

# The Ontario Committee on the Status of Women

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

NEWSLETTER -- February, 1979

## NEXT MEETING

The OCSW will hold a general meeting on Thursday, March 8, at 8 p.m. in the home of Milly Morton, 17 Bowden Street, Toronto.

Bowden St. runs south off Danforth, east of Broadview. To go by TTC: take the Bloor subway to Chester; walk 3 blocks west on Danforth to Bowden, then 2 blocks south to #17.

## 1979 MEMBERSHIP FEES NOW OVERDUE

The annual membership fee of \$5 for 1979 is now overdue. Because of the expenses involved in our forthcoming activities, it is extremely important for the OCSW to have membership payments immediately. Please send them to us at your earliest convenience.

If a red dot appears next to your name on this Newsletter, your membership has expired, and we simply cannot afford to send you any further mail-outs until you renew. Since postal rates are about to increase, the OCSW would be especially appreciative of any extra amount you may wish to send, in addition to your membership fee.

## OCSW ACTION

### PROVINCIAL CABINET MEMBERS TO MEET WITH OCSW

On March 29, the Premier and several Ministers of his Cabinet will meet with a delegation from the Ontario Committee on the Status of Women. The Hon. Margaret Birch, Provincial Secretary for Social Development, will chair the meeting, during which the OCSW will present its concerns about the situation of Ontario women in the climate of 1979.

The OCSW last met with a group of Cabinet Ministers in International Women's Year, 1975. A special subcommittee is now preparing the presentation from our organization. More details will be provided at our next general meeting.

### OCSW TAKING BRIEF TO HEALTH MINISTER

On April 5, representatives of the OCSW will meet with Ontario's Minister of Health, the Hon. Dennis Timbrell, to present a brief discussing family planning programs in this province. The brief makes recommendations based on a study of services offered by local health boards in Ontario.

The OCSW is also requesting that the Minister of Health make public the Caudwell Report (on abortion in Ontario), together with the responses to it by the Ontario Hospital Association and the Ontario Medical Association.

## NEWSLETTER FEATURE -- EMPLOYMENT ISSUES

The OCSW's Employment Subcommittee has produced a brief on equal pay for work of equal value, and will be seeking an appointment with the Minister of Labour to present it. The brief urges the Ministry of Labour to take positive action to close the ever-widening wage gap between women and men. It makes a number of specific recommendations, including amendments to current legislation, and changes in the procedures for equal pay complaints.

The Subcommittee is also preparing a brief on contract compliance to be forwarded to the Ministry of Labour, as well as a submission on women and unemployment. We are now investigating such other topics as occupational health and safety, and sexual harassment.

Topless Waitresses--Reacting to a trend toward topless waitresses in local dining lounges, the OCSW has taken the position that women should not be required to go without clothing as a condition of employment. The best way of ensuring proper working conditions for waitresses is through remedial amendments to The Employment Standards Act and The Ontario Human Rights Code.

Program Cutbacks--Following the removal of women as a special target group under the Outreach program of the federal Department of Employment and Immigration, the OCSW sent a letter to the responsible Minister, the Hon. J. S. G. Cullen. The OCSW asked Mr. Cullen to reconsider his action in the light of the continuing high rate of women's unemployment. The OCSW also expressed fear that such local projects as Times Change Employment Service might be forced to close down because of the Outreach changes.

The OCSW sent a representative to help with publicity for the forum on "Women and Unemployment", held on February 21 in Toronto. We are also consulting with women concerned about the fate of the City of Toronto's affirmative action program for its own employees.

"Are Women Getting a Fair Shake Where You Work?"

We suspect not. But your answers to our questionnaire--the last 3 pages of this Newsletter--will tell us what you think, and we hope, provide the Labour Minister, Dr. Robert Elgie, with some idea of how working women in Ontario perceive their situation today.

The questionnaire was designed by the OCSW Employment Subcommittee. It should be filled out by all working women who receive this Newsletter. Please feel free to make extra copies to be passed on for use by other women you know, as well.

We do not make any claim that the questionnaire is scientific. However, it was designed for several purposes:

- to provide a means for women to evaluate their employer's performance as an equal opportunity employer
- to inform women, via the questions themselves and the brief explanation at the end, of their basic rights in employment
- most importantly, to encourage women who feel that their employer is discriminating to do something about it!

