

Mike Hears Voices: Voice of Women and Lester Pearson, 1960-1963

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ABSTRACT

Born of a sense of urgency and hope in Toronto in 1960, Voice of Women (VOW), a women's peace organization, quickly grew and gained renown as a national organization. A timely affiliation with Lester B. Pearson from 1960 to 1963 encouraged and boosted the organization in its early years. Less than one month after VOW was born, Pearson, the Leader of the Opposition, formally proposed that Canada not accept nuclear weapons. However, when Pearson changed his mind as Prime Minister in 1963 and allowed nuclear warheads for Bomarc missiles into Canada, VOW became disappointed with him and increasingly focussed on the international scene.

Women's concern for a lasting universal peace has transcended borders of countries and policies of governments.¹ In the early 1960s a Canadian women's peace organization had hopes of helping to establish universal peace in the tense Cold War era. "By working through women's common interests and their instinctive concern for the human family," Voice of Women (VOW) sought "to help create a world climate of understanding favourable to mutual disarmament without fear."² VOW's emphasis on the universality of motherhood and peace in the early 1960s linked the organization to women's peace groups throughout history.

VOW quickly became international because of its message that women the world over, as bearers and nurturers of life, have common concerns for world peace. The group had national interests as well, although not all was smooth sailing for VOW on the home front. Internally, late in 1962 the organization suffered ideological and methodological conflicts. These conflicts revealed a continuing concern: from the start, the group claimed to be nonideological and nonpartisan in concept and so it welcomed many different women with a broad spectrum of ideas about how to "make peace." In time, these women's differences over method revealed at least one deeper issue: was the group for deterrence or disarmament? Externally, VOW soon realized that it was difficult to remain "apolitical" with its frequent contacts with politicians and involvement in political matters. These women became especially sensitive to this interplay of personal and political factors when they received support in 1960 from Lester B. Pearson, leader of the opposition Liberals. VOW rallied behind Pearson when he proposed his new defence policy for Canada but then became disappointed with him when he shifted his policy in 1963 to allow nuclear weapons on Canadian soil. Morally wounded by a trusted politician,

in mid-1963 VOW rekindled its original zeal for international peace after a brief but deep immersion into Canadian politics.

VOW developed out of a collective fear for the future of the world's children and the conviction that all women have a right to peace because of their common link to motherhood.³ VOW drew upon an earlier tradition of women's organizations: ever since the late nineteenth century a maternal concern for others' children and the amelioration of society's ills have caused many women to look beyond the domestic world. Similar to women's associations in Canada at the turn of the century, VOW members had a biological rationale for their reform efforts.⁴ Many Canadian women in 1960, like some in 1900, had time to be involved in women's groups, and they saw association as a means for them to effect social change.⁵ The Royal Commission on the Status of Women (1970) stated, of Canadian women in the 1960s, "[i]t appears to have been much easier for them to engage in politics indirectly than to run for elected office." In the 1960s women rarely served on policymaking bodies at any government level; instead, women saw their role as supportive and involved themselves in organized groups. During the 1960s, "political, occupational, professional, service, and civic groups seem to have grown at a faster pace than the adult population."⁶ Involvement in these groups was a way for women to express their fears, convictions and needs. It was an avenue for their political talent, a means of effecting changes in society.

In the early 1960s the media aroused public sympathy and stressed international and national news. But, in spite of public uneasiness about the nuclear threat, many people nonetheless believed they could do something about it through direct action; they were hopeful about "participatory democracy."⁷ Lobbying government officials and demonstra-

ting became common practice for many North Americans.⁸ All these changes—women's involvement in associations, the media, and participatory democracy—affected the ways in which some Canadians protested the acquisition of nuclear arms.⁹ These changes certainly were instrumental in the formation and function of VOW.

