



## BETWEEN THE LINES

*Mrs. Keith Hiepleh  
President  
Federated  
Women's Institutes of  
Ontario*

Dear W.I. Members:

It is a cold sunny afternoon in February as I write to you to-day. The recent snowfalls have covered the fields with a deep blanket of snow. Various species of birds are eating a special blend of cracked grains and sunflower seeds as they gather around the bird-feeder nestled among the spruce trees. Just as the birds require food for their survival, so do humans.

Recently, the Ontario Minister of Agriculture and Food, The Honourable Lorne C. Henderson, convened a two day conference in Toronto focusing on the theme, "Growing With Agriculture In The 80's". The Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario were represented by four delegates and myself at this conference.

Agriculture is fundamental to the economy of Ontario with one in five residents employed in agriculture and related industries. Our province has some of Canada's finest Agricultural land and a climate that allows us to grow the country's most varied range of crops.

The preservation of the soil through good field management practices and crop rotation is a principal goal of our farm community. Farmers have made tremendous strides in production, especially corn, soybeans, apples and grapes because of improved technology.

World population growth is expected to continue at a rapid pace until the end of the century and beyond with most of the increase taking place in developing countries. Global food production capability is of vital importance especially when we are told that there will be more starving people in the world by the year 2000 than there are now. Technical assistance is needed in the developing countries to improve their agricultural production. Improved farm management practices and cultivation techniques need to be shared with them. Any short-term surplus we have should not be shipped to a "developing" country, as this simply destroys the local incentive to produce. It was suggested that perhaps surplus food should be stored and used for a real emergency situation such as a drought.

Farm machinery in Ontario is designed with productivity in mind. With to-day's technology, farmers are able to both plant and harvest crops much faster and more efficiently. By reducing tillage, we could be coming into a decade of conservation farming. Emphasis will be placed on reducing soil erosion and restoring clean waterways. In to-day's combine or tractor, the farmer sits in a comfortable control centre. The farmer is insulated from the noise of the machine and the

outside elements. There is instant access to data or engine performance, ground speed, and other functions through a touch response of electronic monitoring devices. Future advances will see the sensors not just monitoring but automatically making adjustments. Today's machinery is doing a good job so remote control guidance equipment is still years away. It is evident that high management skills are necessary for the 80's.

The Bank's roots in the farm community of Ontario go back a very long way. In recent years the banks have made considerable progress in upgrading their farm services. Farmers are increasingly turning to banks for their credit. On many farms it is the wife who is responsible for the accounting system. There is also a trend towards the multi-family farm, consisting of family farm corporations or partnerships between fathers and sons and sometimes daughters, or partnership between brothers.

More than six hundred delegates enjoyed the All-Ontario meals featured at this Agriculture Conference. The aim of serving these meals was to increase awareness that consumers can prepare delicious and nutritious meals any time of the year with Ontario grown foods. The menus were prepared by the Market Development Branch of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food in co-operation with the cooking staff of the Skyline Hotel, Toronto. The meals featured apples, winter vegetables such as rutabaga, carrots, potatoes and onions. Fresh from Ontario greenhouses were cucumbers and lettuce. Lesser known products such as smoked trout and wild rice were included with beef, chicken, bacon, sausages, eggs, milk and wine. Honey replaced the sugar bowl and hot beverages included apple cider and herbal tea. The range of Ontario's first class agriculture and food products was impressive and satisfactory to all.

In addition to the Agriculture Conference, I wish to share with you another occasion. It was my privilege to present the winners of the Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario Macdonald Awards with their certificates at the College of Family and Consumer Studies, University of Guelph. Fifteen students were chosen to receive awards and twelve girls were able to be present.

Dean Janet Wardlaw of Family and Consumer Studies, Miss Molly McGhee Director of the Home Economics Branch, Miss Joyce Canning Regional Supervisor, Mrs. Virginia Campbell, Academic Assistant to the Dean, and myself enjoyed a social time with the girls following the presentations. The Awards of \$200.00 each are presented after the successful completion of one semester of the degree program at the University. The College of Family and Consumer Studies was established in 1969 and now has a total undergraduate enrolment of nearly 1,350 students. This enrolment includes in addition to the students in the program of Family and Consumer Studies, also those in the program of Hotel and Food Administration. Opportunities to serve society await these students upon graduation.

As a Women's Institute member, you have the opportunity to become involved in an organization that has enriched many lives throughout the world. Offer your leadership in your community, become involved in decision making and help formulate solutions for tomorrow. You have much to offer.

*Janet D. Hiepleh*