If you or someone you know decides to approach management, a union, or the Ministry of Labour with a complaint, remember to seek the support of other women at work--that is, take action collectively--and also involve local women's groups. Remember to let us know, too, so that we may aid you with your case. See our address below.

Ministry of Labour Estimates Provoke Discussion of Women and Employment

Contract compliance and equal pay for work of equal value figured prominently in questions by the Opposition to the Ministry of Labour and his staff during the recent Estimates Debates before a committee of MPPs. Kudos for their performances on women's issues go to Maryon Bryden, Ted Bounsall, and Bob MacKenzie (NDP), Margaret Campbell (Lib.), and the Minister of Labour, Dr. Robert Elgie (P.C.)

The Ministry of Labour was upbraided by the Opposition for too much talk and not enough action to improve the employment and general economic situation of women. Margaret Campbell summed up:

"Women have been around in this country for a long time, and we are sitting here talking about more research to figure out whether something will work. I've condemned this government many times for bringing in new programs without thinking them through, but I'll be hanged if I wouldn't rather see them bring in a program here to try it [contract compliance] without any more research into something. Women have been, like native people, researched and studied to death."

Among Ministry of Labour staff, including Women's Bureau Director Marnie Clarke, there seemed to be more support for contract compliance than for equal pay for work of equal value, although everyone agreed that something must be done to close the wage gap. As it is widely believed that long-awaited amendments to The Human Rights Code will be introduced in the next session of the Ontario Legislature, which starts in early March, it is encouraging to see informed interest and concern on women's issues.

Police Case Faces Human Rights Boards of Inquiry

A recent Human Rights Commission Board of Inquiry considered the question of whether unisex height and weight requirements constitute sex discrimination, and decided that they do. Peter Cumming was ruling on a complaint brought by Ann Colfer, who had applied for a position on the Ottawa police force in 1977.

Ms. Colfer was initially discouraged by the recruiting officer, who asked her such job-related questions as what her husband thought of her joining the police force. At the Board of Inquiry, the Ottawa Police Chief defended his force's policy on the grounds that Ms. Colfer did not meet the height and weight requirements -- 5 ft. 10 in., and 160 lb. These requirements, which had not been brought to Ms. Colfer's attention during her talk with the recruiting officer, had been established on the basis of the national norm for males.

Peter Cumming ruled that using unisex height and weight requirements was discriminatory, and gave the Ottawa police force a choice of two courses of action:

- eliminate height and weight requirements entirely, and assess candidates by physical and psychological tests
- establish height and weight requirements for females according to the national norm for women.

After indicating that they would appeal the Cumming ruling, the Ottawa police now appear to have chosen the second alternative. As Ann Colfer, who is 5 ft., 7 $\frac{1}{4}$  in. tall and 146 lb. will exceed any national norm for women, Cumming also ordered that her application be placed on the recruitment list, back-dated to the original date of application.

Although the ruling solves Ann Colfer's case, it would obviously be preferable to have height and weight requirements abolished altogether, and use validated tests instead to evaluate candidates. (Someone may meet height and weight requirements, yet be less fit than a lighter and shorter person.)

Police Hiring Attitudes Bring Criticism

Other police forces have also gained publicity over their attitudes to women. Timmins Police Chief Floyd Schwantz recently went on record as opposing women for police work. In a speech reported by the Globe and Mail, he stated that hiring women is impractical from an economic point of view because they are a poor training investment. He also held that women follow their husbands in employment decisions, and that there is no place for a pregnant woman on a police force.

Not to be outdone, Chief Les Sterritt of Brockville reported that the local police force does not need separate height and weight requirements because there are no women on the force.

Did You Know That . . . ?

- In 1976, women working full-time in Canada earned an average \$8,114, compared to the men's average of \$15,180.
- Women in Canada now have a much higher unemployment rate than do men. In Ontario, the unemployment rate for women has increased from 3.1% in 1966 to 8.6% in 1977. At the moment, almost half of Ontario's unemployed are women.
- Ontario's minimum wage for most workers is \$3.00 per hour.
- The average parents' fee for day care in Metro Toronto is \$190 a month for a non-subsidized two-year-old.