Like many organizations arising in response to a widely perceived threat, VOW received much initial support but also experienced growing pains. Much of VOW's early strength was drawn from a timely affiliation with Lester B. Pearson, leader of the opposition Liberals until he became Prime Minister in April 1963. Immediately after VOW formation, Pearson made a formal statement of the new Liberal defence policy which opposed Canadian acquisition of nuclear weapons. VOW quickly rallied behind Pearson and supported him for the next two and a half years. However, when Pearson changed his policy in 1963 and agreed to accept nuclear warheads for the otherwise useless Bomarc missiles already on Canadian soil, VOW lost faith in him.

This event was both instrumental in challenging VOW's fragile foundation of late 1962 as well as forming a less "vague and diffuse" focus for the group over time. VOW's reaction to the shift in Liberal policy provides an excellent example of the lobbying techniques of the still young organization, the importance of the debate over disarmament and deterrence as a means of avoiding nuclear war, and the friction within VOW created by partisan considerations. Moreover, this example shows how the timing of international political events uniquely influenced Canadian foreign affairs, and eventually VOW and the Canadian public. Interestingly, as Pearson's stance on nuclear weapons for Canada shifted, the interpretation of the original purpose of VOW also changed.

In 1960 both VOW and Pearson were open about their support for each other. On July 28, 1960, the date of VOW formation, Pearson sent a personal telegram to Josephine Davis, one of VOW's founding members, forwarding "greetings to all those assembled and best wishes for successful deliberations and for your work for peace and justice."¹⁰ VOW sought Pearson's well-respected advice even before the organization was formed, and welcomed Pearson's wife, Maryon, as an honorary sponsor with open arms once the group was established. When rumors of a forthcoming shift in Liberal defence policy—from an unclear nuclear defence position to a lucid platform of "no nuclear arms"—coincided with the birth of the organization, VOW threw all its support behind the Liberal leader.

On August 5, 1960, Pearson made an important statement on defence in the House of Commons, clearly stating his hope that Canada as a "middle" power could stay out of the nuclear weapons field. Pearson believed he had formulated a policy which would not question Canada's continental defence commitment nor default on Canada's obligations as a member of NATO. Unless a final collective NATO decision made at the highest political level of the council would agree to equip NATO forces with defensive nuclear weapons, Canada "should not even consider equipping her European NATO forces with any kind of nuclear weapon," Pearson wrote to concerned Canadians.¹¹

In essence Pearson was advocating a "new approach in the field of defence policy, a new orientation, a change of direction" in which Canada's defence policy would be strengthened "through its participation in the search for an enduring peace which, after all, is the only defence policy that really means anything in the long run." In the House of Commons Pearson said, in part, that

If we lose the peace and slide into nuclear war—because we are more likely to slide into nuclear war than to get into it in any other way—then no other form of defence is going to save us, essential though those forms may seem at the present time.

I think this change of direction which I have mentioned should always have in mind the desirability...for getting out of nuclear armaments completely, without getting out of our collective commitments. I think that is the best role for a middle power like Canada.¹²

Pearson believed that his proposed defence policy would assert Canadian independence in foreign affairs policy-making without defaulting on Canada's international obligations. In fact, Canada should always be ready to muster its forces on land, sea, or in the air for international service.

This kind of statement by a prominent politician appealed to the sentiments of VOW members. The Leader of the Opposition was firmly stating his position against the acquisition of a nuclear arsenal for Canada's defence weapons. More than one hundred letters from Canadian women, many of whom wrote that they were VOW members, praised his antinuclear stance as contributing to better futures for their children and children's children. Many women began their letters to Pearson by stating their concern as "mothers and Canadians." Phrases such as the following dominated letters addressed to Pearson in August, 1960: "the dangers of radiation to our children and children's children"; "because of the great

anxiety for the future of our children"; "in view of the extreme dangers which will come to men, women, girls and boys and little children"; "thank you from thousands of mothers and especially from me"; "Canadian mothers will not sacrifice husbands, children and their own lives willingly to assuage U.S. ego's [sic] in Pentagon"; "I am the mother of seven children, five of whom are boys, and earnestly feel that we mothers should not have to give birth only to be offered up in war or in the disasters of nuclear fallout"; "for the future of the human race"; "On this peaceful Sunday morning as I sit and watch my three children quietly praying in the sun, I know I cannot fully relax with the sword of a nuclear war hanging over their heads."¹³ The last paragraph of Marion Bacon's letter to Pearson, dated August 4, 1960, sums up the sentiments expressed in most of the letters. She wrote,

