

40th anniversary

The Royal Commission on the Status of Women

By Kathy Laing, BPW Virtual

Kathy represented BPW Canada at this event.

I attended the event on behalf of BPW Canada, January 27th on Parliament Hill. As you know, the Commission was formed under the direction of Prime Minister Lester Pearson's Liberal Government in 1967. At that time, the Commission held intensive public hearings across Canada. It was difficult for me to believe that it was more than 40 years since I attended one of the open meetings held at the Chateau Laurier circa 1968 - but I digress!

The morning panel included speakers Ellen Gabriel (President of the Native Women's Association of Quebec), Dr. Wendy Robbins (UNB Professor Women's Studies and English), Dr. Hedy Fry (MP Vancouver Centre), Kathleen Lahey (Queen's University Law Professor), Susan Bazilli (Director of the International Women's Rights Project U of Victoria), Charlotte Thibault (Conseil des Montrealaises) and Diane Majury (Law, Carleton University) .

Lunch was provided, and included a presentation by Flora MacDonald concerning her Afghanistan experiences.

The afternoon roundtable discussion focused on "Women's Economic Security." The participants were Alexa Conradi (President, Federation des femmes de Québec), Leilani Farha (Executive Director, Centre for Equality Rights in Accommodation), Patty Ducharme (National Executive VP, PSAC) and Maria Minna (Liberal Critic for Labour).

Michael Ignatieff gave the closing remarks.

I was a little disappointed that references were not made to some of the women on the original Commission – such as our own Elsie Gregory MacGill. Please note that there are websites providing more details – example Judy Rebick's blog.

<http://canadiandimension.com/blog/2830/>