OTHER OCSW ACTIVITIES -- FUN AT THE FOLLIES

On February 9, the OCSW held an informal get-together featuring the notorious Follies, a program of satire and silliness that lived up to its reputation for comedy. Thanks are due to our very own writer-performers: Irma Melville, Karen Fejer, Anne Hill, Wendy Lawrence, Cathleen Morrison, Kathryn Morgan, and Milly Morton; and also to their conscript cast: Chaviva Hošek, Marjorie Cohen, Beth Atcheson, Robin Inskip, and Sylvia Van Kirk.

We are grateful as well to Lorna Marsden, Susan Barkley, and anonymous donors for taking care of the refreshments, and to Anne Hill for offering her home as the site of the hi-jinks.

MEMBERS' PERSONAL NOTES

Last fall, Dr. Rose Sheinin was appointed to the CBC English Services Division Committee on Science and Technology, where she says "one of our continuing problems has been to present women in this area in their proper light."

NEWS ROUND-UP

WOMEN SETTLE PURETEX STRIKE -- Increased wages and the removal of a TV camera trained on their washroom door are among the gains won by women workers at the Puretex Knitting Co. in Downsview, following a recent strike. An arbitrator will rule on the use of other cameras for surveillance. Some OCSW members were active on picket lines.

WORK GROUP SEEKS HIGHER FAMILY BENEFITS -- The Family Benefits Work Group has called the 6% increase in welfare payments announced in December by Keith Norton, Minister of Community and Social Services, "a step in the right direction". However, the group will be asking for more, since the new maximum benefit to a mother with two children under 10 works out to \$5,789 annually.

NEW POLITICAL INITIATIVES FOR WOMEN -- Ontario women are investigating ways to increase their political effectiveness. At one recent meeting in Toronto, the more than 100 women attending decided against forming a women's political party. Instead, they pledged to seek out and campaign actively for women candidates in future elections.

Then representatives from organizations across the province met in Toronto in late February to consider founding an Ontario-wide federation of women's groups. Irma Melville was there on behalf of OCSW, and described the OCSW's aims and activities to the gathering.

POLICE RAPE REPORT CRITICIZED -- The Toronto Rape Crisis Centre criticized a study, done for the Ontario Provincial Police, purporting to show that "promiscuity" and "great lack of discretion" were major factors in cases of rape reported by young female victims last year in the province. The Crisis Centre maintained that the study had not provided evidence of its claims, which represent a stereotyped image of young women.

The Ontario Status of Women Council also passed a motion censuring the report for "making moral judgments about the victim".

50 YEARS AS "PERSONS" -- This year, Canadian women are celebrating the anniversary of the legal case in 1929 which settled our status as "persons" under the B.N.A. Act. To mark the occasion, the National Action Committee on the Status of Women will be selling commemorative seals for use on correspondence, etc. The seals will be available for \$1 per sheet of 60, from the NAC office.

CARAL RENEWS CAMPAIGN -- The Canadian Association for Repeal of the Abortion Law is seeking support from new members in its continuing work on abortion rights for women. Send donations to CARAL at Box 935, Station Q, Toronto M4T 2P1. Single memberships are \$10, families \$15, sustaining \$25.

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS -- James McGrath, M.P. (P.C., St. John's East) introduced a private member's bill into Parliament last November, calling for a Bill of Rights for children. The Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs has been studying

NEWS FROM OTHER GROUPS

NATIONAL ACTION COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN -- 40 St. Clair Ave. E., suite 306, Toronto M4T 1M9. (416) 922-3246.

NAC will be holding its Annual Meeting at the Skyline Hotel in Ottawa again this year, from March 23-26. The agenda for the week-end is substantial:

- Friday: registration; reports on provincial and regional groups' activities for the past year; a discussion of NAC's structure; evening reception
- Saturday: panel discussion on the economic realities for women in 1979; workshops on: employment, income support systems, family law, counselling services, Criminal Code amendments, International Year of the Child, violence, and election strategies; election of NAC's new Executive; banquet; guest speaker Sheila Arnopoulos on "Immigrant Women in Canada".
- Sunday: feminist bus tour of Ottawa; recommendations from workshops; NAC's business meeting; preparation for lobby. A new Constitution for NAC, with provisions for regional representation, is also up for ratification.
- Monday: Parliamentary lobby: presentation of women's concerns to party caucuses and MPs; press conference.