As a mother of two growing daughters, I want to feel that my girls have a chance to grow up and someday themselves be mothers of happy, healthy children.... Do not permit [Canada] to become a partner in nuclear armaments, a joiner in the headlong race towards the annihilation of humanity. Untold numbers of Canadian men and women like myself, concerned for the future of our children and our children's children, will be standing solidly behind you.¹⁴

In addition to this maternal concern for the human race, the letters written in the summer of 1960 concentrated on the "insanity" and "mass suicide" of nuclear war. A few letters were quite graphic in their descriptions of the possible annihilation of the human race, and these descriptions again stressed the responsibility of women as mothers. The universal tie among all of the world's mothers was referred to often. One woman wrote that "as a mother...I feel keenly for mothers of children, yet unborn, all over the world. This terrible insanity has to end." Another wrote, "What is to be gained by mangling other peoples [sic] children?" Yet another wrote that "To accede in the preparation for a nuclear war which would be suicidal to the majority of the human race is to become as the lemmings and race madly to the edge of the cliff to throw ourselves to our deaths."¹⁵ Some suggested that their maternal abhorrence of a nuclear war revealed a purer motive on the part of women as compared to men. One woman remarked:

As a mother of two children I find the idea of nuclear conflict abhorrent, and I have decided to do what I can to support any action which will turn the minds of men away from warfare.¹⁶

Another woman strongly felt that "the world cannot be saved by men alone; you have tried, in your own way all of you," she wrote, and "now we the women...will try in our own way, and together, we will succeed."¹⁷

Evidently some VOW members were also Liberal party supporters. Several laudatory letters congratulated Pearson's antinuclear stance as a boon to the Liberal party. For example, one woman from Vancouver wrote:

I would like to congratulate you on the firm and realistic stand which the Liberal party has now taken on Canada's defence policies.

I am particularly pleased to note that the Liberal Party is now advocating that Canada be a non-nuclear power¹⁸.

A writer from Ontario began her letter to Pearson by referring to herself as a member of VOW, "as an independent person, housewife and mother." As such, she wished to express her "wholehearted support for the Liberal Party's stand against the acquisition of nuclear warheads."¹⁹ One woman went so far as to "confess that [she was] one of the many Liberals who foolishly voted P.C. in '57 (but not in '58)." She continued to say "what a grievous disappointment [the Conservatives] have been," and ended by "wishing [Pearson] and the Liberal Party the best of luck in the future."²⁰ After applauding Pearson's stance another wrote that "I'm fed up with Diefenbaker, a lot more people likewise."²¹ Like the examples above, most VOW members' letters to Pearson simply stated the horrors of nuclear war, their concern for the world's children, and their support for Pearson as a Liberal. Just organized in July, 1960, it seemed natural for VOW to support the Liberal party's new nonnuclear stance of August 1960. Perhaps this political angle of support for Pearson reflected the traditional role of women when it came to public matters: by attaching themselves to an influential and powerful man, women's burdensome feelings of helplessness and fear were reduced.

Pearson personally answered several of these letters. In most replies he stated that he was "most appreciative of the sentiments expressed by the members of the 'Voice of Women' and their sincere desire to do everything possible to promote a peaceful atmosphere in the world."²² Many VOW members received form letters and almost all were sent a copy of the *House of Commons Debates* of August 5, 1960, where Pearson outlined exactly how Canada could be an effective non-nuclear, "middle" power.

