

The Tenth Officers' Conference

THE CHALLENGE OF TOMORROW" was the theme of the tenth annual Women's Institute officers' conference held at the Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph, on May 8 and 9. Speaking on this theme, Mrs. James Haggerty, President of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario said:

"Any organization which is successful and progressive looks forward with dreams and visions of possibilities for the future. Every year that passes reveals more aspects of education, of opportunities for expansion, more frontiers of knowledge to be explored. These are all challenges of tomorrow and are incentives for broader programmes of study, action based upon our studies and ability to meet challenges that come to us suddenly and without warning.

Women's Institutes need not desert their early aims and objectives to build such a programme. Our branches still render many services in their own communities, find that there is still much to learn about home-making, housekeeping and business management of the homes; but as modern living has drawn communities, provinces and nations more closely together, just so have the affairs and welfare of all these places become our interest and concern.

"World Peace and World Safety are everyone's responsibility.' These words were spoken by the Hon. Lester Pearson, and he went on to say that no matter in what walk of life we live, each one of us has a contribution to make toward World Peace. The first step is to learn to live peaceably with our families, friends and communities.

"One of the main detriments to World Peace is insecurity, and insecurity creates fear and fear leads to danger. Unless people can feel safe they live in constant fear. In this land of plenty of ours, safety means something different to us than it does in many other lands. Our safety is threatened by hazards which in many cases could be prevented quite easily. There are home, farm, highway, water, industrial and many other accidents that need not happen if reasonable care were taken. These are challenges for Women's Institutes to accept. We must try to plan a programme to deal with these problems.

"In many other countries the situation is different and the people have never known the feeling of safety and security, of adequate food, clothing, warmth, laws to protect their very existence. Many of their lives have been constantly threatened by war and instruments of war, by being driven from their homes, separated from their families. With no safety anywhere, with constant fears haunting them, can we expect world peace while such conditions exist?

"These are some 'frontiers of knowledge' that we must explore. We cannot close our eyes and hearts to the sufferings, the insecurity of part of the world.

"Women's Institutes always rise to the occasion as far as possible to meet challenges from other countries. This past year they have been called upon to respond to two projects especially. The contributions for Layettees to Arab Refugee Babies and Pull-over Sweaters for Korean boys and girls have been wonderful, and show that women's hearts and hands go out in a material way to children of any land.

"When the Lanka Mahila Samiti of Ceylon appealed to the Women's Institutes of Canada for relief following the devastating floods there, I hesitated to write to the branches to ask for more funds when they had already so many demands, so I made the appeal as a purely voluntary one, and what a response! The cheques simply poured in. All in all the branches contributed \$4,047.87.

"It has been almost definitely determined that the floods in Ceylon were due to lack of soil conservation and forestation, which goes to prove that our study here in Ontario on Soil Conservation is a sound course of study and is a safety measure as well.

"While help to other countries is a worthy project, there is a challenge to be met at home. Every Institute member has an obligation to her own organization at the various levels. If we fail to carry out our duties here at home we shall be in no position to assist other people. Contributions to the F.W.I.O. project are coming in satisfactorily. This is the additional donation per member to carry on our own work. I hope that each branch will accept this project as a responsibility. The project does not close until September 30.

"The new F.W.I.O. office is a step forward and I hope each one of you will be able to visit it sometime. We are indeed grateful to the Department of Agriculture for providing us with beautiful quarters, and we are enjoying working under such conditions. With your help we are putting forth our best efforts to set up policies and administer the business in a manner that will best meet the needs of today and shape the things to come in the world tomorrow."

The Challenge of Change

Welcoming the delegates to the College, the President, Dr. J. D. MacLachlan said there were two reasons why he is always happy to welcome Institute women to the campus: first, the admiration he has for the Institute objec-