

# REPORTS

## HYDERABAD Support Rameezabee

Three women's organizations—Stree Shakti Sangathana, Indian Federation of Women Lawyers and Vimochana Forum for Women's Rights—have filed a petition in the Karnataka High Court at Bangalore for revision of the judgment by the Raichur sessions court which acquitted all the accused in the Rameezabee case and declared them innocent of rape and murder.

In March 1978, Rameezabee was wrongfully confined at the police station at Nallakunta, Hyderabad. There she was beaten and raped by sub-inspector Surender Singh, head constables Sayeed Ahmed and Mohammed Sultan, and constable Mohammed Khaja. Her husband Ahmed Husain was beaten so severely in the same police station that he died of the injuries. This sparked off widespread public protest throughout the state, in response to which the government set up an enquiry commission headed by Justice Mukhtadar. The commission found the policemen guilty and pointed out that this case sheds light on the way poor women are habitually maltreated by the police.

The police however, managed to destroy evidence and also to get the case transferred from Hyderabad to Raichur, on the pretext that justice would not be done to them at Hyderabad! In the Raichur trial, both the prosecution and defence lawyers were defending the accused. The judge accepted the false accusation that Rameezabee was a prostitute, and on this pretext he ignored the medical evidence of semen stains and injuries on her person. The death of

her husband was ascribed to "natural causes", completely disregarding the evidence of injuries on his body. The Andhra Pradesh state government is not interested in appealing to the high court against this judgment. Rameezabee was socially ostracized in Hyderabad to the extent that she could not find a place to stay, so she is not in a position to fight the case.

Therefore these three women's organizations have filed the petition for revision, because they are not entitled to appeal on her behalf. They have also formed a joint committee with other women's groups. The programme includes the following: a press conference, pamphleteering, a play and a demonstration on July 18. They are requesting other women's organizations to file *vakalats* in support.

—Lalita

## BIHAR Women Fight Rapists

On 28.6.81, at about three p.m., I left for Kanheri Hill with 72 girl students and one teacher named Ignatia. We go on a picnic there every Sunday. In the jungle, 40 of us were together when we were accosted by six boys who teased the girls by obscene acts and songs. When we tried to leave, they caught hold of Mary Linda and tried to drag her away. She resisted and got rid of them but she sustained several injuries from the sticks which the boys were wielding. Apolina and I too were similarly manhandled but managed to get away with the help of other girls. While we were engaged in this encounter, two boys succeeded in taking away Teresa Frances and raping her within our sight. While we were



rescuing Java from an attack, two boys pounced on Monica Tuti and took her away into the jungle where she too was raped. The boys then left, hurling abuse and threats at us. We could not find Monica and returned to the hostel. Monica reached the hostel at 5 p.m. She was completely naked as her clothes had been torn away by the rapists. Nomita, Virginia, Josepha and others were also outraged and beaten by the men. We can identify these men and we request that action be taken against them.

—(extract from letter from a teacher of Grihini School, Hazaribagh, to the officer-in-charge, Sadar police station)

## GOA Murdered for Resisting Molestation

On January 21, local newspapers carried a report that Vimal Pagi, a 24 year old girl, was killed in Collomb, a village on the outskirts of Canacona Taluk. She was killed on the night of January 19, while guarding the coconut trees of the *batkar* (landlord).

On reading this report, we three junior college students went as a fact-finding team to the place. Vimal's whole family was suffering from TB, her parents

and brother had died of the disease. 20 years after the "liberation" of Goa in 1961, TB is still a killer among the poorer people in the border districts of Goa. Vimal stayed alone in a small hut and earned her livelihood by guarding the landlord's property. She was socially ostracized by the local people because of her family's sickness.

A few days after our visit, the murderer Babali alias Premanand Shiva Desai was arrested. On the 19th night, he drank heavily and then went to Vimal's hut, carrying a sharp weapon. He made advances towards her and when she protested and ran, shouting, he brutally murdered her.

**Panjim** : A military man C.K. Das was arrested for molesting a seven year old girl in Panjim city. The girl is in hospital and the police have registered a case but are awaiting the medical report.

—Carol, Olga, Sabina  
(Seal Documentation Service)

## **PUNJAB New Victories**

**Chandigarh** : Nurses of Government Hospital, Sector XIII, ignored government orders and wore a new uniform of blue salwar kameez or sari instead of the old white skirt and blouse. The nurses feel the skirt is the legacy of the colonial era and exposes them to more sexual harassment from patients and their relatives. The director of Chandigarh health services prohibited the new uniform and ordered the nurses to continue wearing the old one. Nurses in Haryana and Himachal have already struggled against and discarded the old uniform...

