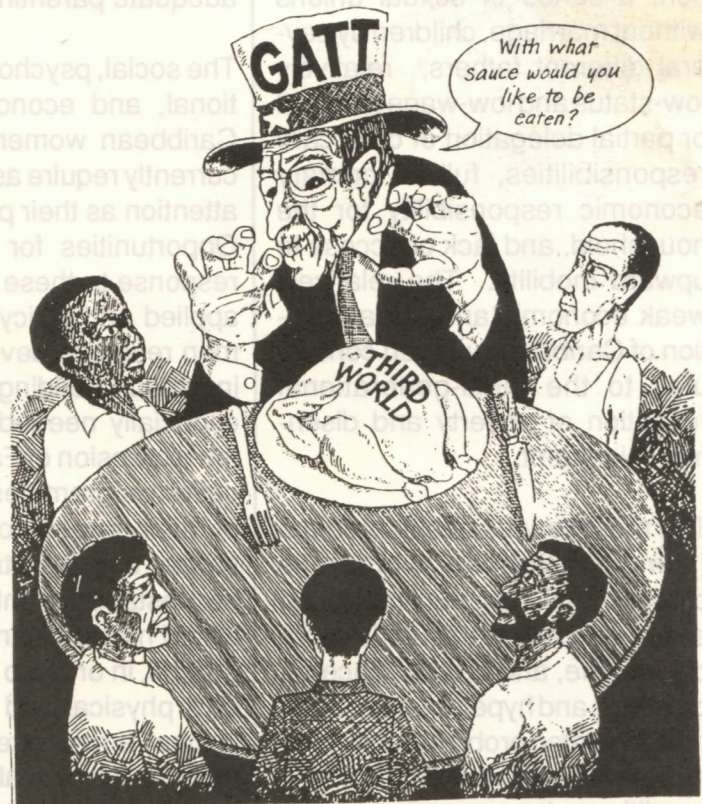
The impact of SAP in other countries of the world has shown that substantial sections of society become further impoverished, and a political space for dissent, critique, experimentation and the generation of alternatives is curtailed. In the face of such experiences, the proponents of these macro economic policies (the World Bank, IMF, bilateral aid agencies and other multilateral institutions) have devised an alternative strategy which is known as the "Human Face of Structural Adjustment". Under this, resources are made available to certain segments of society to alleviate and minimise the harshness of the impact experienced due to SAP.

Voluntary development organisations and other non-governmental organisations have been "seduced" to participate in a massive initiative for providing a Human Face to the consequences of structural adjustment programmes in many countries. As the State is forced to withdraw its social welfare and service providing functions (in issues such

as health, education, skillbuilding, retraining, etc.), resources are induced into voluntary development organisations and NGOs to take over these functions. Similarly, NGOs may be induced to support informalisation of Indian economy in the face of growing privatisation.

It is in this context that voluntary organisations working all over the country in different ways and at different levels need to begin thinking about the implications of these programmes in India. It is in this context that we need to guard against the possibilities of becoming unwitting allies to the globalisation of capitalism and homogenisation of our cultural heritage. We need to reflect upon our roles and contributions in evolving creative alternatives to the contemporary "myth" of a singular model of development.

The coming decade may well represent a watershed in the recent history of voluntary organisations in India by resulting in intensive polarisation in the face of such significant macro-economic policies and interventions. This could well be a turning point in upscaling the level of contribution of institutions of the civil society (like voluntary development organisations) in challenging this "remedy" and evolving alternatives. ¶



Utusan/Konsumer/Malaysia

W

omen and Children's Health

by Dr. Margaret A Gwynne

Fifty experts in Caribbean health and development agree that the most serious problems facing both women and children in the Caribbean reflect the social and economic status of women in the region.

Outside of the household, where they may enjoy considerable authority, the economic and social status of Caribbean women is inferior to men's. The lives of women, especially poor women, are often characterised by early motherhood, incomplete education, a series of sexual unions without marriage, children by several different fathers, relatively low-status and low-wage jobs, full or partial delegation of child care responsibilities, full or primary economic responsibility for the household, and lack of access to upward mobility. The relatively weak economic and social position of Caribbean women contributes to the multi-generational repetition of poverty and disenfranchisement.

The most serious health problem facing Caribbean women is chronic, non-communicable disease: cancers (particularly cervical, uterine, and breast cancers), diabetes, and hypertension. Other health-related problems of women include poor environmental health conditions, teen pregnancy, domestic violence, and abortion.

Women are also negatively affected by inadequate financing for public health care, a lack of employment opportunities, a lack of adequate day care arrangements for working mothers, and a lack of access to sources of development assistance.

Children's health and development problems reflect their mothers' socioeconomic status, and include perinatal mortality, communicable diseases, under-nutrition, incomplete immunisation coverage, abuse (especially the sexual abuse of girls by their mothers' consorts), and lack of adequate parenting.

The social, psychological, educational, and economic needs of Caribbean women and children currently require as much or more attention as their physical health. Opportunities for assistance in response to these needs include applied and policy research, human resource development, and institution-building. Support is especially needed in two areas: the expansion of Family Life Education programmes, both in terms of their target populations and scope; and the strengthening of and establishment of institutionalised networks among women's groups, in order to address women's physical and mental health issues, encourage their involvement in policy dialogue, and develop entrepreneurship. In addition, regional ombudsmen are



Isis, *Women in Action*, no. 5

needed to help women's groups improve their understanding of and access to development assistance.

Summary of a report on Caribbean Women's and Children's Health and Development Issues to the Pew Charitable Trusts "Neighbours" Programme Advisory Committee. Dr Gwynne teaches in the Department of Anthropology, State University of New York at Stony Brook.



Exploiting Belizean Traditional Medicine

by Lucia Ellis

The Belize Rural Women's Association (BRWA) has been active in promoting Traditional Medicine in Belize. In 1988 and 1991 BRWA co-sponsored symposia on the topic, in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, Belize Centre for Environmental Studies and Ix Chel Research.

Among reasons for BRWA's involvement in promoting traditional medicine are:

- a) the enlightenment of healers about their contribution to primary health care;
- b) promoting awareness about the value of bush medicine;
- c) bringing together of health professionals and bush doctors in dialogue and planning;
- and d) influencing national policy regarding bush medicine.

BRWA sought and accepted assistance from non-Belizean organisations to co-sponsor these symposia. We were informed by these organisations that the healers would obtain technical assistance (skills training in preparation of medicines, scientific identification of plants, etc.). BRWA facilitated access to an abundance of information by these outside agencies which have consequently accumulated a lot of knowledge on Belizean bush medicine. To date however, neither information nor the results of findings have been pro-

vided to BRWA. BRWA believes that sufficient time has elapsed since these agencies have compiled the information on Belizean Bush Medicine yet so far they have not provided the facilitating agencies and/or individuals with any valid or concrete data. BRWA now finds itself in the position of having given a lot and receiving nothing in return.



