

CUPE women face a long road to equality

By NANCY FALCONER

"I think if you're going to be bitching and complaining you have to take an active part in trying to remedy it" was Bernadine Laumont's explanation of her active role in the York caretaker's union executive. She is the only woman on the 7 or 8 member executive,

although women comprise nearly one third of the Canadian union of public employees (CUPE) local here. Sixty five percent of all CUPE members are women.

A report approved by the CUPE national convention (September 1971) on the status of women in the

union recommended active steps towards ending male-female discrimination. Although sanctioned after much dispute over important issues such as equal pay, opportunities, benefits, the York local does not seem to have met its responsibility to its women members.

"CUPE locals should negotiate equitable systems of job evaluation that will measure the worth of a job and remove the sex differentiation altogether." This was one of several major recommendations in the report. But with CUPE's new contract at York there has come an increase in the wage gap between male cleaners and female housemaids.

That there should be any wage difference at all lies in the managements evaluation and title of the job. A housemaid receives \$.5¢ an hour less than a male cleaner

although they essentially perform many of the same duties.

Laumont sees the classification system as being in the management's favour and primarily sexual discrimination. "They're getting a good portion of the labour cheaper," she said.

However Laumont sees that by not providing plant-wide seniority the contract gives women the chance to compete for jobs in male dominated areas. "The only way the women are going to insure their jobs is to compete with the men for the cleaning jobs."

Asked if there might be discrimination in hiring for these cleaning jobs, Laumont agreed. "If a man and woman both applied for the same job the man would probably get it. Management's attitude is not at the point yet where people can just walk in and get the job."

Discriminatory attitudes within the rank and file also make equality difficult. Acting local union president Ron Beaton admits that "some cleaners — the Italians — would rather walk out than do a womans job."

More representation of women in planning positions, such as executive, is important too. Laumont said she'll encourage women to run next time there are CUPE local elections. "Yes it is important. I'd like to see more (women) there."

The CUPE status of women report states that the local union should enforce equal representation of women on boards, commissions and advisory bodies. Reluctance to be elected or appointed is common amongst women members. The increased work and time involvement in relation to their families needs and the fear that their nomination would not be regarded seriously keeps the executive ratio about 8 to 1.

Laumont also mentioned that some female workers are afraid to lodge a signed complaint as they feel they might lose their job.

It appears to be difficult for women members of the union to deal directly with management concerning their needs. The question of male-female parity was not dealt with at the new pact agreement. If it is to be dealt with at all, women members must stand up to executive and management for what they want and need.

At time of printing one of the women union members — a housemaid — has decided to submit a grievance demanding a cleaner's pay for her job. The union appears ready to back her completely on what seems to be the test case for wage parity.



CUPE women such as Nina Gatt will have to stand up for their own rights

Filmmaker will raise Canadian conscience

By RUTH SHAMAI

Canadian filmmaker, Joyce Weiland came to York Monday to show and discuss one of her films, Reason Over Passion, as part of the women's film festival at York this week.

The film was one and a half hours of Canadian landscape broken by intermittent, high pitched beeps and permutations of the title. (reason over passion . . . esaron rove ni nisosap . . . serano vero ipasosn etc.) In the middle there was a series of pictures of Trudeau.

The audience had mixed reactions to the film. They ranged from the feeling it was a fine film artistically and politically and that much more needed to be done with landscape to a feeling of anger and insult that here was no clear content, political or otherwise.

Weiland says she made the film at a time in her life when she felt strongly about the U.S. takeovers of Canada and she made it as a monument and a moratorium for Canada.

Weiland has made about 10 films in her 16 years as a filmmaker. She is an artist and a crafts person as well as a filmmaker.

She spent a good deal of time in New York and came back to Canada feeling strongly about the need to liberate Canada from U.S. imperialism. Her films have dealt with women, Canada and Pierre Vallieres.

She thinks her films are all political, but criticizes standard political films as being too dogmatic and not poetic enough.

She also tries to express in her films what she calls a feminine aesthetic — something she says she doesn't understand very well. But it means not trying to be equal in a man's world but using our feelings and emotions to create our own. There are things that women would be more likely to express in their art and Weiland has opened the door a bit for it to happen more.

Weiland says she is obsessed with the oppression of people and realizing there is a rich Canadian culture considers it part of her work help raise people's consciences so they will take their lives into their own hands.

She sees that art always expresses the ideology of the ruling class at any particular time. It is part of the artists role, she feels to convey an understanding of our history — a history of struggle, oppression and militancy. To counter the effects of New York on popular tastes, Weiland says to artists: "Go back to find the roots of the Group of Seven and go back to the landscape."

She is presently writing a script for a film about Tom Thompson that will be a mixture of all kinds of things — history, politics and a love story. With the script almost complete the main thing she needs now is money — about \$100,000.

Weiland works with a group called Canadian Artist Representatives, (CAR) dedicated to smashing the

myth that the artist's place is in the garret and making galleries and the public realize that artists need money too. They are working towards a fee schedule for galleries to provide for a standard pay for displaying their art.

The group is also looking for a large place to have as a gallery, meeting place and film theatre for young artists. If you are interested in finding out more about CAR call Bob Kell (925-8037) or Judy Steed (921-8594).

The women's film festival continues today and tomorrow. See notices for times.

Intellect judged as well as beauty

By ROBIN POND

While watching the Miss Teen Canada Beauty Pageant Tuesday night, I suddenly realized that my conception of what a beauty contest actually is was all wrong. I'd always thought that in a beauty contest a bunch of good-looking girls lined up, and the one with the best body gets picked the winner. But, no, it's not like that at all. The girls didn't even line up; they stood in sort of a zig-zag pattern.

