

The Ontario Committee on the Status of Women

TORONTO ONTARIO

NEWSLETTER

JUNE 1973

This newsletter is distributed by the Ontario Committee on the Status of Women, a Toronto-based group formed in 1972 to press for the implementation of the provincial aspects of the report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women. The newsletter is an effort to establish communication among members and with other Status of Women groups in the province to exchange information and to provide a basis for province-wide action when necessary.

With the growth of activity of the committee, some comment on its format seems required. As an action group working on specific problems, the OCSW has kept formal processes to a minimum in order to be flexible while still allowing for an acceptable degree of consensus. Decisions are made in committee by the people who are actually doing the job. An informal steering committee is made up of one or two representatives of the sub-committees active at that time. There are no permanent officers, the only two on-going jobs to date being compiling of memberships and writing the newsletter. General meetings are held whenever proposals for new action arise needing discussion and the formation of new sub-committees. All people on the membership list are notified of these meetings which are chaired on a rotating basis. At the general meetings, reports are heard from the active committees and policy aired. Briefs, press releases and issues demanding immediate attention are discussed by the person or committee initiating action with at least three other members of the steering committee.

We urge the formation of other Status of Women groups in centres throughout the province. We would be pleased to publish regularly names and addresses of contact people in other areas.

FAIR EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES COMMITTEE --- BANKING

Bank employees are being encouraged to seek advancement and equality of employment practices. The pamphlet "How far can you go as a woman in banking?" was distributed throughout Metro in February. An invitation to meet to discuss women in banking led to meetings which are still being held regularly. Other women's groups in Ontario and in other provinces are carrying this part of the campaign across the country.

Meeting with heads of Canadian banks, the committee has made the case that it is incumbent on management to make women employees aware of available opportunities in training and promotion. Meeting with the Chairman of the Board and the Chief General Manager of the Bank of Nova Scotia on April 27th, the committee presented a brief outlining specific recommendations to overcome stereotyped attitudes evident in promotion practices, recruitment and the image of women presented in advertising and publications.

Scotiabank officials stated that they are actively seeking women both from within and outside the bank who are interested in management careers. The committee plans a return visit at a later date to review progress.

Arrangements have been made to interview the executive of the Royal Bank in Montreal on June 6th. A negative response had been received from other banks but with regular press releases regarding the more positive responses of Scotiabank and the Royal, a more positive attitude is expected from the Banks of Commerce, Montreal and the Toronto-Dominion.

Members of the committee have been interviewed for press and TV, the most recent coverage being Barbara Frum's discussion with Liz Adamson and an anonymous bank employee. The campaign has caught the interest of people across the country; women in banks can look forward to customer support from an increasing number of the public. Women in banks can contact Sandra Burkenmayer or Margorie Cohen at PO Box 188, Station Q, Toronto M4T 2M1 to attend meetings or remain in touch by mail.

FAIR EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES COMMITTEE BRIEF TO THE TASK FORCE ON BENEFITS

The six member committee presented a brief to the Minister of Labour Task Force on Benefits in April. They were subsequently asked to speak to the brief, making their presentation on May 17th.

The section of the Ontario Human Rights Code prohibiting discrimination against any employee with regard to any term or condition of employment is currently limited as to age, sex and marital status in the areas of persons, insurance plans and other benefits. The brief strongly recommended that the Human Rights Code be put into full effect immediately and that a set time schedule be established in bringing about full equality in benefits.

Discussion was presented regarding the "rationale" for discriminatory practices such as:

- all male employees have financial responsibilities or dependents.
- not all women employees have 'needs' for benefits while all male employees do have such needs.
- women do not have financial responsibilities for dependents.
- single men have greater 'needs' than single women.
- single persons do not have financial responsibilities for dependents.
- women work only for short periods of time, are not career orientated and do not want (or need) benefits.

Such inequalities as group pension plans which provide survivor benefits for widows of male contributors while denying such benefits to spouses of female contributors were discussed. Rates of pay for benefits are the same though benefits being payable to the husband is totally conditional on proof of disability or total dependency. Also discussed were voluntary and compulsory plans, rates for benefits and cost of equality. Information regarding the brief can be obtained from Sandra Birkenmayer (4870218).

BRIEF TO THE ONTARIO TASK FORCE ON POLICING

A brief prepared by Aideen Nicholson was submitted to the Task Force on Policing in March. A discussion with members of the Task Force regarding points raised in the brief followed. The brief focused on employment of police women, recruitment and basic training, and career opportunities for women. Specifically, a selection system for promotions based on clearly defined criteria was recommended with no areas of service prohibited to women members, this limiting their opportunities for subsequent promotion. It was also recommended that police women officers should have equal rank with men officers who carry equal responsibilities. Pay is equated with rank and two examples in which women officers did the same job as male officers but were designated by lower rank and paid less were cited. Finally, the appointment of more women to the Ontario Police Commission and the Board of Commissioners of Police in Metropolitan Toronto was recommended.

