



## BETWEEN THE LINES

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

Dear W.I. Members:

During the past few months Ontario Women's Institute members have been concentrating on the 1981 project, The Women's Institute: Working Toward "Barrier Free Communities For Disabled Persons Across Ontario." It is my hope, that, through your efforts, existing physical barriers that have made accessibility to the community a serious problem for the handicapped, are now being removed, thus enabling equal opportunity for all citizens.

Recently another project commenced for Women's Institute members across Canada. The decision to "twin" one province with another province was unanimously accepted by the Board members attending the annual Federated Women's Institutes of Canada Board Meeting at Carleton University, Ottawa. Since regional variances in Canada are great, Women's Institute members have a need to update their knowledge about the other provincial units and their members. The twin chosen for Ontario is the province of Manitoba.

It was my good fortune to be able to share the last afternoon following the conclusion of the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada Board Meeting in Ottawa with Mrs. Lois Edie, President of Manitoba Women's Institutes, thus beginning the Ontario-Manitoba Twinning Program. Mrs. Edie and her husband live on a grain farm in the municipality of Dugald, Manitoba. She is a warm, friendly person keenly interested in Women's Institute, who writes a column in the Institute News published quarterly by the Manitoba Women's Institute.

There are presently 2,000 Women's Institute members in Manitoba, working to improve their homes and communities. They study current issues and problems related to families and societies. Projects overseas, Northern Canada and the International Peace Garden are supported. The women enjoy the friendship of fellow members and the fun of special family nights, sports and other activities. Institutes have been active in the communities of Manitoba since 1910.

Mrs. Edie and I were privileged to have a personally conducted tour of the Parliament Buildings by Senator Martha P. Bielish, Area Vice-President for Canada to the Associated Country Women of the World. The Peace Tower immediately commands your attention upon arrival at the Centre Block. This world renowned gothic structure houses in its Tower a four-faced clock that measures sixteen feet in diameter. Jutting out from each corner of the Peace Tower are four, ten-foot gargoyles carved from Wallace stone.

After entering through the huge archway and going up a number of steps into the main entrance of the Houses of Parliament, Confederation Hall, sometimes called the Rotunda, comes into view. A magnificent central column in the centre of this Hall rises toward the ceiling. The groin arches join together as a symbol of confederation. Carved heads of Eskimos and Indians, the original inhabitants of Canada, are carved on the east and the west sides of the hall. The trapper, the woodsman, the miner and the sailor are featured on the north and the south walls.

Proceeding to The House of Commons we were able to view from the gallery assembled Members of Parliament engaged in debate in the Chamber. Built of Canadian oak and Tyndall limestone, the Chamber seats the 282 elected representatives of the people of Canada. The Speaker, Madam Sauvé, was presiding over the House. She was seated in the great chair which is a replica of the Speaker's chair in the Palace of Westminster that was destroyed by enemy bombing in 1941.

Leaving the Centre Block, we walked to the West Block of the Parliament Buildings, where we attended the Ottawa première of "Moving Mountains". This film by Canadian producer Laura Sky, showed women working in non-traditional jobs at Fording Coal mine in British Columbia. Capable women were driving huge trucks, handling explosives, making repairs to machinery and supervising various jobs at this coal mine. This sensitive, moving film portrayed women working side by side with the men in mutual respect of each other. Following the showing of this film, we mingled and chatted with the people attending this première while enjoying the hors d'oeuvres, delicious canapes and fancy sandwiches.

Sight-seeing in Ottawa continued for Mrs. Edie and I as we made our way past various shops to the marketplace. Fresh garden produce consisting of fruits and vegetables interspersed with fragrant cut flowers and potted floral arrangements caught our attention. However, it was in the gift shops that souvenirs were purchased to remind each of us in the days ahead of the friendship that had been developed between two Women's Institute members in adjoining provinces as a result of the Ontario-Manitoba Twinning Program.

Quality of life is enhanced when we become involved in our organization. Working together we are encouraged to develop our talents and self-worth. Leadership skills are learned and women are encouraged to become leaders. Our minds are kept alert as discussion takes place on current issues. Doors will open to new avenues of learning as interesting programs are presented by the Standing Committee Conveners.

Membership in Women's Institute allows one to meet people and become involved provincially, nationally and internationally. Any woman or girl (16 years of age and over) may join the Women's Institute upon payment of the annual fee. Encourage new brides, young mothers, your neighbor, single women and professional women to become new members. By being enthusiastic and projecting a good image, we will encourage potential members to join our organization. Congratulations and best wishes are extended to the new branch Providence-Shaw organized in Durham West; may each new Women's Institute member develop into better informed, happier and more useful citizens.

*Janet D Hiepleh*