

The Ontario Committee on the Status of Women

P.O. BOX 188, STATION Q
TORONTO M4T 2M1

NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 1975.

GENERAL MEETING

The next general meeting will be on Wednesday, March 12, at 8 p.m., in Room N401 of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 252 Bloor St. West (at St. George St.).

SUB-COMMITTEE NOTES

WOMEN AND EMPLOYMENT

Legislative Intervention--"Equal pay for work of equal value"

When Bill 134 was introduced in the Ontario Legislature by Minister of Labour John MacBeth, the OCSW decided to intervene with a brief at the second reading committee stage. OCSW representatives met with other interested women for discussion of a brief, which was formally presented to the legislative committee by Madeleine Parent and Lynn MacDonald on December 10. Citing Canadian ratification of the International Labour Office Convention #100 which calls for equal pay for work of equal value, the brief criticized Bill 134's Section 33 for falling short of this principle by providing merely for equal pay for "substantially the same kind of work". Instead, the OCSW proposed "equal pay for work of equal value, to be appraised by job evaluation on the basis of the criteria of skill, training, effort, responsibility, and working conditions". While such an amendment was acceptable to both Opposition parties, it did not receive approval in the Legislature.

Public Meeting--The OCSW re-iterated its stand at a well-attended St. Lawrence Centre forum co-sponsored with Toronto Arts Productions. The audience heard from Madeleine Parent, and MLAs Frank Drea (PC), Robert Nixon (Lib), and Stephen Lewis (NDP), with Alderman Dorothy Thomas moderating. In a fact sheet, the OCSW pointed out that Canadian women working full-time earn only 60% of what full-time male workers receive, and that the gap between men's and women's wages is widening. There was considerable news coverage of the issue, while the forum itself was filmed by the CBC for a Take 30 programme on which Lynn MacDonald and Cathy Morrison were interviewed.

Equal Opportunities for Women--On February 18, the Ontario government held a gathering of management and labour representatives to encourage employment opportunities for women. Government officials suggested that business and industry draw up affirmative action programmes for themselves, while in her keynote address, Dr. Sylvia Ostry mentioned that the unemployment rate for Ontario women is rising as the rate for men drops. Although the OCSW was not officially invited, several members attended to distribute a pamphlet which detailed the situation of Ontario's working women and suggested improvement through affirmative action and legislation for equal pay for work of equal value.

Lynn MacDonald and Anu Bose are assisting working women with complaints about fair employment under existing human rights legislation. For information, call Anu at 532-5394.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

Briefs to the federal and Ontario governments are ready, and will be presented soon to the relevant ministers. Further briefs dealing with the application of affirmative action in municipal government, the private sector, and unions are now in preparation.

MEDIA

On February 17, the OCSW co-sponsored "Sex in Subliminal Advertising" at the St. Lawrence Centre. The overflow crowd attending heard a lecture by Dr. Wilson Key, author of Subliminal Seduction, and a panel discussion chaired by Helen LaFontaine. Since regulation of subliminal advertising will be considered by the Canadian Radio-Television Commission at its hearings in March, Helen and others are working on a presentation to the CRTC. The Media sub-committee hopes to press for legislation to protect women and other minorities from exploitation in advertising.

FAMILY PLANNING

This new sub-committee has been meeting bi-weekly, and is drafting a brief at present. A letter of support was sent to Dr. Bette Stephenson following her remarks on the inadequacy of the current federal abortion policy as articulated by Justice Minister Otto Lang.

FAMILY PROPERTY LAW

81 of the OCSW's mailed questionnaires were returned, and these are now being tabulated for a report. (See also below, "Ontario Status of Women Council".)

DAY CARE

The OCSW sub-committee was one of very few groups to meet directly with the provincial Advisory Council on Day Care, which referred to the meeting in its interim report to the Provincial Secretary for Social Development. The government has indicated that there will be no change in day care policy until its Advisory Council submits a final report.

CO-ORDINATING

Formed to improve communication with other groups in the province, this sub-committee will meet soon. Call Helen LaFontaine at 789-5230 to participate.

UPCOMING EVENTS, AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTION

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY, MARCH 8--A gala celebration is anticipated, beginning with a festival on Friday March 7, at 8 p.m. in the University of Toronto's Convocation Hall. This is free to all. On Saturday, March 8, a conference gets underway in Toronto's City Hall at 9 a.m. This will feature general sessions and workshops. A \$1 registration fee for the day is nominal, and day care will be provided. In the evening, there will be a free party and dance, open to everyone, at the University of Toronto Graduate Students' Union, 16 Bancroft St. The International Women's Year celebrations are thus focussing on this special day.

BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL WOMEN'S CLUB LUNCHEON--An International Women's Day luncheon will be held on March 8, at 12:30 p.m., in the Concert Hall of the Royal York Hotel. Tickets--\$7.25 per person--must be purchased in advance from Isabelle Hopwood, 573 O'Connor Drive, Toronto M4C 2Z9; phone 421-1159.

WOMEN AT NOON--The University of Toronto's School of Continuing Studies has arranged a series of free lectures on women and law, employment, health, politics, etc. These are held Tuesdays, 12 to 1 p.m. (February 4 to April 1), at The Cinema in the Toronto Dominion Centre.

NATIONAL FILM BOARD--Director Kathleen Shannon has completed a series of films on women in contemporary Canada, with emphasis on the problems of working. During March, the NFB is screening its women's films every Tuesday at 7 p.m. For a catalogue of the films, or for more information, contact the NFB at 1 Lombard St., Toronto; phone 369-4093.

WOMEN'S FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS--A group of Toronto women are planning such a festival for June. If interested in helping to organize or in participating, call Gloria Heller, 21 McGill St., 366-0331.

"LEARNING TO READ BETWEEN THE STEREOTYPES"--is a 20 minute, 16 mm. colour film documenting sex stereotyping in children's readers. Available for purchase from the Teaching Aids Department of the Toronto Board of Education, a print costs \$150. City of Toronto teachers may borrow it from their Board. As yet, there is no rental, but local libraries could be encouraged to buy the film, which was directed by Moira Armour.

PREGNANCY AND TRANQUILLIZERS--Research shows that women have a 4 to 6% higher chance of producing abnormal children if taking tranquillizers during the first 4 months of pregnancy. Ruth Cooperstock (of the Addiction Research Foundation) and Lorna Marsden are preparing a Brief about this. To learn more or assist, call Lorna at 537-9254.

WOMEN AND THE CHURCH--Anyone interested in looking into the status of women in the church is asked to contact Shelley Finson at 154 Davisville Ave., Toronto.

CHILDREN'S TV PROGRAMMING--There is a dearth of good children's programmes with an acceptable portrayal of women. Anyone with ideas or scripts for such a show should contact Nell Thompson at 364-4438 (during business hours).

NEWS FROM GOVERNMENT AND OTHER GROUPS

DEPARTMENT OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE, GOVERNMENT OF CANADA

Regional offices have been opened to handle requests for funding of International Women's Year projects. Address inquiries to the Toronto office at 55 St. Clair Ave. East; phone 966-9554.

FEDERAL ADVISORY COUNCIL ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN--Box 1541, Station B, Ottawa K1P 5R5.

Its First Annual Report is obtainable on request.

ONTARIO STATUS OF WOMEN COUNCIL--801 Bay St., Toronto M5S 1Z1; phone 965-1111.

Its report for 1974 is available for \$1. Following Stage 2 of its media monitoring, the Council is preparing a brief on the portrayal of women in advertising.

The Council has already published its recommendations on matrimonial property law, which suggest a "scheme of fair sharing of matrimonial property based on the principle that marriage is a social and economic partnership". Specifically, the Council requests immediate recognition of "co-ownership of the matrimonial home" as a general legal principle, and advises "guidelines along the lines of the English system with judicial discretion" instead of the deferred community system recommended by the Ontario Law Reform Commission.

Meanwhile, Ontario's Bill 117 died on the order paper of the last legislature.

WOMEN'S PROGRAMS DIVISION, ONTARIO MINISTRY OF LABOUR

Grants of up to \$1,000 are available during IWY for activities by non-profit groups. Special consideration will be given to projects furthering the goals of the Royal Commission Report. To apply, contact: International Women's Year Office, Ministry of Labour, 10th floor, 400 University Ave., Toronto M7A 1T7. This office is publishing bulletins outlining IWY activities in Ontario. To be put on the mailing list, or to contribute information on group events and projects, contact Helen Tator at the previous address.

MAYOR'S TASK FORCE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN--8th floor, East Tower, City Hall, Toronto; phone 367-7203.

With its mandate extended until the end of 1975, the Task Force continues

MAYOR'S TASK FORCE (continued)

to report on the situation of women in Toronto. Currently, it is asking the city administration to establish an affirmative action programme for women in its employment. The Task Force will also be arranging more evening discussion meetings. Contact the office for more information, or to offer suggestions.

NATIONAL ACTION COMMITTEE--121 Avenue Road, Toronto; phone 922-3246.

Planning is now going on for the annual meeting on May 10 in Winnipeg. General sessions and workshops will be held, with stress on NAC's priorities for International Women's Year: equal pay for work of equal value, a choice in child care, birth control services for all who need them, and recognition of marriage as an economic partnership of equals. NAC will hear from groups across the country which may be emphasizing other issues as well.