As long as he reiterated an antinuclear stance, Pearson continued to get VOW support. In a VOW "Rush Bulletin"

dated March 30, 1962, the group praised Pearson for his statement of March 28 which reiterated his position not to allow nuclear weapons on Canadian soil. He was quoted in the bulletin as saying, "I believe that we should have a defense policy which will not require Canada to become a nuclear power in the sense of making, or using or securing nuclear weapons for her forces and which would be under national control." The bulletin urged members, "as an important voice," to indicate their support by writing to Pearson.²³

As the year progressed VOW continued to make its own voice heard. Two resolutions passed at the second annual meeting in September 1962 revealed that VOW members were abreast of current world issues. One concerned Cuba and "the threat to world peace brought about by existing American and Russian involvement in Cuban affairs"; VOWers wished "to make an effort to reverse this trend." Another centered on the Bomarc missile bases in Canada, asking "that the Government of Canada demonstrate the sincerity of its position against the further spread of nuclear weapons by instituting proceedings for the immediate removal of Bomarc missile bases."²⁴ A press release dated October 13, 1962, for example, shows how the organization tried to pressure the government about nuclear weapons. It said that "La Voix des Femmes vous pris instamment en ce moment critique de ré-affirmer la position de votre gouvernement contre les ogives nucléaires."²⁵

While the Cuban crisis caused many VOW members to reaffirm their antinuclear stand, that same crisis precipitated key policy changes among Western leaders which eventually lost them the support they may have had from peace groups. The American government under John F. Kennedy discovered that missiles were being shipped to Cuba and set up there by the Soviets. This revelation sent a shock of panic throughout the Western world. In Canada, the whole situation forced government and opposition leaders to reexamine Canada's agreements with the United States and to do so on very short notice. According to one writer, the Cuban missile crisis was the first crucial test of the integrated defence system of Canada and the United States.²⁶ Internationally, the crisis was "the most dangerous East-West confrontation since World War II"; nationally, it showed Canadians that Diefenbaker's ability to make sound decisions upon short notice was waning.²⁷ The affair awakened some Canadians to the fact that the Conservative government's defence policy lacked substance. Moreover, it created an uneasiness within the Conservative caucus. Some Conservatives strongly supported Howard Green who cautioned against blindly following the United States' lead, particularly since Kennedy had not kept the American commitment to consult Canada in view of such a crisis. Others felt that it was necessary to endorse imme-

diately the American decision to impose a naval quarantine of further shipments of military weapons to Cuba.²⁸

It took Diefenbaker three days to state an official position for Canada, that of supporting the American government in the naval quarantine. His lack of enthusiasm and unwillingness to back the American government without hesitation brought the Conservatives criticism, but not from VOW. Nevertheless, the issue deeply concerned VOW members. They got involved, prodding the United Nations Security Council to "send immediately a neutral fact finding mission to Cuba."²⁹ VOW also sent a telegram to Diefenbaker on October 27, 1962, two days after his decision to support the United States. The group urged Diefenbaker to

use all of Canada's prestige and resources to support the efforts of the acting secretary, U Thant, to mediate in the current dispute, upholding the right and the authority of the United Nations as the highest arbitrator of all international disputes in the world today.³⁰

The Cuban crisis also forced Pearson to review his own stand on nuclear weapons. In November 1962 Pearson sent a "Memorandum to the Members of the Liberal Caucus Re: Foreign and Defence Policy." The contents reiterated that Canada should remain free of nuclear weapons:

I regret that there was no consultation beforehand [from Kennedy]... May I assure you that I do not believe that Canada should accept nuclear arms under national control by herself or by the U.S.A. On the contrary, I have consistently argued that the nuclear club should not be enlarged...³¹