BRWA notes that this pattern of exploitation has been occurring throughout the Third World and has found it necessary to dissassociate itself from anyone who wants to exploit the country and people of Belize.

We are aware that bush medicine is now a multi-billion dollar business. We are also aware that a very minute amount goes to the countries, and people, that provide the knowledge and sources.

We have appealed to all Belizean herbalists to use their knowledge for the development of Belizean people and not allow themselves to be exploited for a few dollars.

Appreciation is extended to the Ministry of Health and other Government Ministries for their tremendous support in our Traditional Medicine Programme. We urge them to continue supporting traditional medicine. We further recommend that the government develop a system which would allow them to have exclusive rights on all information regarding bush medicine. The royalties from this can be utilised for research centres that would promote Belizean bush medicine. Royalty monies could also provide a reasonable compensation to traditional herablists so that they would not fall victims to the vultures who prey on the people and the wealth of Third World countries.

Extracted from the press Release on the situation of Traditional medicine in Belize.

I nternational Women's Day 1992

CAFRA News surveys IWD celebrations across the region.

Commonwealth of Dominica

The Dominica National Council of Women (DNCW) organised several activities in communities throughout the island. These included: church services, educational and recreational activities. Topics for the educational fora included "**Women and aids**", "**Women and Drugs**" (done by WICA Roots, Marigot), "**Cholera, Women and Community Development**", "**Women, the Environment and Development.**" On the latter panel, DNCW's President, Neva Edwards delivered an address. CAFRA's local branch members also participated in this activity.

Curaçao

The Sentro di Dama (Women's Centre) organised a panel discussion on the theme "**The Socialization of Women.**" The Centre also hosted a one-day seminar on 7 March on the topic "**Project Formulation and Implementation: Women's Participation and Presence.**" Invited speakers included Sonia Cuales, former CAFRA National Representative of Trinidad and

Tobago, now teaching at the University of the Netherlands Antilles; Nuovis Winklaar of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Jamila Romero of the Ministry of Development Cooperation.

*C. Shepherd as reported by
S. Cuales.*

Puerto Rico

The Women's Studies Project of the Univeristy College of Cayey, University of Puerto Rico held a series of activities to commemorate Women's Week from 3-13 March. These included a **Meeting of Craft Women**; launching of the Project's publication **Towards a Non-sexist Curriculum**; a one-day Conference on "**The Black Woman in Puerto Rican Literature**"; and launching of the publication **Women and Statistics**, papers from the First Seminar on Women and Statistics held in October 1990.

Other events held during Women's Week included the **Thirty-Second Assembly of Colleagues of the Puerto Rican Family Planning Association (Pro-Familia)**, on the theme of Abortion; the **First National Dialogue on Women and the Church**; and the Seventh Expert Meeting of the Arts: "**Women and her Artistic Projection**": **Vivencias y Realidad de Un Reto.**



R. Templeton

Suriname

The United Women's Organisations, The National Centre for Women and the Ministry of Agriculture, Department for Home Economics, hosted a **lecture/discussion** on the theme "**Women and Structural adjustment**". It focussed on "Young Women" and addressed issues such as: income generating activities, better organisational structures and education for womens' organisations, and how to survive with less resources to feed ourselves, children, and families.

During the day there were several **demonstrations on food preparation, and exhibits of women in the production sector.** Women not only participated ac-

tively in IWD, but demonstrated their concern about the economic future of Suriname. It resulted in the development of several groups committed to continue working on the issues raised at IWD throughout the year.

The 'Action Committee, Violence against Women' along with the 'National Centre for Women', organised two **workshops** for volunteers, on the theme "**The silence is broken in our society.**"

The workshops were held in the capital, Paramaribo, and in New Nickerie, Suriname's second city, in the west of Suriname near the Guyana border. In New Nickerie alcoholism and drugs are major social problems. Women spoke out and reacted with great concern to the fact that violence against women and children was on the increase in Surinamese society, a factor they felt was related to the increase in alcohol and drug abuse in the society.

The workshops recommended that:

1. the 'Action Committee, Violence against Women' increase activities to deal with the issue of violence;
2. that structures to change the legislation relating to sexual offences and domestic violence be put in place;
3. more information programmes for women be aired on radio;
4. more training activities for

- counsellors be initiated;
5. more counselling/guidance be targeted towards men who abuse their partners;
6. adequate shelter for abused women be provided; and
7. training in counselling for police officers be provided.

The first training session for counsellors is carded for 30 March - 2 April. CAFRA members, Sheila Ketwaru, Nadia Raveles, and Tienieke Sumter, are active members in the 'Action committee, Violence against Women' which is hoping to liaise with the Women's Coalition of St. Croix who have successfully trained counsellors to work with victims of abuse.

N. Raveles

Trinidad and Tobago

The variety of groups which celebrated International Women's Day, as well as the coverage given to these groups, and women's activities by the mainstream media, is testimony of the inroads made by the women's movement in penetrating the consciousness of women and the public in general in Trinidad and Tobago. More than one male friend actually wished me "Happy IWD!"

Events were held in Chaguanas

Port-of-Spain, and San-Fernando as follows:

Friday 6th - **Panel Discussion on "Women, Health and the Environment"**, hosted by the *Democratic Women's Association (DWA)*.

Saturday 7th - **Rally** -

Sunday 8th - **Interfaith Service**, hosted by the *Division of Women's Affairs, Ministry of Community Development, Culture, and Women's Affairs*.

- **Brunch and Lecture/Discussion** on the theme, "**Making Networking Work for You**" - hosted by *The Network of NGO's in T & T for the Advancement of Women*.

- **Candle lighting ceremony** - hosted by - *The Business and Professional Women, South*.

Thursday 12th - **Panel Discussion, "Is the Women's Movement Emasculating Men?"** - hosted by *Women Working for Social Progress (Workingwomen)*.

R. Kalloo



"Women for Peace", Denmark.

Jamaica

Two weeks of workshops, panel discussions, symposia, film shows, and concerts characterised IWD celebrations in Jamaica.

The events were as follows:

Feb. 29 - Workshop on "Women and the Media" - Women's Media Watch.

Mar. 3 - Screening and discussion of "Prisoners of Wedlock" - Women's Media Watch.

