

Birth Control and abortion were illegal in Canada during the depression. Many women died in childbirth and from abortions they induced with slippery elm (herb) and knitting needles. With support from the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation, a brave band of women went door to door, risking imprisonment, in impoverished rural communities. Visiting homes with fresh diapers and children's clothing on the line, they dodged the church and police, and begged post masters to deliver condoms or diaphragms, by mail.

RUTH BULLOCK:

My birth had been so horrific that I was never able to carry a child again. I became pregnant but I would lose a child within two months. So, I had to fight with my doctor to get a pessary so I would not repeat this problem. He said, "Mrs. Matthews, when you have