THE PROVINCIAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Early in April the Minister of Social Development, Robert Welch, announced the intention of the government to establish an advisory committee on the status of women to be chaired by a member of the public and made up of both government appointees and private citizens. Operating under the Department of Labour, the committee would have representatives from other departments and would report yearly to the House as part of the Civil Service submission. However tabling of the report recommending the establishment of the committee has been delayed. Members of the OCSW have continued in contact with the government regarding the proposed committee and its terms of reference.

NEW ACTION

Lorna Marsden and Naomi Black have revitalized the letter campaign to federal government ministers following up the series of questions raised in the House by MP Frank Howard regarding a variety of status of women issues.....A brief is underway regarding day care in Ontario to be submitted to the Minister of Community and Family Services. Gail Newell (294-4765) is coordinator..... The Media Committee has been active responding to offensive advertisements. Helen LaFontaine (789-5230) and Joan Barberis (961-0339) ask that you take note of the exact magazine, page and issue or TV time spot and channel or location of billboard and contact them in order to help coordinate the letter campaign.... Cathy Morrison (483-4785) has been in correspondence with Premier Davis regarding the withdrawal of financial support from Ryerson Open University. In May she spoke to a town hall meeting regarding the large number of women who used the radio service and recommending that means of continuing the service be found..... The Dean of Seneca College discussed the newly established one year course called Flight Services 101 with Elaine Borins and Flora Hogarth in April at the King campus. Objection was raised to the community college diploma course in which more than 1/3 of the content and time allotment featured 'figure control' and grooming.

OTHER NEWS- OTHER GROUPS

The Mayor's Task Force on the Status of Women is to be established at a meeting on June 7th at City Hall. The Task Force is to be co-chaired by alderpersons Dorothy Thomas and Elizabeth Eayres.

This action was begun by the Metro Committee on the Status of Women, a group interested in politics at the municipal level. The mayor was contacted in January and a brief later presented to city council which included twenty-seven areas of concern such as child care services, recreational facilities, appointment of women to Boards and Commissions and discriminatory practices at the civil service level. Women are to be invited as representatives of groups and as individuals to participate.

The establishment and development of the Task Force should be of interest to women's groups in the boroughs and in other cities in Ontario.

THE WPA CONFERENCE

A National Conference of Women in Politics is planned by Women for Political Action for June 15-17 in Toronto. The public is invited to attend a panel discussion to be chaired by Doris Anderson on The Future of Women in and Through Politics on June 16th at 8:30 at the auditorium of New College, University of Toronto. For more information write Jacqui Dynevor, Delegate Committee, Box 1213, Station q, Toronto M4T 2P4 or call her at 196-7802.

NAC ACTION

On April 2nd members of the Nation Action Committee including Aline Gregory, OCSW representative, travelled to Ottawa to meet with John Munro, Minister of Labour and Minister for Status of Women. A brief was presented which included the proposed NAC budget, amendments to the Federal Labour Code Bill C-206, appointments to the advisory committee and abortion reform. A summary of the issues in question in the Bill C-206 amendment prepared by Aline Gregory was submitted and later sent to all Members of Parliament.

FINAL NOTE

Several active members of the OCSW have moved during the past six months among them Lynn MacDonald who had been active on all committees and who is now on sabbatical leave in Sweden and France. Brigid O'Reilly, who had been in charge of memberships, leaves for two years in London, England. From the Banking Committee, Cathy Stewart is now in Vancouver, B.C. and Liz Adamson leaves shortly for Wolfville, Nova Scotia. In July, I leave for Vancouver, B.C. and in this newsletter wish to thank Brigid for duplicating and Lorraine Drdul for typing most of our past five newsletters.

Flora Hogarth.

NEXT GENERAL MEETING

JUNE 13, 1973,

at

ONTARIO INSTITUTE FOR STUDIES IN EDUCATION

252 BLOOR STREET, TORONTO,

IN ROOM 202

AT 8 PM.

For further information on OCSW:

Moira Armour 483-5150
Sandra Birkenmayer 487-0218
Naomi Black 925-3069

Aline Gregory 929-5205
Lorna Marsden 923-1506
Aideen Nicholson 481-0672

TEAR OFF AND MAIL TO:

ONTARIO COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN,
c/o Frances Money,
195 Stibbard Ave.,
Toronto 12, Ontario.

I would like to become a member. \$3.00 enclosed.

I am interested in:

Name:

Address:

Burgess O'Reilly # 112,
83 Elm Ave.,
Toronto, Ont.