Mar. 4 - The Faces behind the Voices (Women in Media) - JIS "Jamaica Woman"

Mar. 5-6 - Rural Parish Workshops mobilising for the All-Island Conference - Association of Womens Organisations in Jamaica (AWOJA).

Mar. 6 - Panel Discussion: "Gender, Ethnicity, and National Identity." - Women and Development Studies Group, University of the West Indies.

Symposium on "Sexual Harassment" - Woman Incorporated.

Mar.7 - "Nanny' Awards ceremony and concerts. - Oilnut Productions - Launch of Jamaica Womens' Political Caucus - Ja. Womens' Political Caucus/St Andrews Professional & Business Womens' Club

National Symposium on "Women in Development" - Bureau of Womens Affairs

Workshop on "Gender Roles & Youth" for Inner City Youth - Bureau of Womens Affairs/Kingston Restoration Co./Sistren Theatre Collective.

Mar. 7-8 - National Distribution of Stickers "Women Stepping Up and Stepping Out" - Womens Media Watch.

Mar. 8 - "Children of Babylon", Film Screening - Bureau of Womens Affairs.

Sisters Celebration Annual Concert - Sistren Theatre Collective /Sisters Celebration Committee

Mar. 9 - Montego Bay Parish Rally - Parish Advisory Committee

Mar. 11 - Womens Image in the Media - "Jamaica Woman" programme of JIS with Womens Media Watch. ¶



W

omen in the Media: Regional Conference

by Marilyn Jones

Regional conference on Women in the Caribbean Media. March 8-10, 1992, Castries, St. Lucia.

Participants from over ten CARICOM territories, and one from Costa Rica came together to address issues affecting women in the media at a conference organised by the St. Lucia Media Workers Association (SLMWA), and the Eastern Caribbean Office of CUSO. A total of 36 local and overseas delegates representing national media organisations and non-governmental organisations involved with women found that their problems extended to issues well beyond strictly gender-related matters.

The conference, organised to mark International Women's Day, was the second of its kind held in the region, the previous meeting having been held in Jamaica eleven years ago.

Then as now, the women media workers identified specific industrial relations problems related to lack of opportunity for advancement to decision-making levels; poor salaries, considered particularly inadequate because of the expectations of employers with regard to women's attire; the absence of training opportunities to enable women to progress to managerial levels; and hints of

sexual harassment or the tendency of some women to feel compromised into granting sexual favours in return for advancement or job security.

But what was perhaps most significant was the frequency with which the issue of political interference arose - an indication that participants were as concerned about standard in the conduct of their jobs as they were with those issues directly affecting women in media.

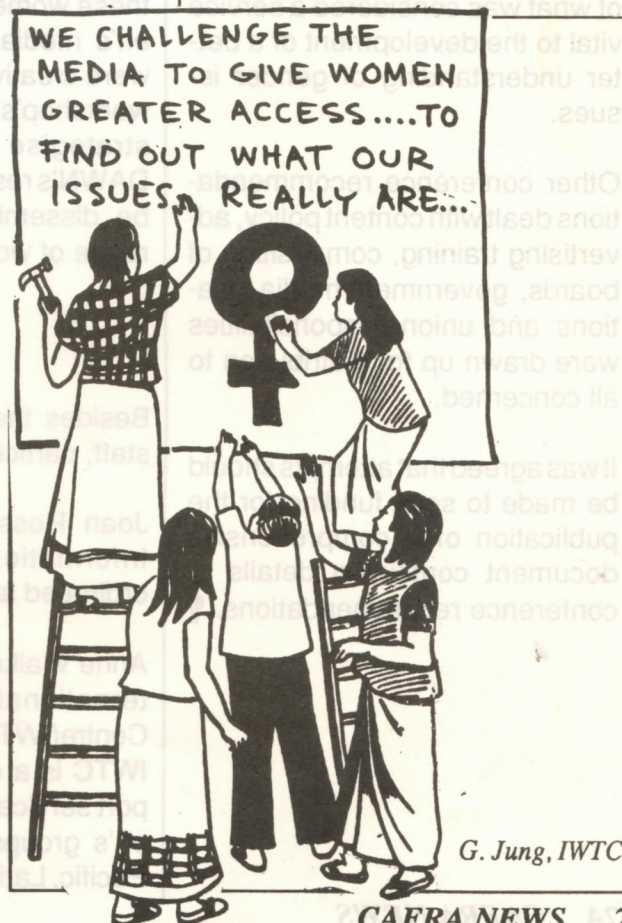
Political interference, they observed, resulted in self-censorship and in some cases led to demotion or dismissal. The trend of discussion along these lines pointed to an awareness by participants of a responsibility to uphold standards as relative newcomers to a profession long dominated by males.

This concern with values and standards also emerged in discussions about the content and portrayal of women in the mass media, though for the most part participants did not

appear to feel empowered to initiate change.

This was an issue touched on in the feature address given by Dawn Morgan, a senior journalist with the *Barbados Advocate* and member of CAMWORK, the Caribbean Association of Media Workers. 'Media managers need a stated philosophy on the image of women in their product the statement should have a link with women's current status and goals....'

Advertising content came under scrutiny as well. A panel discus-



G. Jung, IWTC

DAWN Media Workshop

sion on "Images of Women in Caribbean Media Commercials", cited the fact that women were mostly portrayed as being concerned with beauty and household chores. It was observed that, though 90 % of commercials involve women or target women, there was under-representation of women in other roles, particularly professionals.

The conference noted the decline and possible phasing out of the Caribbean Women's Features Syndicate and included in its recommendations a call for the re-establishment and strengthening of what was considered a service vital to the development of a better understanding of gender issues.

Other conference recommendations dealt with content policy, advertising training, composition of boards, government/media relations and union responsibilities were drawn up for distribution to all concerned.

It was agreed that attempts should be made to seek funding for the publication of a comprehensive document containing details of conference recommendations. ¶

by Rowena Kalloo
Interregional Media Workshop
10-13th Feb. 1992
Mangrove, Barbados.

How many things can DAWN (Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era) mean? You'd be surprised at the acronyms that the participants at DAWN's media workshop came up with and put to song - "Dare to be an Analyzing Woman Now, Daring Answers for Women's Networks, Darling Angels Win Nothing."

Clearly with such imagination, these women, members of women's media networks worldwide were creative enough to fulfill the workshop's objective, namely to strategise on ways in which DAWN's research analyses could be disseminated to as wide a range of women as possible.

Participants

Besides the DAWN and WAND staff, participants were:

Joan Ross-Frankson: DAWN's Information Officer, who coordinated and ran this workshop.