However, by the end of 1962 it was abundantly clear to Pearson that most of the military hardware which Canada had acquired was totally useless without nuclear warheads. The Bomarc missiles that Canada had agreed to accept as part of its NORAD commitment had come into the country without their nuclear warheads, and the debate over whether Canada should now accept the warheads escalated after the Cuban crisis. Pearson was keenly aware that Diefenbaker's cabinet was split over the question and that the Conservatives consequently presented a cloudy image to the Canadian electorate. The Liberal leader saw that the time was opportune for presenting a clear policy, one which he thought would satisfy most Canadians that Canada was an "effective ally." In the months between the Cuban crisis and the election in April 1963, Pearson changed the position he had held since VOW's formation. Instead of maintaining that military considerations did not require Canada to accept nuclear weapons,

Pearson adopted a stance which honoured Canada's international commitments to "accept...nuclear warheads."³² It was a shame that Canada had made "nuclear commitments and then refused to discharge them."³³

Finally, Pearson was needled by a speech on January 3, 1963 by the American general, Lauris Norstad, when Norstad arrived in Canada. The general bluntly stated that the American government was becoming increasingly impatient with the Canadian government's lack of policy. Pearson responded with a switch in his party's policy, but the public did not hear of it until nine days later because the Liberals needed time to iron out the subtleties of the policy change. A memorandum to Pearson by one of his top aides, Richard O'Hagan, dated January 7, 1963, stressed the importance of the timing of Pearson's upcoming speech on defence policy. Furthermore, he emphasized the "shakiness" of the present world situation, commenting, "Cuba, Kennedy, Skybolt, and now in local terms, General Norstad have helped bring this whole picture into a shaky kind of focus."³⁴ He urged Pearson to state clearly his policy in his next speech.

Pearson's modified nuclear defence policy, officially outlined in a speech to the York-Scarborough Liberal Association in Toronto, stressed Canada's commitments of 1957 and 1958 to NORAD and NATO to accept short-range tactical nuclear weapons. The Liberals maintained that the commitments were entered into by the Canadian government under Diefenbaker and should be honoured. The Liberal policy was now one of "deterrent defence" which meant "the availability of nuclear tactical weapons in the face of an immediate vital threat or emergency." Cuba was cited as an example of "an immediate vital threat." In sum, the Liberal defence policy after January 12 included "Defensive Nuclear Weapons in NATO and in NORAD in order to fulfill Canada's present commitments as a respected member of the Free World and in Defense of Peace, Security and Freedom." Pearson now believed that deterrence was "essential to the preservation of peace."³⁵

The reactions to Pearson's new defence policy were numerous. Many Canadians, including VOW members and some newspaper editors, felt the Leader of the Opposition was "waffling." In another of O'Hagan's memoranda to Pearson, dated January 23, 1963, the importance of clarifying the defence policy was stressed again: it was essential that the Liberals present a distinct alternative to the Conservatives, while not losing Liberal supporters.³⁶ Since the Liberals wanted to present a solid image to the Canadian people—in contrast to the faltering Conservatives—Pearson repeated the party's position in a simplistic manner on several occasions

after January 12. He restated his earlier concern that the government must be responsible to the Canadian people and that the Conservative government had failed in its responsibility. The inability of the Minister of National Defence to act quickly in a crucial world situation

underlines the confusion and conflict within a divided Cabinet. This continued unwillingness or inability of the Government to state a policy on defence in clear and forthright terms is an abdication of responsibility to the people of Canada and to this country's allies in the Atlantic coalition.³⁷

Pearson was well aware of the opposition his speech of January 12 would arouse. In a letter to "Jimmie" Sinclair of Vancouver he wrote, "I am much encouraged by the many letters I have had similar to yours—but then there are also many who don't agree. The days ahead will be difficult!"³⁸ Pearson received numerous letters, written almost exclusively by men, welcoming his speech, but the majority of those questioning his consistency came from women. Many letters were from VOW members who condemned what they saw as a total reversal in Liberal policy. Before 1963 Pearson had an unequivocal nonnuclear stance and after 1963 he was advocating the use of nuclear weapons. VOW felt it had been betrayed by a trusted advisor and political leader.³⁹ A few who wrote were also members of the Liberal Party. One woman found it necessary to resign from her local Liberal Women's Association because of Pearson's speech. Pearson "respect[ed] the sincerity of [her] motives" even though he could not "respect the validity of [her] reason."⁴⁰