YWCA

The Y continues valuable courses in academic upgrading, home and auto repairs, self-defence, etc. Contact them at 487-7151 (north), 762-8169 (west), or 466-9878 (east) in Toronto.

WOMEN'S INFORMATION CENTRE--165 Spadina Rd., suite 27, Toronto; phone 363-8021.

The Centre (formerly Women's Place) is open daily, 10 to 2. Legal clinics take place Tuesdays and Thursdays, 6 to 9 p.m. Hours and programmes will be expanding soon.

WOMEN'S HEALTH CENTRE--134 D'Arcy Street, Toronto; phone 366-0325.

Open between 12 and 3 p.m. General health counselling is done 3 afternoons a week; other services include health discussion groups, massage, natal care.

REDLIGHT THEATRE--24 Ryerson Ave, Toronto M5T 2P3; phone 368-9094.

What Glorious Times They Had will continue its national tour by travelling west in June.

PUBLICATIONS

STATUS OF WOMEN NEWS--A special IWY edition is just out. To order or subscribe, contact the National Action Committee Office, 121 Avenue Road, Toronto.

THE LAW RELATING TO WORKING WOMEN--is a booklet free from the Women's Bureau, Canada Department of Labour, 340 Laurier Ave. West, Ottawa K1A 0J2.

REFERENCE BOOKLET ON ONTARIO LAWS RELATING TO WOMEN--One is available from the Ontario Women's Bureau, Ministry of Labour, 400 University Avenue, Toronto M7A 1V6.

WOMEN WORKING--A pamphlet on the situation of working women in Canada today is put out by the Division of Mission in Canada, United Church House, 85 St. Clair Ave. East, Toronto.

RAPE--Pamphlets can be obtained from the Rape Crisis Centre, P. O. Box 6597, Station A, Toronto; phone 368-8383. The Centre still needs donations and help.

CANADIAN WOMEN'S EDUCATIONAL PRESS--280 Bloor St. W., #305, Toronto M5S 1W1; phone 962-3904. The most recent books from the Women's Press are Women at Work: Ontario 1850-1930, and Born a Woman: The Rita MacNeil Songbook.

TORONTO WOMEN'S YELLOW PAGES--is a directory to women in trades, professions, arts, and business in Toronto, as well as to services and organizations for women. It costs \$2 (or \$5 for institutions), plus 25¢ a copy for handling. Order from: Terry Hilliard, 399 Sackville St., Toronto; or from Box 153, Station Q, Toronto.

NON-SEXIST CHILDREN'S LITERATURE: "WOMEN AT WORK"--Four booklets for children portray women in non-traditional roles (Ellie Sells Fish, Myra Builds a House). Illustrated with colour photos, they are published by D. C. Heath Ltd., 100 Adelaide St. West, suite 1408, Toronto M5H 1S9.

NEWS BRIEFS

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR--Conferences sponsored by the federal government have been cancelled, following protests by women's organizations. These groups are now awaiting the announcement of alternate plans for the conference funding.

Suzanne Findlay--successfully appealed her employment situation after job reclassification, and is now Director for Women's Programmes, Department of the Secretary of State, Ottawa.

RULE BRITANNIA, BUT CAN IT HAPPEN HERE?--The selection of Margaret Thatcher as leader of the British Conservatives is encouraging speculation about Canadian federal parties. MP Flora MacDonald (PC) and British Columbia MLA Rosemary Brown (NDP) have been mentioned as leadership candidates for their respective parties. We were recently assured by Dalton Camp that the ugly chauvinist world of Canadian politics is not yet ready for a woman at the helm. Those wishing to be more than camp followers may send letters of support to:

- Flora MacDonald, M.P., House of Commons, Ottawa
- Rosemary Brown, MLA, 4750 Belmont Drive, Vancouver 8, B.C.

EAR TRUMPET AWARD--"Success is sexy."--Ethel McLellan (on "Warren Davis Tonight", CBC, February 19). Could we have that again, please, only louder this time?

MEMBERSHIP AND MAILING LIST OVERHAUL

Although the OCSW has never had a formal policy, those members who can are asked to pay \$3 annually to cover the cost of the newsletter, other printing and postage, public meetings, etc. Because of much-increased costs, we are requesting those on our lists who have not contributed for 1975 to contact Fran Money right away. Please let her know whether you wish to continue membership in the OCSW; the fee can be waived if you can't afford it. However, if we don't hear from you, we'll assume that you no longer wish to receive the newsletter.

Clip and send to:
Ontario Committee on the Status of Women,
c/o Frances Money, 195 Stibbard Avenue, Toronto M4P 2C4.

- _____ I am renewing my membership and enclose \$3.
- _____ I would like to become a member and enclose \$3.
- _____ I am interested in _____

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____ POSTAL CODE _____

