

This issue of *Canadian Woman Studies/Les cahiers de la femme* has a unique history. In the "Post-Nairobi" issue of *CWS/cf* (Spring/Summer 1986, vol. 7, nos. 1&2), we noted, with regret, the absence of information from the Soviet Union. In 1987, Professors Shelagh Wilkinson and Meg Luxton of Atkinson College, York University, traveled to the USSR and met with the North American division of Novosti, the official Soviet press agency. We proposed a special issue of *CWS/cf* on Soviet women which would be a joint Canada-USSR effort. The trip was sponsored by Atkinson College, who, along with the editorial board of *CWS/cf*, was convinced that such an issue would be unique as a scholarly venture and contribute to fostering mutual understanding.

Novosti expressed an interest and we began a regular correspondence. Our main contact has been Sergei Buranov who, over the past two years, has been very helpful in assisting this project. Novosti assembled thirteen articles and provided photographs.

Novosti, specifically Vladimir Sazanov, Deputy Editor-in-Chief of the North American division, invited the editors of "Soviet Women" to return to the USSR in June 1988. Professors Shelagh Wilkinson, Meg Luxton and Ester Reiter, Brock University, spent two weeks in Moscow, Riga, Kishinev and in several small towns and collective farms near those cities.

Novosti journalist Ludmila Eniutina, now with *Moscow News*, planned our itinerary, arranged for us to meet and interview a range of people concerned with women's issues, accompanied us and translated for us. She and An-

drei Stulov, now the Press Attaché at the USSR embassy in Ottawa, were very helpful in discussing with us our interpretations of the interviews and in clarifying any questions we had. In addition, through various Canadian scholars and journalists, we met a number of workers, students and scholars. Once back in Canada, we were fortunate to have Janet Hyer, University of Toronto, a specialist on Soviet domestic politics and a feminist, join our editorial collective.

Not all our plans worked out. Some of the Soviet articles we had hoped for did not arrive. We sent a number of Canadian books to the USSR for review, but only one review was submitted in time for publication: Mariam Shaumian's review of Alice Munro's *The Progress of Love*. We invited a Black *Moscow News* journalist to write about racism in the Soviet Union and we would have liked articles from lesbians, native women, women in the Asian republics and more on the ethnic question. We were troubled and confused by the silence surrounding the Jewish Holocaust.

What we do have, however, are the voices of leading Soviet women writers and academics. We know from interviews, reading Soviet media and discussions with Canadians who have lived in the USSR, that the viewpoints presented here are widely held and, so far, rarely challenged. We think

they represent a significant Soviet voice. They are, of course, in translation, and while we have edited the translations to make them more accessible to Canadian readers, we have tried to retain the style and way of presenting arguments typical of Soviet writing. They often sound strange to Canadian ears, but they give the "flavour" of the originals.

