

Junior Women's Institute Annual Meeting

5. While it was recognized that the formulation and implementation of population policies is the sovereign right of each nation, it was agreed that international co-operation should play an important role in accordance with the principles of the United Nations Charter. It was also agreed that, with the family the basic unit of society, all "couples and individuals have the basic human right to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children and to have the information, education and means to do so; . . .".

6. Among many other recommendations, it was urged that all countries should make use, "wherever needed and appropriate, of adequately trained professional and auxiliary health personnel, rural extension, home economics and social workers, and non-governmental channels, to help provide family planning services and to advise users of contraceptives. Governments which have family planning programmes are invited to consider integrating and co-ordinating those services with health and other services designed to raise the quality of family life, including family allowances and maternity benefits, and to consider including family planning services in their official health and social insurance systems."

7. It was urged that "voluntary organizations should be encouraged, within the framework of national laws, policies and regulations, to play an important role in disseminating population information and ensuring wider participation in population programmes, and to share experiences regarding the implementation of population measures and programmes." International non-governmental organizations (such as ACWW) "are urged to respond to the goals and policies of this Plan of Action", "co-operating in the promotion of widespread knowledge" and "supporting national and private institutions and organizations dealing with population questions."

There was unanimous agreement that the "principal aim of social, economic and cultural development, of which population goals and policies are integral parts, is to improve levels of living and the quality of life of the people. Of all things in the world, people are the most precious."

Tribune

Alongside the official Conference, an unofficial Tribune was held in which non-governmental organizations and interested individuals heard explanations of population trends and problems and carried on lively discussions about possible solutions. This meant a good deal of quick moving by the ACWW representative as observer at the Conference and participant in the Tribune. It also meant a lot of very interesting encounters with other organizations and individuals who share our concern for women, their families, their communities, and the whole of humankind.

Perhaps the most important outcome of these gatherings in Bucharest was that they brought a wide new range of ideas to so many people about what needs to be done and what might be done to prevent a Population Explosion from blindly driving the people of this little Planet to disaster. Perhaps, instead, it may, indeed, prove to be within our power to win for humanity "a future that is infinitely bright."

Miss June Alton was elected Junior Provincial Board Director and Mrs. Sylvia Shaw will serve as the Senior Board Director for the coming year.

Approximately 45 members and visitors gathered at the Badenoch Community Centre for the annual meeting which included the business as well as a speaker on Women's Legal Rights, and a visit to the police station.

Miss Cindy Cordingly was re-elected President, and Mrs. Linda Middleton Secretary-Treasurer.

A Bursary is to be established to provide token assistance to a member continuing her formal education beyond secondary school. Terms of reference will be completed and a winner chosen next Spring.

Margaret J. Black, a local lawyer, discussed women's legal rights. As one who has retained her maiden name after marriage, she honestly believes in equality for all.

It is time women changed their attitudes. It concerns her that so many women seem satisfied to accept degrading attitudes from their male counterparts.

She feels some groups such as lawyers do not have to establish equality, however teachers, nurses, secretaries, as examples, will remain the underdog if they do not fight for equal rights and equal job opportunities. Women must work hard to gain equality, however this equality must be justified.

There must be fairness and objectivity, because many women still live in a traditional manner.

Another area of concern is "Rape." The law treats women unjustly and puts them on trial. They are degraded at every turn. The Ontario Commission on the Status of Women have a bill going through parliament asking to protect the girl from this legal process, seeking more guidance for her, and trying to protect the victim from severe cross examination.

Mrs. Black thinks the abortion laws will remain as is — the laws and how they are enforced, will remain a problem; she showed concern that laws are not uniformly carried out for or against.

She briefly referred to the Ontario Law Reform Act which is in limbo, although they have been working on it since 1968, reports have been revised or requests for change. Her final advice "women do not protect themselves enough, they should seek legal advice."

CORRECTION

In the By Laws revision that appeared in the Spring 1975 issue, a line was omitted. Under FINANCES should read as follows:

Page 55 - Item 7 (9) The FWIO fee of 50 cents per member, the FWIC fee of 50 cents per member and the ACWW fee of 2 cents per member shall be forwarded annually from the Branch Secretary-Treasurer to the District Secretary-Treasurer before February 1 and forwarded by the District Secretary-Treasurer to the Provincial Secretary-Treasurer before April 1.