Pearson's wife, Maryon, received several letters after January 12, 1963, the date of Pearson's speech. Almost as if she anticipated these letters, Maryon Pearson submitted a statement to the *Globe and Mail* and the *Toronto Star* on January 14, 1963. It indicated that her "husband's statement on defence policy in no way conflict[ed] with [her] support of the V.O.W. as it was originally conceived," adding "We [VOW] are for disarmament, of course, but not for concessions in the name of peace which would mean the loss of freedom and even make war more, rather than less, likely." Along with her husband, Maryon Pearson believed Canada should honour its "commitment" to its "allies."⁴¹

Nevertheless, the letters of disagreement continued to arrive. Most correspondents wondered how she could support her husband's speech and be involved in VOW at the same time. Maryon Pearson replied to such letters in a general way, stating that her husband's main aim was peace as was VOW's. In a typical letter she wrote,

I feel I must tell you...that I understand perfectly the decision arrived at by my husband in his statement on nuclear defence policy, with which I agree wholeheartedly. It is possible for me to do this and, at the same time, uphold the purpose of the V.O.W. which, after all, is peace.⁴²

But in March 1963 she sent an official message to VOW stating the organization had "changed" and that she "no longer agreed with its methods." One of the "changes" that disturbed Maryon Pearson was Thérèse Casgrain's resignation as VOW president to run as an NDP candidate in the upcoming election:

[VOW has] elected as a president someone well known for her political bias. This has been proved to be true by her recent resignation from VOW to become a candidate for the N.D.P.... I have been told that she instructed VOW members how they should vote. This in my opinion ruins the purposes [of] VOW.

She did not mention that her husband's policy had "changed" as well; evidently, politics played a larger part in the Pearson-VOW connection as the election neared.⁴³

The political impact of the Cuban crisis in Canada and Pearson's statement of January 12, 1963, contributed to Maryon Pearson's resignation from VOW. Changes in Pearson's defence policy and a more antinuclear VOW resulting from the organization's first years of struggles and growth combined to make an unhappy marriage between VOW and the Pearsons after a mere two and a half years. Having supported and advised VOW in the past, Pearson's enthusiasm now cooled. After all, the Gallup Poll of December, 1962 had revealed that most Canadians—fifty-four percent—favoured nuclear weapons for Canada's armed forces, while thirty-two percent were against them.⁴⁴ Maryon Pearson, among others, found herself caught in the middle of it all. She could identify with VOW when it initially encouraged the study of issues bearing on survival in the nuclear age and sought to become a voice for the general concerns of Canadian women. But, VOW became a "more routine, and determined, pressure group against nuclear weapons," the Pearsons severed their formal ties with the organizations.⁴⁵

Early in 1962 Pierre Berton called the aims of VOW and similar groups "vague and diffuse." He observed their primary characteristic to be "groping for some alternative to nuclear disaster."⁴⁶ Within a year of this statement Pearson had given VOW something specific to attack. Pearson's new emphasis caused VOW to sharpen what others saw as its

"vague and diffuse" focus. Although maintaining its original purpose, VOW's focus narrowed in a span of less than three years due to the impetus provided by current political events. The Pearson episode also caused VOW henceforth to concentrate its efforts more on international issues; as the organization entered its fourth year its concern for global peace grew. Already at the VOW board meeting in September 1963 the agenda was dominated by proposals to encourage Canada to recognize mainland China, get VOW "observer status" at the United Nations, lobby for test ban treaties and, for the first time, be concerned about the "treatment of children in Vietnam."⁴⁷