Anne Walker - Director of the International Women's Tribune Centre (IWTC) based in New York. IWTC is a communications support service for women and women's groups in Africa, Asia, the Pacific, Latin America, The Carib-

bean and the Middle East.

IWTC through its networking links together 18,000 individuals and groups in over 160 countries. It also collaborates with regional and international women's groups in technical assistance and training in developing and producing media materials. Its main channel of communication is a quarterly newsletter *The Tribune*, produced in English, Spanish, and French.

Jill Emberson - Women's Communications Officer of the Pacific Women's Resource Bureau of the South Pacific Commission, based in New Caledonia. The objective of the Women's Bureau is to support and promote the development of women in the South Pacific, no easy task given the fact that the South Pacific consists of several hundred islands, each with its own language or languages (in Papua New Guinea, alone 700 languages are spoken).

A former t.v. and radio journalist, Jill produces a quarterly newsletter in English and French, as well as monthly updates which are distributed to over 1000 women in 22 countries and territories. She also carries out communications training for women at all levels, responding to requests which range from how to do fabric printing to supplying information on women's rights.

Isabel Duque - a documentalist at ISIS International Santiago, Chile.

Elizabeth Reyes-Martinez - Communications and Networking Programme Officer of ISIS International, Manila. ISIS moved from Rome where it has been situated since 1978 to the Philippines in January '91.

ISIS works towards the empowerment of women by providing information about key issues on the women's movement worldwide, as well as facilitating communication, networking and skills sharing.

Its activities include an International Resource Centre which contains over 839 women's peri-

odicals, and a Human Resource Data Base with 4,000 names and addresses of women's groups, networks, individuals and insiti-tutions.

Its international publications include **Women in Action**, its quarterly magazine and the **ISIS International Book Series**, as well as a "collection of Resource Guides and Periodicals." ISIS also produces the journal **Women and Health** as part of the work of its health network.

It provides internships, in-service training, worker exchanges with other women's groups, organisations, and networks, as well as training courses, technical assistance, organisation of meet-

ings, and consultations.

Pili Mtamabalie - Assistant editor of **Sauti ya Siti**, the Newsletter of the Tanzania Media Women's Association (TAMWA).

Hilary Nicholson - Former newsletter editor of Sistren's magazine and a member of the Sistren Theatre Collective

Gouri Salvi - Co-ordinator of Anglophone Africa and the Middle East states of the Women's Feature Service (WFS). She is stationed at the WFS office in New Delhi. (see p.26 for the WFS).

Rowena Kalloo - Newsletter editor **CAFRA News**.

Networking with DAWN

Coming out of this meeting was a commitment by participants to formalise networking through the formation of a women's media network, dubbed WOMENET, which would communicate through fax, keeping each other informed of women's issues and concerns in their regions.

After two days of discussing how we networked, what DAWN wanted out of the media net-



DAWN workshop, staff and participants, from left: Anne Walker, Kurlyne Alleyne, Elizabeth Reyes-Martinez, Sandra Edwards, Pili Mtambalike, Gouri Salvi, Hilary Nicholson, Joan Ross-Frankson, Nan Peacocke, Rowena Kalloo, Jill Emberson, Peggy Antrobus, Isabel Dique.

Selling Women's News

The Women's Feature Service

works present, their capacity to fulfill DAWN's needs, and presenting our ideas in graphics, (a welcome and colourful way in which to use newspaper) the room soon looked like a children's art gallery, and we came to the conclusion that DAWN did not need yet another newsletter. Instead briefs, abstracts, resource kits, lists of publications could be more readily made use of in all our various media.

A commitment to highlighting DAWN's analyses was strengthened by Rosina Wiltshire's presentation of DAWN's perspective on the Environment and Development, and Peggy Antrobus (DAWN's general co-ordinator) who explained DAWN's structure and work.

"In the 1990's", DAWN argues, "there is need for a new vision - something to replace the old dichotomies of socialism vs. capitalism, neither of which have served the majority of women well. The next stage of DAWN's work will be to flesh out the vision by looking at women's experience and addressing the question of how to reconcile economic viability and sustainability with women's need and wants. DAWN's networks and institutional capacity need to be strengthened to facilitate the process." Hopefully this workshop has begun the process of strengthening DAWN's networks."¶

The Women's Feature Service (WFS) is a news-feature service of views and analyses of women in their societies and their perception of local, national and international development.

The only wire service of its kind, the WFS seeks to ensure a realistic portrayal of women in mainstream media by actively recruiting and training women journalists.

Besides being published in mainstream media, WFS features are used as reference material for conferences, workshops and projects.

*The following is an edited version of an article entitled **The Women's Feature Service and the Portrayal of Women in Media**, by Anita Anand, Director of the WFS.*

Reaching mainstream media, especially print media, which is more traditional and male dominated, has been a real challenge for those individuals and organisations wanting an intervention into it.

The nature of 'news' is on-the-spot: a drought, an assassination, an election, a demonstration. What is called 'hard' stuff in newspaper journalism - politics, economics - is what men cover, write about and read. The 'soft' stuff is what women are all about - fashion, the home and children.

For journalists, both male and female, the hard is preferred if they

are to 'make it.' The soft stuff is scorned as second best, relegated to the women's pages and Sunday editions.

Besides this are 'women's issues' - birth control, abortion, prostitution and many others, as if men had no part to play either in either reproduction or sexual behaviour.

The WFS Experience

The Women's Feature Service (WFS) began in 1978 as a UNESCO-UNFPA initiative to create women's feature services with the specific purpose of impacting on mainstream media. Until 1991, it was a project of the Inter Press Service (IPS). Of five services initiated, only two exist today. Of these only the WFS has achieved the goal set by UNESCO: to set up a women's feature service controlled and managed by women.

Among reasons given for the success of the WFS are: the appointment of a woman coordinator with a mandate to re-build, initiate and expand the network; access to the telecommunications network and ready-made market of IPS; the design and implementation of a marketing plan; and annual evaluations of its performance.

Selling women's features

Nevertheless, selling a WFS feature is more difficult than selling a feature on travel, the stock market, and the latest fashions or the beauty queen contests. Editors have the standard responses, the world over: its too long, its too short, it doesn't have photographs, it is timeless, there is no interest in these issues, give us something sexy and sensational.

While the WFS would prefer not to be compromised on the content, length and other aspects of its features, it has learnt a thing or two about about what does sell and what doesn't and how to sell.

Since newspapers are about news, the WFS has attempted to provide a news angle to its features. This enables it to address the serious and more long term aspects of development, while picking on a recent news happening.

What does not sell are dull, long and detailed reports of atrocities against women, without creating a context in which the problem is occurring. For these could only evoke horror and pity, and what beyond that?