Actually, all this talk about the exploitation of the female sex is a lot of mindless chatter. Bobby Curtola — Canada's own "Mr. Personality" — a man with an untiring smile — promptly pointed out at the beginning of the contest that the girls were judged as much on their intellect, personality, and outside interests, as on their appearance. Thus, when the girls paraded out, in evening dresses that looked more like night-shirts, to the sound of the old '20's hit tune;

"Ain't she nice?
Look her over once or twice.
Now I ask you very confidentially,
Ain't she nice?"

I was glad Mr. Curtola had filled me in. I might have started looking for curves. But, no, this is the wrong approach. When you're looking her over once or twice you are attempting to discern her personality, and intellect, and outside interests.

Discerning intellect, personality, and outside interests, was a rather difficult task, though; since, aside from attempting to keep up with Curtola in the smiles department, the girls didn't seem to do much of anything. I was disappointed when I found out that there wasn't going to be any talent contest. That's always the best part. But, oh well . . .

We did get an opportunity to meet each of the 10 semi-finalists, though. Each related an interesting anecdote from their lives as girls growing up in Canada. Miss Toronto got lost in a taxi somewhere just outside Tokyo; Miss New Brunswick, when she was very small,

saw a tap-dancing man fall through the roof of her father's laboratory; and Miss Sault Ste. Marie, when she was in grade nine, had toilet paper placed in her locker by her friends on April Fools, and, when she opened her locker, she was so embarrassed!

At this point in the program there was a small interview with a fashion designer, speaking on behalf of one of the sponsors: Legs are in this year, girls. Legs are going to be really big. That's what all the guys are watching.

But now back to intellect, personality, and outside interests. The four finalists each gave a small but profound talk on a topic of their choice. Talking on travel, Miss Toronto claimed, "I've travelled in many forms, and to many places" and went on to state, "the best part of any trip is coming home." In a discussion of careers, Miss Saskatchewan said that "success is derived by striving for something you've always wanted to." (I spent a long time thinking about that one.) And Miss Hamilton firmly asserted that "a career in today's society is of the utmost importance."

Perhaps it is significant that I can remember where the girls were from, but I can't remember any of their names. But, then, when you're buying swiss cheese, the fact that it comes from Switzerland is important; the fact that the cheese-maker's name is Schmidt is highly irrelevant.

Beauty Contests are dumb. I don't know why anyone watches them; but, then, I don't know why anyone watches Lawrence Welk or Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom, either. But they do. Still, if you're going to have a beauty contest, you might as well be honest about it. It was really much easier when we could be honest male chauvinists rather than hypocritical psychologists. I confess that, although I was able to form an opinion about who was prettiest, (Bobby Curtola — an easy winner) I wasn't up to the task of determining which one had the best personality, intellect, and outside interests.

York Briefs

John Mays' resignation a hoax

A letter of resignation supposedly tendered by Calumet liaison officer John Mays and printed in Excalibur last week was revealed this week as a hoax. As well as to Excalibur, copies were sent to the university president, both the master and assistant master of Calumet College and the Calumet college general meeting. The fraudulent letters were composite photocopies using a superimposed signature of Mays' on a letterhead stolen from the Calumet student Liaison office. What upset Mays most was the letter's complaint of "hypocrisy (sic) maintained in the staff of this college." Replied Mays; "This is the most straightforward administration I have ever worked with." Mays described his liaison position as totally rewarding, his activities ranging from finding student housing to translating a Greek passage for a student, last week. He is alive and well and still available in 116 Atkinson for whatever help he can provide. Excalibur regrets any embarrassment it added to the situation in printing the alleged "resignation".

Fees receipt available on demand

Those students who have failed to pay this year's second installment fee and are awaiting the receipt for their first instalment had best hurry over to the Temporary Office Building before the end of March. Due to Ontario government policy, the York accounting department was instructed to mail out only one receipt per academic year. A student failing to pay his second instalment, due to the now defunct fee strike or for any reason, would have only received in the mail a tax receipt covering the payment of last year's second instalment. Although the accounting department will refuse to mail out a receipt covering the September payment to students in this position, they must legally hand it over on demand. If you have paid the first instalment and have still not received a receipt, go personally to student accounts at the TOB and ask for it. Tax reports must be filed by the end of March, so hurry.

Ziedan Atashi spoke Tuesday

Ziedan Atashi, the first Arab citizen appointed to Israel's diplomatic service in the New York consulate, spoke at York Tuesday as part of Israeli week events on campus. Atashi said that Jews and Arabs in the Middle East can learn to co-exist by looking to the example of Israeli Arabs and Jews. Atashi said both Jews and Arabs want to rehabilitate the Palestinians as a final solution to the conflict, but not at the expense of Israel. The campus celebration marks the 25th anniversary of the state of Israel.

Left and right opposed Hitler

Conservatives and communists were the major participants in the German resistance to Hitler during the second World War, according to professor Hans Mommsen, who spoke at York Monday. Mommsen, a descendant of the nineteenth century liberal historian Theodor Mommsen, said that one reason behind the lack of liberal participation in the resistance was the failure of the liberal democratic Weimar constitution during the 1920s. The lack of a solid tradition, which both conservatives and communists possessed as a unifying basis for a Germany without Hitler, was another reason for the absence of a sizable democratic opposition to Naziism. More than 100 York students and professors jammed lecture hall K to hear Mommsen, a history professor from the University of Bochum in West Germany. His address was co-sponsored by Atkinson college and the Goethe Institute of Toronto, a branch of the chief cultural association of West Germany.