As a member group, OCSW will be sending 2 voting delegates, and will also be submitting candidates for election to NAC's Executive. This past year, we have been well served by Brigid O'Reilly (Vice-President), Marjorie Cohen (Treasurer), and Lorna Marsden (Past President). ?KM *km*

NAC has been extremely busy lately. On February 22, Executive members met in Toronto with the federal Cabinet to discuss the effects on women of changes in federal legislation and policies (for example, unemployment insurance, job training programs, family allowances, sexual assault provisions in the Criminal Code, etc.). NAC also made submissions about the presentation of women on the CBC and CTV networks to hearings held by the Canadian Radio-Television and Telecommunications Commission, in Ottawa. As a result, NAC representatives were invited by the CBC President to participate in a two-day session on women in CBC programming.

NELLIE'S -- The campaign fund has now reached \$270,000 of its \$400,000 objective to renovate Nellie's hostel for women. To raise more money, there will be a sale of jewellery of all kinds at Holy Trinity Church, on May 11 from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Contributions of jewellery are being sought. If you would like to donate, send or take contributions to: Nellie's Projects, suite 113, Eaton Centre, 220 Yonge St., Toronto M5B 2H1; or c/o 5 Believers Boutique, 105 Yorkville Ave. For more information, call 364-8750 or 598-1450.

WOMEN'S COUNSELLING, REFERRAL AND EDUCATION CENTRE -- 348 College St., 3rd floor, Toronto M4T 1S4. (416) 924-0766. The Centre has moved into new quarters after receiving a \$19,200 grant from the Ontario Ministry of Health, to fund its operations until June. The Centre has had to curtail its educational function, and is now mainly providing referral services. It has one full-time and 2 part-time staff members; alternate funding sources are being sought for after June.

PAULINE MCGIBBON CULTURAL CENTRE -- 86 Lombard Street, Toronto. (416) 363-7698. Enough money has now been raised to cover the cost of basic renovations to the Centre. A further \$85,000 is required for equipment and furnishings, of which \$15,000 has been pledged. Donations are welcome. The Centre is also launching a campaign for members across Canada -- \$15 will provide you with a Newsletter, notification of upcoming events, and invitations to openings of exhibitions.

EVENTS

International Women's Day, 1979 -- "Jobs and Rights for Women" is the theme of this year's demonstration in Toronto, on Saturday, March 10. Participants will rally at Convocation Hall, University of Toronto, at 12:45 p.m. An all-woman celebration program will take place that evening at 8 p.m., in St. Paul's Centre, 121 Avenue Road, Toronto.

Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value -- Supporters of the Equal Value Coalition will be assembling at the Legislature, Queen's Park, Toronto on Thursday, March 8, at 12:15 p.m. to hear representatives of each of the 3 provincial political parties explain their stand on this important issue for women.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

Problems of Immigrant Women in the Canadian Labour Force -- by Sheila Arnopoulos is a new report written for the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, documenting the laws and conditions under which most immigrant women work. It makes recommendations for new legislation on immigration and minimum labour standards, government job training and language programs, etc. Available free from the Council at Box 1541, Station B, Ottawa K1P 5R5.

Good Day Care: Getting It, Keeping It, Fighting For It -- is a new collection of practical articles by people involved in day care services in Canada, edited by Kathleen Ross. \$7.95 from Women's Press, c/o Balfour Books, 73 Broadview Ave., Toronto M4M 2T9. (416) 463-5981.

OCSW EMPLOYMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

ARE WOMEN GETTING A FAIR SHAKE WHERE YOU WORK?

Under the law in Ontario, women have been guaranteed equal pay since 1951, and equal opportunity in employment since 1972. But, do women have equity in pay and opportunity where you work? Your answers to the following questions can indicate whether you work for an equal opportunity employer.

We wish to make a summary of the views of Ontario women known to the Minister of Labour, the Honourable Dr. Robert Elgie.

Please complete this questionnaire and return to:

Ontario Committee on the Status of Women
P.O. Box 188, Station Q
Toronto, Ontario, M4T 2M1

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WHAT TYPE OF COMPANY/ORGANIZATION DO YOU WORK FOR?
(e.g. insurance, finance, civil service, school board, etc.)