VOW learned a valuable lesson through its close association with and reliance on "Mike" Pearson. The organization's return to its original emphasis on global peace from overt support for a political party's policy was the result of its early growth experiences. In 1960, VOW had passionately proclaimed that "the force of our message must penetrate statesmen's minds so as to make real changes in our world."⁴⁸ As the interwoven pattern of public involvement in political matters developed in the early 1960s, VOW members found themselves getting involved, too. One woman maintained that the more members worked, the more the group "realized [it] had to become involved politically."⁴⁹ Originally a loose aggregation of women concerned for the future of their children, VOW emerged as a more mature and sophisticated lobby group with a clearly defined goal: world disarmament. From 1963 on, Voice of Women was more wary about pledging support to a Canadian politician, and increasingly focussed its concerns on the international scene.

NOTES

1. A recently released film showing women's ongoing concern for world peace is "Speaking Our Peace," directed by Bonnie Sherr Klein and Terri Nash, National Film Board of Canada, 1985. I would like to thank David Frank (University of New Brunswick), Louis-Georges Harvey (University of Ottawa) and Susan M. Trofimenkoff (University of Ottawa) for commenting on earlier versions of this paper.
2. Pearson papers, vol. 91, part 1. The bulk of the research for this paper comes from Voice of Women files [MG 28 I 218] and the Lester Bowles Pearson papers [MG 26 N 2], both available at the Public Archives of Canada. See also many letters in VOW files, vol. 1, files 1-3. This theme is further explored in my unpublished M.A. history memoir at the University of Ottawa, on the early years of VOW entitled "Women Organized for Peace: Voice of Women, 1960-1963."
3. The impetus to form VOW came from many responses to Lotta Dempsey's column in the *Toronto Star* on May 21, 1960. After the collapse of the Paris Summit Conference renewed the threat of worldwide war, she simply asked in her column, "What can women do?" See also Kay Macpherson and Meg Sears, "The Voice of Women: A History," in Gwen Matheson, ed., *Women in the Canadian Mosaic* (Toronto: Peter Martin Associates Ltd., 1976); "In Conversation with Muriel Duckworth Part Two: The Peace Movement," Bernadette Maxwell, ed., *New Maritimes*, 1, 9 (May, 1983): p. 10; VOW files, vol. 1 at the PAC; VOW files in the present head

- office, 175 Carlton Street, Toronto, Ontario, M5A 2K3; Charlotte McEwen, interview, June 29, 1984; Dorothy Smieciuch, interview, September 21, 1984.
4. Linda Kealey emphasizes that women in networks at the turn of the century had a biological rationale for their reform zeal: "woman's special role as mother gives her the duty and the right to participate in the public sphere" Linda Kealey, ed., *A Not Unreasonable Claim: Women and Reform in Canada, 1880s-1920s* (Toronto: Women's Educational Press, 1979), p. 8.
 5. The Royal Commission on the Status of Women (1970) noted the following: "There is little doubt that the need to be socially useful has always been one of the reasons why women join voluntary groups.... The kind of associations women join gives an indication of their current interests and indirectly their needs." Canada, *Report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada* (Ottawa: Information Canada, 1970), 46.
 6. *Op. cit.*, p. 46, 64.
 7. See Robert Bothwell, et. al., *Canada Since 1945: Power, Politics and Provincialism* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981), p. 256.
 8. Thérèse Casgrain, one-time VOW president, has written that "[d]emonstrating was one of our methods long before such actions became popular." Thérèse Casgrain, tr. Joyce Marshall, *A Woman in a Man's World* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1972), p. 164.
 9. The press and television media were both a boon and a stumbling block to VOW from 1960 to 1963. For example, Josephine Davis appeared on Canadian Broadcasting Corporation shows, including the television program "Front Page Challenge" on October 11, 1960; after the show had been aired, letters poured in from women who wanted to join VOW. But one VOW file at the PAC is filled with "Hate Literature, 1962-1966," too.
 10. VOW files, vol. 1, file 4.
 11. Pearson papers, vol. 3.
 12. Canada, *House of Commons Debates*, VII (August 5, 1960), p. 7611.
 13. Pearson papers, vol. 3, file 100.1, letters from the following women:

Margaret Cotgave	August 31, 1960
Esther Radosevic	August 23, 1960
W.R. Lautelon [<i>sic</i>]	August 15, 1960
Gwen Resnick	August 10, 1960
Mrs. Davies	August 8, 1960
Hilda Collins	August 8, 1960
Sandra Snetsinger	August 7, 1960
Mrs. V. Olson	August 4, 1960
 14. *Ibid.*, Marion Bacon to Pearson, August 4, 1960.
 15. *Ibid.*, Wanda P. Justice to Pearson, August 5, 1960.
 16. *Ibid.*, Gladys M. Stowe to Pearson, August 2, 1960.
 17. *Ibid.*, Delphine Pare to Pearson, August 9, 1960.
 18. *Ibid.*, Noreen A. Lyon to Pearson, August 24, 1960.
 19. *Ibid.*, Jocelyn Lee to Pearson, August 19, 1960.
 20. *Ibid.*, Mrs. F. Twiss to Pearson, August 16, 1960.
 21. *Ibid.*, G.K. Laburn to Pearson, August 7, 1960.
 22. *Ibid.*, Pearson to Mrs. L. Ray Silver, August 9, 1960.
 23. Pearson papers, vol. 91, part 1, March 30, 1962.
 24. VOW files, vol. 1, file 18.
 25. *Ibid.*, vol.1, file 13.
 26. John W. Warnock, *Partner to Behemoth: The Military Policy of a Satellite Canada* (Toronto: New Press, 1970), p. 157.
 27. Peter C. Newman, *Renegade in Power: The Diefenbaker Years* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd., 1963), p. 333.
 28. *Ibid.*, p. 336-337.
 29. VOW files, vol. 1, file 13.
 30. *Ibid.*, vol. 1, file 6.
 31. Pearson papers, vol. 91, part 1.
 32. As Peter Newman points out, "Pearson's personal aversion to the acquisition of nuclear warheads was outbalanced by his conviction that international commitments, once pledged, must be discharged." Newman, *op. cit.*, p. 396.
 33. Robert Bothwell, *Pearson: His Life and World* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd., 1978), p. 120.
 34. Pearson papers, vol. 91, part 1.
 35. *Ibid.*, vol. 158, January 18, 1963.
 36. *Ibid.*, vol. 158, January 23, 1963.
 37. *Ibid.*, vol. 158, February 4, 1963.
 38. *Ibid.*, vol. 158, January 19, 1963.
 39. Most of the women writing to Pearson in 1963 capitalized on this theme. Charlotte McEwen told the author, "Because people had so much faith in Pearson it came as a real shock." Charlotte McEwen, interview, June 29, 1984.
 40. Pearson papers, vol. 158, January 19, 1963.
 41. *Ibid.*, vol. 13, Mrs. Pearson file.
 42. *Ibid.*, vol. 157, January 19, 1963.
 43. *Ibid.*, vol. 91, part 1.
 44. John Paul and Jerome Laulich, *In Your Opinion* (Clarkson, Ontario, 1963), p. 138, as found in Peyton V. Lyon, *Canada in World Affairs 1961-1963*, Vol. XII (Winnipeg: Hignell Printing Ltd. for Oxford University Press, 1968), p. 89.
 45. *Ibid.*
 46. Quoted in Gratton Gray, "Norman Alcock vs. the Bomb," *Toronto Star Weekly*, January 20, 1962.
 47. VOW files, vol. 2, file 11.
 48. VOW files, vol. 1, file 2.
 49. *Ibid.*, vol. 1, file 8, Peggy Hope-Simpson to Josephine Davis, November 24, 1962.