Presentation of a problem no matter how stark it was, is not justification enough for its portrayal. Skill in treatment, style and timeliness is a must. If editors are not ready for it is a good barometer of the fact that

probably the readers will not be either, at least the overwhelming majority of them.

Try and try again

The WFS has also learnt that if not successful at the first attempt, try and try again. Repeated visits to newspaper editors resulted in some in-roads into their pages despite editors' protests. And for every chauvinist editor there is the closet feminist who comes forward to champion the material.

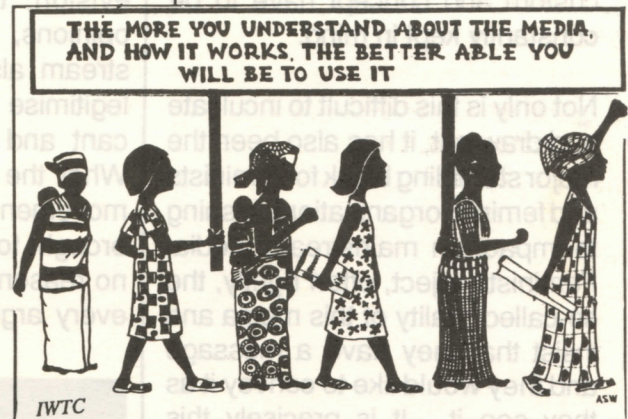
Listening to positive feedback and criticism has also helped to increase the pick up and visibility of the service. Constant complaints (especially from colleagues in the North) regarding quality, lack of background, data, and well researched features have resulted in changes in management of the service. For example, editing has become more centralised to avoid inconsistency in quality.

The WFS does not, on principle, give the service free to anyone. This principle has often made it difficult for the WFS to market its features as editors routinely get 'free material' from competitive feature agencies, who are funded for this work and for the agencies

and donors, clippings are adequate.

Training

Perhaps, the trickiest problem to tackle are human resources. Unless qualified and committed women were available to this work, the best objectives and strategies would only look good on paper.



Journalists although trained, need re-training and marketing staff need not only a knowledge of marketing but mainstream media and especially print media. Over and above these training opportunities is the need for formalising the training so that others can do it as well. The WFS has developed curricula which it plans to formalise and make available more widely.

Training in acquiring a progressive women's perspective is not that easy to impart. A combination of intuition, insight, understanding of

the political, social and economic system as well as development, along with writing skills is a tall order.

Impacting on the mainstream media

Writing from a progressive women's perspective for a local audience is not as demanding as writing for an international audience where nuances such as language, custom and concept have to be constantly kept in mind.

Not only is this difficult to inculcate and draw out, it has also been the major stumbling block for feminists and feminist organisations wishing to impact on mainstream media. Feminists reject, often rightly, the so-called reality of this media and insist that they have a message and they would like to convey it as they see it. It is precisely this insistence plus the reality of the media that make the two incompatible. To reverse this, women will have to write about what they feel is important the way they want to, with some attention to the 'rules' of the media. And media will have to change its perception of its 'rules' and make way for new and creative ways of expression. Without this, there can be no visible and lasting impact of feminist writing on mainstream media.

Unless there is a more commercial angle to the few efforts that are being made, feminist news and

analyses will be marginal. Feminist groups and efforts are by and large non-commercial and to bring about this change requires a unique blend of the politically correct and the commercially possible. It requires taking risks, thinking big and acting smart.

The feminist movement must take on the mainstream, which is different from being mainstreamed. For the mainstream has the power through newsprint, radio and television, to transform people's opinions, overnight. The mainstream also has the power to legitimise the small, the insignificant and the most noteworthy. What the feminist and women's movements have achieved can be brought to the public and there is no reason why it should not. For every argument that is made to

keep women out, by friends and foes of the women's movement, brings with it the assumption that women cannot be brought in and should be kept out.

The media and the field of communications are probably the most powerful expression of change. The tremendous strides made by women can only accurately be recorded and interpreted to media by women who have a progressive perspective. This means women who have the inner strength to know their roots, have a heightened understanding of the environment around them, and wish to see society go forward in a democratic and participatory way. It means women who have that special skill to combine the 'hard' with the 'soft', who understand means and ends and those that see the



Gouri Salvi, of WFS, at the DAWN workshop, Barbados, Feb. 1992, pointing to New Delhi where WFS has its headquarters, which links (map lines) with its regional centres as well as media houses through out the world.

News, news, news

interconnectedness of matter and being.

Other insights

The experience of the WFS has revealed other insights that could be of interest to others as they create new networks and invest in initiatives. By and large, newspapers are interested in features that document events and processes from their own countries, the region and then from the North. In the Caribbean which has a mixture of Asian and African ethnic groups, copy from these regions that make connections to the Caribbean context are better received than others.

These findings support an age old theory in social science: people are comfortable with what is around them and what they can identify with. This is something the feminist movement will have to contend with. That change in mainstream media will come about when popular notions and ones they are comfortable with can be linked to concerns of the feminist community so that the 'ah-ha' syndrome can occur, without people and institutions being hit over their heads by the truth or the obvious. ¶

Peace for Cuba: International Appeal

The Caribbean (NGO) Policy Development Centre circulated a Peace for Cuba International Appeal to member organisations in December 1991. The Appeal was initiated by a group of individuals from the United States of America, Brazil and Uruguay, including former U.S. Attorney General, Ramsey Clark; writer, Alice Walker and entertainer, Harry Belafonte.

Prominent world figures, national leaders, community activists, and concerned professionals were asked to demonstrate their opposition to U.S. intervention in Cuba by signing an international appeal and organising a solidarity rally for Cuba on Saturday 25 January, 1992.

CAFRA was asked to contribute to the Caribbean end of the appeal by collecting signatures from within Trinidad and Tobago. Over sixty individuals and representatives of non-governmental organisations signed the Appeal, including ministers of religion, lawyers, social workers, students, women's activists and two Members of Parliament.

CAFRA also gave a small contribution to the Jamaica Cuba Solidarity Committee, which hosted a seminar in support of Cuba on 25 January, 1992. Peggy Antrobus,

General Coordinator of DAWN (Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era) spoke on the effect of the U.S. embargo against Cuba on women and children.

The Jamaica/Cuba Solidarity Committee has launched an appeal to women's organisations in Jamaica, for donations of sanitary napkins to help their Cuban sisters. Among those spearheading the initiative is CAFRA member, Pamela Redwood.

Women Networking for Advancement in Developing Countries (WONADCO)

WONADCO was formed on May 26, 1991 in Marburg, Germany, by a group of women from Namibia, Uganda, Ghana, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Mexico, Pakistan, Indonesia and Thailand.