...On May 7, a 19 year old girl who had just undergone an operation for ruptured eardrums was raped in the P.G.I. hospital by a sweeper on duty in her ward. The rapist Ram Chunder woke up the girl at night and took her to another room under the pretext of changing the dressing. Her mother waited outside until the girl emerged, weeping. She was unable to speak because of the after-effects of the operation. The next morning, she managed to tell her mother what had happened. Ever since, the girl has been lying in a state of shock, not speaking or eating, while her mother

weeps and wails. The rapist is absconding and the police have not found him.

**Jullundur** : Gurmail Singh Mann of Udhawal village near Nakodar has murdered his young wife Jagdish Kaur in England. Gurmail is settled in Wolverhampton and married Jagdish last year. It is said that he had relations with several other women there and wanted to get rid of Jagdish. He strangled her with her dupatta and took away her jewels as well as household goods to make it appear like a dacoity. However, he confessed to the crime in the course of police interrogation. Women of the Association for Social Health in India went to Udhawal village where Gurmail's grandparents live and recovered from them all the furniture and jewellery which had been given in dowry by Jagdish's parents. The dowry was returned to Jagdish's parents.

**Bhatinda** : Manju Bala is a 25 year old woman who had migrated from Bihar to Punjab because of extreme poverty. She has two small children. On February 14, an assistant sub-inspector of police Anok Singh and two constables took her to the Sadar police station on a trumped-up charge of theft. At 8 p.m., she was made to lie prostrate on a blanket, held fast by the feet and hands, and brutally tortured. The central government orders that police women should be present when women are being interrogated, was completely ignored. The policemen were torturing her in order to force her to live with a man from a village Sivian near Bhatinda.

Later that night, she was locked in a small room, the light was put out and a constable tried to rape her. When she resisted, she was gagged and thrice raped. The next morning she was forcibly sent with a man from Sivian who paid Rs 500 to the police. The next day, she somehow managed to reach the district court and reported the matter to a lawyer. Her statement was recorded by the police but no action was taken till the 20th. On the 21st all the newspapers carried a report of this case.

The case was debated in parliament but the chief minister only started a controversy over the caste of Manju, saying she was a brahman, not a harijan.

The district authorities told the press that she had been illegally detained and tortured but not raped. So far nothing has been heard about the magisterial enquiry into the rape case which seems to have been hushed up.

— Ved Prakash Gupta, Secretary,  
Punjab Human Rights Committee

## **JABALPUR Lijjat Papad Coop —Women Toil, Men Control**

Shri Mahila Griha Udyog Lijjat Papad is a society registered under Societies Registration Act. It was founded on the principle of Sarvodaya and has received recognition from the Khadi and Village Industries Commission. Its main object, as proclaimed in its constitution, is to promote economic, social, educational and cultural activities and thereby raise the standard of living of women. Its membership is open to all women who adhere to this idea and start working. There are at present about 5,000 to 6,000 working members. The head office of the society is at Bombay, but there are branches in several parts of the country. Several products such as papads, masala, agarbatti and matches are manufactured, mainly by women.

However, women have virtually no control over the institution and its running. Elections for the managing committee in Bombay have not been held for the last 22 years. Consequently, the same office bearers have continued to occupy the posts over the years, wielding tremendous influence. The nature of this influence becomes obvious from the experience of Ms Pushpa Berry who opened a branch in Jabalpur in 1974. Depending on local resources in the absence of monetary support from Bombay, the women started making profits which they distributed among themselves. This obviously was against the interests of the controllers in Bombay, who, failing to close down the Jabalpur branch by harassing the women, tried to accomplish their objective by passing a resolution to that effect. The women of Jabalpur, however, filed a suit and sought an injunction against the resolution. This injunction has been upheld by the supreme court. Litigation is however

continuing, as is the exploitation of the labour of poor women. This is apparent from a recent report in the Free Press Journal (April 11, 1981). A unit in Borivili making plastic bags for packing papads, has been closed without notice since March 29, affecting 42 women, who have not been paid their salaries for the month of March.

