

eyes." Radwan sees, too, that the best efforts of his family to retain their culture are failing: the grandchildren speak only English; the close-knit immigrant community cannot duplicate the warmth of the village. He understands, against his will, that the losses — of peace, of the young, of his own youth — are irrevocable. The restlessness grows, speaking a

need to return to his home, to the vestiges of the past, "before it is too late." In the words of his son, Nabeel, "he judges things emotionally and his emotion is tied up with that little spot of the world."

*Flight Against Time* illuminates the Lebanon of the present in the light of a gentler time, and reflects the joys and passions, the fears, and the ideals of its people

caught in unwilling transition. A novel of considerable strength, well conceived and beautifully executed, this is a book to read and to read again: "a handful of soil ... a gift to the young ones, as though it were the last call for help from a land on fire."

## WOMEN AND PEACE: RESOURCE BOOK

Edited by Wilma Needham. Halifax:  
Voice of Women, 1987.

### Sharon Froese Nielsen

"Women and Peace" was originally an exhibition at the Mount Saint Vincent Art Gallery in 1985. As Heather Dawkins and Mary Sparling, Exhibitions Office and Director of the Gallery, point out

*The exhibition provided a point from which women, peace activists and artists could work, forging new relationships between grassroots movements and art, and (in a predominantly formalist artistic environment), art-making and 'the social/political.'*

This book is a result of that exhibition and takes the work to a much larger audience.

The book begins with an introduction by the editor who discusses women's role in peace and the role of feminist art. She points out that, "it is necessary to speak of peace not only in terms of an absence of war in our backyard but also in terms of justice." The issues of "art and politics and women and peace" are also discussed. Tradition has it that artists must separate art and political activity: "if you want to grub around in the unseemly muck of political and social issues, you must leave your studio." One response to what to do when an artist cares about both art and politics is the notion that the personal is political. For artists, this translates into "a conscious personal visualization of the social and political forces that inform our lives." It has also meant that we learn to speak about art with our own voices, not leaving interpretation to the 'experts,' not giving power to others. Feminist art has thus "provided a validation of women's lives and values; it made women visible more emphatically to ourselves."

Needham further notes that, "Among the many recent contributions of feminist art was the re-validation of women's craft-work, in particular, textiles." Her introduction concludes with a discussion of various themes in the work portrayed in the exhibit.

Barbara Roberts contributed the next section on "Canadian Women and the Peace Movement: An Introductory History" which is an excellent summary of women's peace activities since the turn of the century. She points out that women have always been instrumental in peace-related issues, that they tend to be the core of the movement and that women have given the peace movement new inspiration. It is often difficult to find historical material on the peace movement and women's role therein. Roberts' discussion provides a good overview not only of events, organizations, and activists but also of various theoretical conceptions that have concerned the peace movement over time. She concludes by noting that "a few women peace workers pointed out a



Illustration by Suzanne Barnes [TDN]

century and a half ago that peace is indeed a women's issue."

Following this is a presentation of poetry by Donna E. Smyth and Maxine N. Tynes. The poetry complements the artwork beautifully by portraying in words the concerns evident in the photographs of the exhibit pieces.

Prior to presenting photographs of the exhibit, Heather Dawkins and Mary Sparling discuss the exhibit, noting that, "For peace activists and supporters, the exhibition was a cultural affirmation."

The following 20-page section contains photographs of "Women and Peace: An Exhibition of Visual Art of Resistance by Women from Across Canada." Each photograph is accompanied by a brief explanation of the artist's particular vision of peace. The work presented is wonderful — although one wishes the photographs were in colour. However, as they are, the photos present a variety of ideas concerning feminist orientations to peace, from the personal to the global. The book concludes with a resource list of activist groups across the country.

Overall, this book is an excellent piece of work. It has the advantage of presenting articles in both French and English. It provides a great deal of information, educating us in terms of the historical context of the peace movement as well as showing vividly some of the various ways women are currently working for peace. Certainly one concludes the book wishing it had been possible to attend the actual exhibition. Moreover, the work is inspirational while at the same time providing information to enable readers to become active in peace issues. It is good to see evidence that

*Women's groups are developing new ways to make decisions, work cooperatively, and integrate our emotional, analytical, creative, and spiritual abilities as we work to reclaim the world and shape a future safe for everyone.*