WONADCO's main objective is to improve communication among women involved in field projects concerning the rural and urban poor through networking within Third World countries by: exchanging experiences and ideas; pooling efforts to improve living conditions of women and their families; highlighting and promoting women's activities executed by non-governmental organisa-

tions in the social, economic, ecological, cultural and legal aspects; and publishing and disseminating data dealing with women to other organisations and the public in general.

The following interim regional representatives have been charged with promoting the organisation: Magdalena Lorandi (Latin America), Gladys Jaravaza (Africa) and Benjamat Teeram-atvanit (Asia).

Look out for an announcement of WONADCO's first General Assembly Meeting.

Members, etc.

MEETINGS HELD: CAFRA's Interim Continuation Committee met for the first time in Trinidad and Tobago from December 16-17, 1991. In March, we hosted a **Regional Workshop on Participatory Methodologies for Legal Education**, facilitated by Elizabeth Dasso of Peru-Mujer. This workshop is a component of CAFRA's Women and the Law project. Look out for an update on the project's activities in the next issue of the newsletter.

CREATION FIRE is featured in a list of new and recent books

about the Caribbean, appearing in BWIA's new in-flight magazine, *BWee Caribbean Beat* (no.1, Spring 1992, p.71). The magazine describes the CAFRA anthology as "an astonishing outpouring of poetry, much of it passionate and even angry, by Caribbean women."

JUST PUBLISHED:

CAFRA's long-awaited **Publishing Handbook for Caribbean Women Writers** is out and it's free to women writers (experienced and aspiring), interested individuals, schools and libraries in the region. Order your copy now!

WE HAVE MOVED:

The CAFRA Secretariat moved to more comfortable and amenable offices at the end of February. Our new street address is: **8, Bates Private Road, off St. John's Road, St. Augustine**. Please note that our mailing address, telephone and fax numbers, remain the same.

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Josephine Dublin, CAFRA National Representative of Dominica, who was awarded a scholarship to attend a short course on Women and Agricultural Development, in Reading, England, from April 23 - July 2, 1992;

Rhoda Reddock who has been awarded a Rockefeller Residency

Fellowship in the Humanities, at the Women's Studies Programme, Hunter College in New York. The fellowship is for a ten-month period beginning in September 1992, during which Rhoda will be working on a project entitled "*Third World Women, Western Women: Differences, Commonalities and Cross-Currents of Experience*."

ACCEPTED:

CAFRA members, **Martha Joseph** (Dominica) and **Pamela Redwood** (Jamaica), are among 250 candidates selected from a field of 800 applicants, to attend the First International Conference for Young Leaders, organized by the Jeanne Sauvé Youth Foundation. The Conference takes place in Montreal, Canada from May 23-30, 1992. Its theme is "*Globalization and Nationalism*."

RETURNED HOME:

Sonia Cuales, former National Representative of Trinidad and Tobago, is back in Curaçao, lecturing with the Department of Sociology at the University of the Netherlands Antilles;

Eugenie Rezaire of Cayenne, after a year-long stint in Paris.

FROM THE DIASPORA:

CAFRA member **Rosana Ramirez**, formerly of Las Esclavas del Fogon (a feminist, popular theatre group from the Dominican

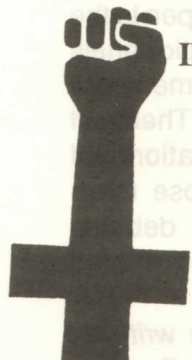
Republic), facilitated a group discussion on the theme "Latinas in the Labour Movement" at the 1st Annual Grassroots Latina Leaders Symposium which was held in March in Brooklyn, New York, where Rosana now resides.

NEW NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES: **Cathy Ribas** (Cuba); **Gisela Quiterio** (Dominican Republic); **Stephanie Pile** (Trinidad and Tobago).

RESIGNED:

Opal Palmer Adisa, Diaspora Representative, at the end of 1991. The Interim Continuation Committee decided not to appoint a new representative but to assign the responsibility to a new post within the Secretariat, to be filled shortly.

WANTED: A new National Representative for Puerto Rico. We understand that **Marilucy González Báez** migrated to New York and we wish her well in her future endeavours.



**INFORMATION
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A Call for Papers

Convergence, the journal of the Popular Environmental Programme of the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE) requires seven articles of approximately 2,500-3,000 words in English, Spanish or French on the theme of popular environmental education for adults.

The main objective of the Popular Environmental Programme of the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE) is to assist in the protection of the environment and improve the quality of life of people around the world through popular environmental education.

One major project promoting the work of the Programme is the publication of a special issue of **Convergence** to coincide with the Global Forum in June 1992.

Articles can discuss theory, methodology or cases which pertain to environmental education. We seek gender balance and representation from all regions of the world. The deadline for articles is April 15, 1992.

Authors are requested to contact the editor as soon as possible with a proposal for their articles.

More information and editorial guidelines can be obtained from: **Editor, Convergence, Interna-**

tional Council for Adult Education, Suite 500, 720 Bathurst Street, Toronto, Ontario, M5S2R4; fax: (416)588-5725, tel: (416)588-1211

Calling Journal Writers!

An Anthology of Contemporary Black Women's Journals, edited by Patricia Bell-Scott and Sandra Murray Nettles.

Deadline: 1 July, 1992

Do you keep a journal or diary? Here's a chance to have your personal reflections about self, family, love friendship and work relationships, as well as social, political and world events, published in this unique anthology. The editors are looking for journal excerpts from women of all ages, backgrounds and world views as they seek to document the diversity, continuities and contradictions in the lives of Black women/girls. Journals written when you were a girl are definitely welcome. If interested, submit 10-30 pages in triplicate by the deadline date, with a stamped, self-addressed envelope. Submissions need not be typed, if they are legible. Photocopies are acceptable. Send materials to: **Patrícia Bell-Scott, Dept., Child & Family Development, Dawson Hall, University of Georgia, Athens, GA 30602.**

M

eetings, conferences, courses

April

10-12: 3rd All-Island Meeting of Women, Jamaica.

Convened by the Association of Women's Organisations of Jamaica (AWOJA). The conference will bring together women's groups to examine current socio-economic conditions, identify priorities for collective action, make policy recommendations to the Government of Jamaica and formulate an Action Plan to garner popular support for the implementation of policy recommendations.

12th: Development Alternatives With Women for a New Era (DAWN). Caribbean Meeting, Jamaica.

22-24: Caribbean (NGO) Policy Development Centre. Annual Assembly, Bridgetown, Barbados. Meeting of member organisations of the CPDC.