## **RAIPUR Call for Social Ostracism**

On February 17, 1981, Gayatri Soni, the wife of Din Dayal Soni, died of 99 per cent burns at D.K. Hospital in Raipur, leaving an eight month old daughter. Broken bangles in the room where she died and the adjacent one indicate that there was a struggle. However, her in-laws claim that she committed suicide.

The Chattisgarh Mahila Jagriti Sangathan which investigated this case is trying to socially ostracize the husband and his family, who are planning his second marriage. The Sangathan organized a protest meeting with other women's groups on May 8, and would welcome support in the form of pressure on government officials in Raipur (M.P.) through letters to (a) Mr. Raghunath Prasad, Commissioner, Commissioner's Office, Raipur City, (M.P). (b) Mr. Ajit Jogi, Collector, Collectorate, Raipur City (M.P). (c) V.K. Mukherjee, The Superintendent of Police, Raipur City (M.P.)....

...The Chattisgarh Mahila Jagriti Sangathan held a women's conference at Raipur.

The theme of the conference was "*Nari aur Nyaya ka Sangharsh*." About a 100 women attended—this was the first time in Raipur that rural and urban working class women came together. The speakers emphasized that this new initiative was a step forward. Pramila Dandavate was the chief guest.

## **ENGLAND Attacking Pornography**

"Angry Women" have this year set fire to three sex-shops in Leeds. Although media coverage has been given to attacks on sex-shops throughout the country, important feminist points have been purposely ignored—that pornography is violence

against women.

We are protesting and fighting back against images portraying women as sexual conveniences for men to abuse, hurt and degrade.

Pornography in films, magazines and sex-shops incites men to treat women as instruments solely for their use. It encourages rape, it increases men's power and control over women by humiliating and terrorizing us. Porn is big money-making business built on the suffering of women.

We have resorted to illegal action as 10 years of legal activities and 100 years of feminist struggle have had no effect whatsoever on the pornography issue. We hope that these arson attacks are the start of a more active protest by women against all forms of pornography.

—*Angry Women, Leeds*

## **USA Preserving Women's Lives**

On April 23, 1981, six women (ages 19-36), were charged on a federal statute for "disrupting Congress." The women interrupted a hearing of the Senate Bill 158, the so-called Human Life Statute designed to establish fetal personhood. This bill would put the 1.5 million U.S. women who have abortions every year in danger of being prosecuted for murder, or of being hospitalized for dangerous illegal abortion procedures. Poor women have already died of illegal abortion since Medicaid stopped paying for these procedures. Women will also live in constant fear of unwanted pregnancy, because statistics show that a woman having regular heterosexual intercourse, *using birth control*, has a statistical chance of 2.5 unexpected pregnancies in her lifetime.

The six women, who call themselves the "Women's Liberation ZAP Action Brigade," although completely opposed to the hearings, acted from their belief that because the Senate refused to admit pro-abortion testimony, women's voices had to be heard. The women said, "Stop these hearings. A Woman's life is a Human Life." Spontaneous applause broke out in support as they were led from the room. They were released on \$100 bail each and now face up to \$ 500 fine and/or six months imprisonment.

Extensive press coverage by all major networks and newspapers indicates the overwhelming success of this action. The women encourage others to continue the new wave for militant feminist action in women's response to the increasing attack on women by the government, in the streets and in the home.

## **MAHARASHTRA Adivasi Women Organize**

The Shramik Sangathana held a working class women's liberation convention at Nandurbarphulia district on May Day this year. More than 2,000 women participated enthusiastically. Women members of the Shramik Sangathana have waged many struggles against rape, wife-beating, alcoholism and bride-price. After ten years of experience women members of the Sangathana realized that though the Sangathana fights against economic exploitation of adivasis, an autonomous women's organisation is needed to fight against the specific oppression of women, and in October 1980, adivasi women formed Shramik Stree Mukti Sangathana. They also have their Kalpathak—a cultural group which goes to different villages with its cultural programme taking up women's problems of economic exploitation, sexual oppression and wife-beating.

Adivasi and gadarhiya women, mainly agricultural labourers, came walking from different villages. Many women had to walk from 12 to 33 miles in the scorching heat. There were no trucks or other temptations by "party bosses." Some women took two days to reach the place of the convention. But they didn't mind losing five days' wages.

The convention started with songs. In the morning session two plays were staged. In the afternoon there was group discussion. To make the discussion more meaningful 12 groups were formed where no "leaders" indulged in monologue.

