

Between the Lines

Dear W.I. Members:

In early May I attended the Eastern Canada Regional Conference of the Associated Country Women of the World. This Conference, arranged by the Constituent Societies of the Associated Country Women of the World (ACWW) in Eastern Canada, was held at the Nova Scotia Agricultural College in Truro. It was an opportunity to meet listen and talk to Dr. Ellen McLean, President of ACWW and it was an opportunity to hear what other Canadian organizations are doing for ACWW, and generally to become better informed about the organization, and what our role in it is.

Because we as Women's Institute members in Ontario are just as inquisitive and curious as members are anywhere, I am going to share some of the information I received with you. To some of you it will be familiar, but to others not.

Fourteen constituent societies in Canada make up the Area of Canada within ACWW. Our Area Vice-President is the Honourable Martha Bielish. The Federated Women's Institutes of Ontario are one of those 14 societies. We pay an annual membership fee of £25. Every Women's Institute member in Ontario has .02¢ deducted from her membership to make her a member of ACWW. This does not give her the privilege of attending a world conference, however, or becoming a voting delegate. To become a contributing member, which gives her these privileges, she must pay an annual membership to ACWW of \$5. or become a life member for £100. A contributing member also receives the Countrywoman, which is the quarterly magazine published by ACWW.

Since the world conference held in Vancouver, and which was planned by the 14 Canadian Constituent Societies, two regional conferences have been held, one in Edmonton, and one in Truro. The next triennial world conference will be held in Killarney, Ireland in May 1986.

The Associated Country Women of the World is an association with over 9 million members in 60 countries of the world. We are all dedicated and working for the development of peace. We are working for a better quality of life for all women. We are involved with educa-

tion and practical aid at all levels. Through positive action we aim to improve the standards of living for rural women and their families and at the same time promote their rights.

Dr. MacLean talked to us about projects within ACWW. The one we in Ontario have been most recently involved with is the Water For All Project. This international project developed to provide the funds for wells, and better sanitation projects, has been supported well by Ontario W.I. members. Your contributions of over \$32,000 means that the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada far exceeded its goal of \$50,000. This money will give women where the wells are dug more time. Time to spend with their families, more time to spend on income generating projects, more time to spend on nutrition and health projects, more time to become more literate. You will have helped to eradicate disease. We are told that 5 million die annually because of unclean water.

Other projects must be initiated in the societies or villages that ask for them. These projects are assessed by the Projects Committee of ACWW, and a list of them are available from the central office of ACWW. The presidential project of Dr. MacLean is sewing machines for Mauritius. In such a project, the sewing machines are bought, and women are taught not only how to use them, but how to service them. By helping women in other societies through projects, we strengthen the network of members around the world.

In Korea women are deep-sea divers. Arthritis strikes early, and there is little or no outside help. Child care centres were set up in four areas by ACWW. Because of the success of these centres, the government picked them up and carried them on.

In Togo the women asked for £500 to buy 300 cutlasses, which is the main farming tool. The request was met by the projects committee.

Sometimes a project needs some extra support. A sunflower oil project was successful in developing the oil, but at the conclusion of the project, a marketing program proved essential so that the product could be moved.

Our support of these types of projects means that women in other parts of the world become more self-suf-

ficient, mainly through their own efforts, and own initiative.

You are faithful when it comes to contributing to Pennies For Friendship. In 1984 Pennies for Friendship accounted for 67.79% of the general income of ACWW. They are used for the upkeep of central office and administration. Administration is the cost of servicing all the activities of ACWW — extension and mutual service, United Nations work and projects, as well as basic administration. It includes the work and travels of the officers around the world on behalf of ACWW. If the stream of pennies could become a river, pennies could be used for development programs and projects. Funds that are set up are the Lady Aberdeen Scholarship Fund; Elsie Zimmern Memorial, Nutrition Education Trust; Projects; UCA 71-Water For All; Administration Fund (it is hoped that this fund will eventually be capable of supporting the cost of Administration, releasing Pennies for development programs) and recently, a moving fund, which was developed to help defray the cost of moving the central office from Warwick Square in London to a larger, better office space in Vincent House. Any individual members or societies are free to contribute to any of these funds at any time.

This is but a sampling of the information given and the discussion that took place at the conference. There is much information available about ACWW, but it is up to you to seek it out. One group leader, Mrs. Jennie McInnes told us "Information starts with I", I have to ask for it, then I will receive it. In your Branches do you have an international month? One-liners or two minute blurbs could be times for knowledgeable people or contributing members of ACWW to share a quick bit of information with the rest of your membership.

To quote our group leader — "We have only one country — Mother Earth; one race, Mankind. To share each others lives, we must try to understand others. Individually we can do little — together we can scale mountains."

Sincerely
Charlotte Johnson