May

1-3: DAWN Steering Committee Meeting, Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles.

3-13: International Perspectives on Gender and Popular Education Training Seminar, Capetown, South Africa.

Women educators and leaders from within South Africa and other regions of the world, meet to share information, knowledge and ex-

perience on their work in challenging gender inequalities and to receive practical training in the use of specific gender-sensitive popular education, as well as to strengthen solidarity and encourage networking and collaboration between popular educators in South Africa and other parts of the world.

June

14-20: 1st Meeting of Black Latin American and Caribbean Women, Dominican Republic.

For further information write to Claudina Valdez, Organiser, Identidad (Movimiento por la Identidad de la Mujer Negra, Casimiro de Moya No. 104, Gazcue, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. Fax: (809) 686-7474

14-27: 2nd Women's Global Leadership Institute: "Women, Violence and Human Rights," New Brunswick, NJ, USA.

Workshop for local and national organisers, public officials, policymakers, researchers and activists working on rape and family violence, sex tourism and military prostitution, female prisoners and refugees, or militarism. For more information, contact Susana Fried, Women's Global Leadership Institute Coordinator, Center for Women's Global Leadership, Douglass College, 27 Clifton Avenue, New Brunswick, NJ 08903, USA. Fax: (908) 932-1180.

27-30: WIDF. Regional Office for America and the Caribbean. 1st Conference, Sao Paulo, Brazil.

During the first two days, affiliated organisations of the WIDF, will meet to assess the work of the regional office. The last two days will be open to non-affiliated organisations, with the theme: "The Women's Movement, Integration, Cooperation and Alliance." For further information write to: Dora Carcaño, Coordinadora Regional, Oficina Regional para America, FDIM, Calle 20 no. 117, Entre 1ra y 3ra, La Habana, Cuba.

24-27: Fifth International Feminist Book Fair, Beurs van Berlage, Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

Important event for the worldwide promotion of literature by women. The first two days of the Fair (the trade days) are open to publishers, booksellers, writers, librarians, etc. Themes to be discussed include book promotion, the cover that sells, business survival and success, the career of the female illustrator and book distribution. The days open to the public will feature thematic panels on writing - from the crime genre to the aesthetics of lust. There will be individual presentations of writers, poetry and prose readings and duologues - debates between two authors with shared affinities.

For further information write to: The 5th International Feminist

Book Fair, Overtoom 270, 1054 JB Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

July

28-31: 3rd International Caribbean Women Writers Conference, Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles.

Theme: *The Caribbean and Female Vision for the Twenty-first Century*. Ten panel themes have been selected. They are: the multi-cultural prism and the indigenising process; dominant and resistance discourses; the internalisation of class, color, colonial and gender oppression in the writing of Caribbean women writers; the educational messages on emotions conveyed by children's literature; theatre as an educational tool for building national consciousness and women's pride; the demystification of gender roles; the mother/grandmother as role; body images as perceived through the eyes of the Caribbean woman writer; the single mother and her experience; the apprehension of a new world: a humanist vision. *Buro of Language Affairs, Sede di Papiamentu, Scharlooweg 29, Curacao, Netherlands Antilles.*

February 1993

22-26: 5th International Interdisciplinary Congress on Women, University of Costa Rica, San José, Costa Rica. Held every three years, the con-

gress aims to bring together scholars and practitioners from a wide range of disciplines and areas of expertise, to share insights, experiences and research and to explore issues of importance to women throughout the world. The theme of the 5th congress is Search, Participation, Change. The theme suggests the search for new alternatives as well as the importance of full participation at all levels in order to move towards a better society. Individual and group contributions (papers, workshops, seminars, audiovisual experiences, roundtables, etc.) are welcome. *Deadline for abstracts: April 1, 1992. If possible, submit proposals in Spanish and English to: Prof. Mirta González-Suárez, PRIEG - Escuela de Psicología, Universidad de Costa Rica, Apdo. 2060, San Pedro, Costa Rica, América Central.*



UNCED and related events

March 22-29: World Youth Preparatory Forum for UNCED, San José, Costa Rica.

May 18-30: World Conference of Indigenous Peoples on Environment, Development and

Territories, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

June 1-12: United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Objectives: ① to agree to inter-governmental **conventions** on several issues including, climate change (global warming), biodiversity and forestry; ② to draw up an **Earth Charter** stating the principles by which people should conduct themselves in relation to each other and to the environment; ③ to draw up an agenda of government actions to be done by the 21st century (**Agenda 21**) to carry out the Earth Charter; ④ to agree to how these activities will be financed especially in developing countries; ⑤ to come up with ways and means for poorer countries to have access to environmentally sound technologies; ⑥ and finally, to agree on how best to strengthen and/or reform existing international institutions so that they can more fully integrate environment and development considerations into their work programmes.

June 1-12: '92 Global Forum, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

A series of simultaneous events, organised separately or collectively by non-governmental organisations. Over 90 events have been registered as at 31 October, 1991. Among these are:

* 1992 Global Youth Summit

(WORLDLINK)

* Women's Centre of Activities (Women's International Policy Action Committee on Environment and Development) will consist of a 12 day programme located in the Women's Tent at Flamengo Park.

Each day will be planned by a different group and will focus on one of the sections of Agenda 21, as follows:

- June 2 Diversity and Solidarity
- June 3 Debt and Trade
- June 4 Land Rights and Food Security
- June 5 Population, Women's Rights and Health
- June 6 Biotechnology and Biodiversity
- June 7 Information and Education
- June 8 Women, Militarism and Environment
- June 9 Science and Technology
- June 10 Consumer Ethics and Action
- June 11 New Institutions

* Workshop on Women & the Environment (International Federation of Business & Professional Women's Clubs)

* Public Meeting on Women & the Environment (Society for International Development)

* Panel Discussion and/or meeting on "Women and the man-made/built environment" (Women's International Network)

* The role of NGOs in inter-

national environmental politics (Academie Internationale de L'Environment)

* Open Forum and Exhibitions on Indigenous People (In-

ternational Indigenous Committee)

* Workshop (World Young Women's Christian Association). ¶

On the Bookshelf

Books available at the CAFRA Office, Trinidad and Tobago.

❖ Andaiye and Peggy Antrobus. "Towards a vision of the future: gender issues in regional integration." Paper commissioned by the West Indian Commission and submitted in November, 1991.

Examines women and the popular process of regional integration and how gender inequality retards West Indian development. Offers recommendations for action in support of gender inequality and concludes with a vision of the Caribbean future as has emerged from women's experience and the reflection of the regional women's movement.