Around 5 p.m. there was a big rally. Women shouted slogans and narrated their problems, struggles, through songs. The public meeting was a little boring where most of the speakers gave long speeches and most of the audience could not understand them because of

language problems. The adivasis there speak Bhilari—a mixture of Gujarati and Marathi.

— *Vibhuti Patel*

## DELHI

### She was one of 394

On the night of March 25, 1981, Raj Rani Tyagi died of burns at the house of her husband Rajinder Kumar Tyagi, - 4981 Gali Malyan, Ahata Kidara, Pahari Dhiraj. We are quite certain that she was burnt by her husband and in-laws. She had been complaining to her parents about the cruelty, ill-treatment and beating she received from her husband and his family. She also said that her father-in-law and other members of the family had threatened to kill her if she failed to get them more dowry and a share in her father's house. Her diary is quite revealing in this regard.

The police first refused to register the case. After many visits, they registered it but not as a case of murder. After much persuasion and the threat of a demonstration outside the police station, we are now told that a murder case has been registered and transferred to the anti-dowry cell of Delhi police. However, the culprits have not yet been arrested.

We would like to emphasize that this case is not an isolated one. The minister of state for home affairs informed the Lok Sabha on April 1 that 394 cases of burning of women by "design or accident" were reported to Delhi police during 1980-81... We demand that Rajinder Kumar and his parents be arrested immediately so that they may not tamper with evidence or exert pressure on witnesses; the police officers guilty of negligence and partiality be suspended immediately; exemplary punishment be awarded to the guilty. . .

—*extracted from report of Raj Rani Case Committee*

### Protest Against Film

It is encouraging to note the increasing number of organizations protesting against the proliferating forms of violence against women.

On May 31, about a 100 women and men demonstrated outside Plaza cinema against the Malayalam film Kochu

Thamburati, advertised in English as *Sexy Girl* and in Hindi as *Pyaasi Jawani*. The three organizations participating were Janwadi Mahila Samiti, Coordination Committee of Working Women and Jan Sanskriti. They shouted slogans and carried placards condemning the commercialization of women and capitalist culture. They tried to persuade cinegoers to sell their tickets and go home. They managed to persuade some while others went in under police protection. They succeeded in engendering a debate with the viewers and this is far more important than merely calling for a state ban on the film.



### Traffic in Women

On April 27, 1981, the Indian Express exposed a sordid racket involving the sale of women in Morena, Madhya Pradesh. The following is based on this and subsequent reports. Morena (M.P.) and Dholpur in Rajasthan are the centres of a far-flung network for buying and selling women. Located at the junction of three states—U.P., Rajasthan and M.P., it is "safe" geographically, as it is surrounded by the ravines of the Chambal and the Yamuna river. Here girls and women can be bought and sold at prices ranging from Rs 2,000 to Rs 20,000. For instance, a 16 year old girl, who can be used to handle ten customers a day for 250 days in a year for at least three years, is priced at Rs 6,000. In recent years, the business, which was originally confined to Pachgaon near Dholpur, has spread over several villages.

The links in the network are varied,

and, as may be expected, they extend upto high places. Women can be obtained through rickshaw pullers and through communities such as the Bedias, the Deradars and the Kanjars. Political patronage is important too. Thus, Banwari Lal Sharma, the most influential man in Pachgaon, is a member of the Rajasthan cabinet. Lawyers and their clerks also act as middlemen, and help in obtaining affidavits to prove that the women voluntarily consent to live with their buyers, and the police say: "Sale and purchase of women is a very old practice here. Are we expected to rush to the village to deal with such cases or are we to concentrate on catching dacoits whose terror is always on our nerves?"

With the explicit or implicit support of those in authority, the traffic in women flourishes unchecked. Girls are generally kidnapped, and "trained." They are then sold, preferably as far as possible from their homes. Thus, a girl from the north will be sold to a buyer from the south and vice versa. This is followed by selling the woman again every few years, so that she cannot develop any links with any one area, which might encourage her to try and escape. And the woman's price is reduced with each successive sale. What such treatment reduces women to is painfully apparent from Kamla's case. She was bought for Rs 2,300 and brought from Morena to Delhi by Ashwini Sarin, an Indian Express reporter, in an attempt to expose the racket. Short, thin, middle-aged, the mother of six children, she was thrown out of her house by her brother-in-law after her husband had either died or abandoned her. Her life before marriage was almost as painful. She lost both her parents while still a child, and her brothers forced her to work in the fields for a livelihood. The other men in her life have treated her similarly—a married pujari and his accomplice kept her without food, a man promised to marry her, but let her down. And her ordeal is nowhere near an end—the Delhi police, in a characteristically overzealous reaction, tried to shift her to the notorious Nari Niketan from the Arya Samaj women's home where she was staying.

