

BY DIANE EDMONDSON

In conjunction with the West Kootenay Status of Women, Selkirk College hosted a seminar recently entitled "People vs. Law". The seminar consisted of a series of lectures and workshops intended to increase one's legal knowledge. It was held at the request of many private citizens who had expressed a real desire to "know their rights".

The speaker opening the well attended seminar was Judge Nancy Morrison, the first provincial judge to be named by the NDP government. Judge Morrison immediately took offence with the advertized title "People vs. Law" and said she felt "People and Law" would have been more appropriate, arguing that it is people who make the law and if one is in opposition to a law, then that person should agitate to have the law changed.

Judge Morrison then discussed the wide range of laws which affect most people. She gave interpretations, and often her opinions, on capital punishment, abortion, prostitution, name change, legal status of women and many more Canadian laws. Judge Morrison manages to make a speech on legalities on entertaining, often humorous events, which surprised and delighted many in her audience.

#### WORKSHOPS

On Saturday a series of workshops, led by qualified specialists, was presented throughout the day. These were held in separate groups to enable each person to attend three workshops of their choice. The topics and group leaders were as follows:

Human Rights Act and Youth and the Law: Kit Rigg, Peoples Law School, Vancouver; Marriage Contracts and Alternate Forms of Marriage and Divorce: Rachael Cormierr, articling lawyer, Vancouver; Family Relations Act: Maureen Enser and Peter Moir, Community Services Centre, Nelson; Landlords and Tenants Act: Susan Lyotier, Project Action, Nelson; UIC: Jane Toews, Project Action, Nelson; Welfare: Pat Bredl, project Action, Nelson; Consumerism: Mike Culpepper, Project Action, Nelson, formerly of Consumer Action League of Vancouver.

#### SUMMATION

At the close of the workshops, a summation was held and each group leader answered questions from the floor.

After the dinner break, Ms. A.E. Chapman and her panel presented "The Key to Thinking Ahead". Ms. Chapman has gained national recognition for helping thousands of people by producing a clearly-written questionnaire designed to encourage people to put their affairs in order. She presented a brief speech, saying that few people are prepared for the crisis in family finances and legal matters that occur because of death. She explained her pamphlet in detail, and then introduced her panel, Russ Stringer, CPP, Victoria; David Ingrams, Income Tax Consultant, Vancouver; Anne Jones, Lawyer, Castlegar; Don Wickett, funeral director, Castlegar. Each of the panelists, experts in their respective fields, spoke to the audience, giving a general outline of procedures and laws and followed with some examples that would help an individual in time of stress.