❖ Boylan, Ester. **Women and disability.** London: Zed, 1991. (Women and World Development).

Provides information on the special problems women with disabilities face. Topics covered

include the stigma of disability; rehabilitation, education and employment; human rights; caregivers and aging.

❖ Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women. **Brief to the Royal Commission on New Reproductive Technologies.** Ottawa: The Council, 1991.

New reproductive technologies (NRTs) and genetic research hold great promise for the alleviation of human misery. However, the conditions of their current development and implementation have contributed little to the empowerment of women. This brief offers minimal strategies for control over the development of NRTs and identifies an urgent ongoing need for public information and discussion.

❖ Clark, John. **Democratizing development: the role of voluntary organisations.**

West Hartford: Kumarian Press, 1991.

Explores the rise of popular organisations, grassroots movements, and the new demands for Northern donor organisations to address controversial policy questions. Challenges NGOs to transform themselves from aid agencies to agents of development.

❖ **FAO. Women in agricultural development: FAO's plan of action.** Rome: FAO, 1990.

Summary of FAO's Plan of Action for the Integration of Women in Development. Outlines four spheres of activities. They relate to the civil status of rural women, to their economic and social situation and to their role in decision-making. Each sphere includes activities which aim at removing existing barriers to and fostering potentials for the full integration of women in the development process.

❖ Feldstein, Hilary Sims and Susan V. Poats, eds. **Working together: gender analysis in agriculture.** 2 vols. West Hartford: Kumarian Press, 1989. Vol. 1: **Case studies.**

Provides essential tools for incorporating gender analysis into programme design, making gender analysis an integral part of day-to-day research and development work in agriculture. Includes seven teaching cases based on experiences in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

❖ **Global Assembly of Women and the Environment - "Partners in Life"** (1991 November 4-8: Miami). **Final report.** Washington, D.C., 1991.

Contains the findings, recommendations and action plans prepared by the participants of the Global Assembly.

Also available are the 218 success stories presented at the Global Assembly. The stories are grouped by region and theme (Environmentally Friendly Service, Water, Waste, and Energy).

❖ **International Task Force on Literacy, comp. Words are what I've got: writings by learners from all around the world during International Literacy Year.** Toronto: Sister Vision Press, 1991.

Divided according to regions (Africa, the Caribbean, Europe, Latin America and the South Pacific Islands), the book contains the writings of newly literate women and men from over 50 countries. Each country is introduced by a unique country motif, with profiles highlighting literacy information and other development issues. The writings themselves are translated into English, French and Spanish. *Canada-based CAFRA members Pat Rodney, Stephanie Martin and Wendy Ifill had a hand in this excellent publication.*

❖ Léon, Rosa Mavila, ed. **Mujer y derechos humanos en América Latina** (Women and human rights in Latin America). Lima: Comité Latinoamericano para la Defensa de los Derechos de la Mujer, 1991.

Contains articles which discuss sexism in human rights law, women's participation in building peace; women in the context of political violence; and the torture of female political prisoners in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Paraguay, and Peru.

❖ **Mendonca, Merle. "Women prisoners: a special group." In: Improving prison conditions in the Caribbean: report and papers from a conference.** St. Michael, Barbados: Caribbean Rights; London: Penal Reform International, 1991. pp.119-140.

Presents and analyses case studies of two women prisoners from Guyana.

❖ **Petchesky, Rosalind P. and Jennifer A. Weiner. Global feminist perspectives on reproductive rights and reproductive health: a report on the special sessions held at the Fourth International Interdisciplinary Congress on Women, Hunter College, New York City, June 3-7, 1990.**

❖ Schuler, Margaret, ed. **Freedom from violence: women's strategies from around the world.** Washington, D.C.: OEF International; distributed by UNIFEM, 1992.

Collection of articles from Asia, Africa, Latin America and North America. Gives an overview of issues and strategies related specifically to gender violence and is directed primarily to women activists and advocates who are engaged in the daily struggle to overcome violence against women through service programmes, education and public awareness campaigns, law reform activities or other strategies.

❖ Smyke, Patricia. **Women and health.** London: Zed, 1991.

Examines the linkages between women, health and development. Chapters deal with the factors influencing women's health, key health issues for women and action to improve women's health.

❖ Vásquez, Roxana, ed. **Capacitación legal a mujeres** (Legal training for women). Peru: Comité Latinoamericano para la Defensa de los Derechos de la Mujer, 1991.

Eight essays examine legal training for women in five countries: Argentina, Costa Rica, Ecuador, México y Perú.

❖ "Debt Crisis." **Women's World** 17 (March 1988). Isis women's International Cross-

Cultural Exchange.

Examines the impact of the international debt crisis on women and women's role in the international economy.

❖ World Women's Congress for a Healthy Planet (1991 November 8-12: Miami). **Official report.** New York: Women's Environment & Development Organization, 1992.

Contains the findings of the Tribunal, the Women's Action Agenda 21, Regional Caucus reports, an open letter to Members of Parliaments and Governments and the decision adopted by the Preparatory Committee for UNCED, on Women in Environment and Development.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

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Organisation: 35 units of local currency

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Organisation: US\$20.00

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ADDRESS

Return to CAFRA, P.O. Bag 442, Tunapuna, Trinidad and Tobago

Caribbean Association for Feminist Research and Action (CAFRA)

We are a network of individual researchers and activists and women's organisations who define feminist politics as a matter of both consciousness and action. We are committed to understanding the relationship between the oppression of women and other forms of oppression in the society, and are working actively for change.

Membership spans the Dutch, English, French and Spanish-speaking countries of the region as well as the diaspora. It is open to women living in the Caribbean and Caribbean women living abroad who support CAFRA's general aims and objectives.

A brochure outlining the aims and objectives of the association is available on request.

Structure of the Association

The decision-making bodies of CAFRA are: (i) The biennial **General Meeting** of the membership of the association; (ii) The annual meeting of National Representatives, a representative of the diaspora, Project Co-ordinators and the Secretariat (also called the **Regional Committee**); (iii) Bi-annual meetings of a **Consultative Committee**, made up of one representative from each of the four major language groups in the region, the Project Co-ordinators and the Secretariat; and (iv) **The Secretariat**, made up of the Co-ordinator, the Financial Officer, the Administrative Assistant and a few members of the feminist movement in Trinidad and Tobago.

Annual Membership Fee

Individuals: 25 units in currency of residence
Organisations: 35 units in currency of residence
(Payable by cheque, money order or cash in currency of residence or US\$)

Founding members

Peggy Antrobus
Sonia Cuales
Joan French

Rawwida Baksh-Soodeen
Honor Ford-Smith
Rhoda Reddock