It is also important to draw attention

to the fact that Kamla's case is by no means an isolated one. The Indian Express carried a report on May 4 about a Harijan woman who was abducted by some Rajput lords and sold in the flesh market. Despite constant appeals by her husband and the M.P. Civil Rights Protection Committee, the police have not even registered an offence. Moreover, according to a report in the Statesman (23.5.81) the M.P. government officials are trying to cover up the racket by treating Kamla's case as an isolated one, besides delaying the enquiry which the Commissioner of Morena and CID were supposed to undertake. Reporters who visited Morena were told that the racket is still continuing in a place known as Subhash Nagar. Significantly, the only change is that the rates are hiked up.

A word on public reactions to Kamla's plight. The letters to the editor published in the Indian Express (4.5.81) are rather revealing. Significantly, all the letters are by men. Most of them congratulate the reporter "for his courage and outstanding performance at a great risk to his life." Others raise questions: "How come that within 200 kms from the capital of the largest democracy in the world girls are being bought and sold for as little as Rs 2,300?" (As if the price is of crucial importance). Another very interesting letter discusses how Mr Sarin cannot be legally prosecuted for buying Kamla and concludes that "She had consented to her situation"! We are also told that "the problem basically is the imbalance in the sex ratio in the Gujjar community." Another man wonders why we need to borrow the concept of equality from the west, when in the name of equality women are dragged from their homes and tortured: "Why cannot women be like Sita and men like Rama?"

Such reactions, and the bid on the part of the Indian Express to exploit the episode for publicity (through posters plastered all over Delhi which carried big red headlines reading "Sorry you missed the story, but you should have been reading the Indian Express: Kamla sold for Rs 2,300" and "More than a Newspaper: a Cause"), raise certain important questions for us. Though we should not belittle the significance of

such investigative journalism, are not the manner in which it is conducted, the way it is presented and used in the mass media related to the kind of reactions it provokes both from the government and from the vocal section of newspaper readers? One possible solution lies in women themselves undertaking such investigations.

—Kumkum Roy

## RAJASTHAN Driving Women To Madness

On March 9, police entered the house of Kanta Porwal's in-laws' house in Udaipur and found her chained on the roof, starving and on the verge of collapse. Neighbours had seen her in this plight for over two weeks, and had got a photographer to take a picture, on the basis of which police were notified. Her in-laws say she was mad and prone to violence. In fact, Kanta is a scholarship holder but after marriage, she was being harassed, tortured and driven to madness because she had not brought enough dowry. Her four month old son was snatched away from her, her husband refused to live with her and sent her back to her parents many times in the last few years. Finally her in-laws tried to starve her to death by keeping her chained on the roof in the scorching sun for over two months.

A women's group called Udaipur Mahila Samiti is giving support to Kanta and other women like her. The police have registered a case of attempt to murder and wrongful confinement.

## KARNATAKA The Death of Sitha—A Mystery?

The alleged rape and murder of Sitha, a harijan girl in a government hostel in Puttur, South Kanara is one of the most brutal manifestations of the oppression of women, the "lower" castes, and the rural poor. Sitha's death has been easily hushed up by the police as a case of "suicide." Public opinion is that Sitha was murdered but people are afraid to speak the truth lest they become victims of similar crimes.

Sitha is from a girijan peasant family living at Konke, Balnad village in South Kanara. After completing her primary education at Konke, she went to do her

high school studies at Puttur and was living in the government hostel for scheduled caste and scheduled tribe girls at Haradi near Puttur. She rarely visited her family and the last they saw her was in October 1980. She had come for the Diwali vacation but returned to the hostel after only two days, because the hostel warden wrote a letter asking her to come back. Sitha's letters to her family give some idea of the happenings in the hostel. In her letters she mentions that the warden and the social welfare inspector used to sleep on the same bed, that Sitha had to wash their clothes and that she was scared to write anything more about the hostel.

