

The Peripatetic WI President

Crises Don't Faze Her

STONEY CREEK

If the women of the world were asked to solve more of the political problems facing governments today, the questions would be solved much more quickly and with "less fuss", according to Mrs. Aroti Dutt, president of the Associated Country Women Of The World.

Mrs. Dutt was in Hamilton to attend a garden party yesterday, sponsored by the Stoney Creek Women's Institute, the mother institute.

"Women are used to worrying about things, but only when they want to and on their terms. They are used to coping with crises at any given moment," she said.

Mrs. Dutt, from Calcutta, in the Bengal province of India, has been president of the organization since 1965 and will be president until the national conference in 1968.

She has visited 12 countries since 1965, including Canada, and will be touring 20 states in the U.S.A. after the week-long national conference of the Federated Women's Institutes of Canada ends in Guelph on Saturday.

"I TRY to see what has been accomplished by the groups in the various countries and cities, see what could be done in the future, and offer suggestions regarding plans I have seen in practice in other countries," she said.

She noted that the Women's Institutes of Canada and in other nations are helping the fledgling groups of underdeveloped countries realize the potential a rural woman has.

"Charity is not the way to set a nation's women on their feet; to help you must promote leadership in rural communities. Self-help is the ingredient."

THE WAYS in which other women's institutes can help those just beginning are exchanges of members and workers, scholarship, information on nutrition and child

care and means of improving household management.

Mrs. Dutt is a housewife in Calcutta, with a husband and a 19-year-old son. She said, "I couldn't have done any work at all in the organization without their support. No housewife, coming into this job could."

She said that she became interested in women's institute work through her mother-in-law, who began the women's institute work in Bengal.

Mrs. Dutt lives out of a suitcase for three or four months each year as she travels from place to place. However, she seemed unharried, calm and cool as she met many of the guests at the garden party yesterday.

Dressed in a deep rose sari and royal purple blouse, she remarked that keeping six yards of material in a sari pressed and cleaned often takes "a lot out of me."

SHE REVEALED that for a three-month trip she normally takes 18 to 20 saris with her.

"One thing everyone re-

marks on is the absence of any red marriage mark on my forehead," she smiled, referring to the tear-shaped drop often seen on the foreheads of Indian women. "Just to get things straight, in my part of India, these are not used. I wear an iron and gold bracelet and red powder along the part in my hair as marriage marks," she said as she indicated her left-sided part.

Mrs. Dutt believes that better understanding of peoples around the world will lead to peace.

"BETTER understanding and better living conditions go hand in hand. Prejudice against others is only an effect of ignorance; educate the peoples of the world and prejudice will disappear, living conditions will improve."

"MAKE all women literate and illiteracy ends in the world. The lives, thoughts and ideals of women have such an effect on the lives of men, they change the world, for good or evil," she said.