

ELIZABETH WILSON

Mrs. Wilson describes the conditions and the struggle of the unemployed during the 1930's. A meeting on the Cambie Street Grounds was broken up by police on horseback with riot sticks. ⁺ The organizers ~~were~~ deported. She worked for the CCF to build ^{the} Dorothy Steeves campaign. Inhabitants of Vancouver East were particularly militant, fighting evictions and assisting the less conscious West Enders. Mrs. Wilson was forced onto relief. She had formerly worked as a waitress. After a demonstration at the Holden Building, Gerry McGeer radd the Riot Act at the Cenotaph. Relief recipients all received the same marked clothing. Women received \$13/month on relief. Andy Rodden, the minister of the First Church preached to the unemployed and visited False Creek, the shantytown of the unemployed men, distributing loaves of bread. The Communist Party was central in leading the unemployed. Women during the Depression faced great difficulties in controlling unwanted pregnancy. Many women resorted to abortion using knitting needles or slippery elm. Only one doctor, Dr. Telford, dispensed birthcontrol. The welfare system provided constant harassment of recipients by social workers. Destitute women were forced off of relief and onto alimony ^{but} most of their husbands never paid up.