In the course of an extensive investigation by us in which several local people expressed their opinions, the following details were brought to light: On March 5, 1981 at 10 a.m., three people came to Sitha's parents' house to inform them that Sitha was missing from 5 a.m. that morning. She was supposed to have been seen early that morning doing her ablutions, and was reported to have been missing during prayer time which starts at 5.30 a.m. When Sitha's father and uncle reached the hostel the next morning, her body was being taken out of a public well about a furlong away from the hostel. The dead girl had only a skirt on. A slap mark was seen on the right side of her face.

Sitha's father was not allowed to touch the body. It was taken to their house to allow her mother to have a glance and was then cremated immediately. An inquest was not conducted on the spot, but only later on in the hospital when the post mortem was done. Sitha's father was summoned inside the hostel. Here the warden tried to force him to give his thumb impression on a paper. But he refused since he could not read what was written on the paper.

An investigation by the local Marati Sangha and a confidential interview with an inmate of the hostel reveal that the warden had asked all the girls to take an oath on a coconut that they would say Sitha had been seen by them early in the morning on the 5th. But the fact has come to light that Sitha was summoned to the parlour at 9 p.m. on the 4th by the warden,

and the social welfare inspector. A cry of "Hoethu" (Gone) was heard. The girls went to have a peep and saw Sitha's body lying on the floor in a pool of blood. The body was kept in the hostel that night and the next day. At midnight on the 5th, the girls saw a heavy object being carried out.

The warden is known to be carrying on a traffic in women and girls, using the hostel girls. The men who visit these girls are known to be high ranking government officials from Puttur, Mangalore, and surrounding areas. On September 1, 1980, the Marati Sangh filed a case against the immoral activities of the warden but so far no action has been taken.

The deputy superintendent of police of Puttur has been appointed by the chief minister of Karnataka to conduct an enquiry into Sitha's death. It has been found that trafficking in girls residing in government hostels for harijans is of common occurrence in South Kanara district. But no action has been taken against the warden and the inspector.

Sitha's mother, an agricultural labourer, says : "Why did the warden not allow Sitha to come home during the holidays ? Where will the girls of Puttur study if such crimes take place ? My daughter has died. Are we going to wait for another girl's death in order to act?" Today, Sitha's sisters are not allowed to go out in the evening or to Puttur town by themselves. The women in the neighbourhood live in a state of constant fear. Even the scheduled caste men are terrified to speak openly.

Women of South Kanara and the country unite ! Our Demands :

1. The immediate dismissal of the hostel warden.
2. Legal action against the warden and the social welfare inspector.
3. No officials should be allowed to enter women's hostels between 6 p.m. and 8 a.m.

— Stri Jagrati, Mangalore

#### Errata

We forgot to mention that Ramanika Gupta's book of poems *Khunte*, reviewed by us in **Manushi** No. 7, is written in Hindi. The extracts we quoted were translated by us for the purpose of the article.

## Why Some of My Best Friends Are Women

*I learned in my credulous youth  
That women are shallow as fountains,  
Women make lies out of truth  
And oft of a molehill their mountains.  
Women are giddy and vain,  
Cold-hearted or tiresomely tender,  
Yet nevertheless I maintain,  
I dote on the feminine gender.  
For the female of the species may be deadlier than the male  
But she can make herself a cup of coffee without reducing  
The entire kitchen to a shambles.*

*Perverse though their taste in cravats  
Is deemed by their lords and their betters,  
They know the importance of hats  
And they write you the news in their letters.  
Their minds may be lighter than foam,  
Or altered in haste and in hurry,  
But they seldom bring company home  
When you re warming up yesterday's curry.  
And when lovely woman stoops to folly  
She does not invariably come in at four a.m.  
Singing "Sweet Adeline."*

*Oh women are frail and they weep,  
They are recklessly given to scions,  
But wakened unduly from sleep,  
They are milder than tigers or lions.  
Women hang clothes on their pegs  
Nor groan at the toil and the trouble,  
Women have rather nice legs  
And chins that are guiltless of stubble.  
Women are restless, uneasy to handle,  
But when they are burning both ends of the scandal  
They do not insist with a vow that is votive  
How high are their minds and how noble their motive.*

*As shopping companions they're heroes and saints,  
They meet you in tearooms nor murmur complaints,  
They listen entranced, to a list of your vapours,  
At breakfast they sometimes emerge from the papers.  
Yes, I rise to defend  
The quite possible She  
For the feminine gend-  
Er is OK by me.*

*Besides, everybody admits it's a Man's World  
And just look what they've done to it!*

—Phyllis Mcginley, 1932