LOCATION (city/town):

- 1. DO WOMEN OCCUPY POSITIONS AT ALL LEVELS WHERE YOU WORK? YES NO
2. ARE THERE ANY JOBS THAT ARE NEVER HELD BY WOMEN? YES NO

PLEASE GIVE EXAMPLES:

3. HOW ARE JOB VACANCIES FILLED? (Check those methods that apply)

- INTERNAL JOB POSTING
AD IN PAPER
SENIORITY LIST
OTHER TYPE OF LIST, SUCH AS INTERNAL LIST OF PROMOTABLE STAFF
SPECIFIC CANDIDATES ARE INVITED TO APPLY
NO COMPETITION: CERTAIN EMPLOYEES ARE ASKED IF THEY WANT THE JOB
DO NOT KNOW

4. DO YOU KNOW OF ANY INSTANCES WHERE WOMEN HAVE BEEN ELIMINATED FROM CONSIDERATION FOR A VACANT POSITION? YES NO

PLEASE GIVE EXAMPLES:

5. WHEN WOMEN ARE INTERVIEWED FOR JOBS, ARE THEY ASKED QUESTIONS PERTAINING TO ANY OF THE FOLLOWING? (Check any that apply)

MARITAL STATUS \_\_\_\_\_

BIRTH CONTROL \_\_\_\_\_

PLANS TO HAVE CHILDREN \_\_\_\_\_

CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS \_\_\_\_\_

HUSBAND'S JOB \_\_\_\_\_

LIKELIHOOD OF HUSBAND BEING TRANSFERRED \_\_\_\_\_

{OTHER INAPPROPRIATE QUESTIONS \_\_\_\_\_

{PLEASE GIVE EXAMPLES: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. DO WOMEN PARTICIPATE IN MANAGEMENT TRAINING PROGRAMS IN THE SAME NUMBERS AS DO MEN? YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

PLEASE EXPLAIN: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. WHEN LAYOFFS OCCUR, ARE WOMEN USUALLY THE FIRST TO BE AFFECTED? YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

8. ARE ANY WOMEN SUBJECTED TO SEXIST REMARKS OR SEXUAL HARASSMENT ON THE JOB? YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

9. WHAT IS THE RESPONSE OF MANAGEMENT, WHEN COMPLAINTS OF SEXIST REMARKS OR SEXUAL HARASSMENT ON THE JOB ARE BROUGHT TO THEIR ATTENTION?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

10. DO WOMEN WHO PERFORM THE SAME JOB AS MEN RECEIVE THE SAME PAY? YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

11. ARE THERE JOBS DONE BY WOMEN WHICH ARE BASICALLY THE SAME AS THOSE DONE BY MEN, BUT WHICH HAVE DIFFERENT JOB TITLES AND A LOWER RATE OF PAY? YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

PLEASE GIVE EXAMPLES: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

12. DO YOU KNOW OF INSTANCES WHERE A WOMAN HAS FILLED A JOB PREVIOUSLY HELD BY A MAN AND BEEN PAID LESS THAN HE WAS? YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

PLEASE GIVE EXAMPLES: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

13. ARE WOMEN ENCOURAGED TO RESIGN WHEN THEY BECOME PREGNANT? YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

14. DO YOU KNOW OF ANY WOMEN WHO HAVE BEEN DISMISSED WHEN THEY BECAME PREGNANT? YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

15. WHEN WOMEN RETURN TO WORK AFTER PREGNANCY LEAVE, IS THEIR JOB CLASSIFICATION AND LEVEL OF PAY THE SAME AS IT WAS PREVIOUSLY? YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_

Please comment on any of the above questions, or any aspects of discrimination in employment not touched on in this questionnaire. (Use reverse side of page if necessary.)

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FAIR EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES QUESTIONNAIRE -- INFORMATION SHEET

In the 27 years of its existence, Ontario's equal pay law has done little to close the earnings gap between men and women. Despite equal employment opportunity legislation, most women still work in low paying "women's jobs" and are routinely discriminated against. If this is the situation where you work, do something about it! And don't do it alone -- seek the support of women with whom you work when you lodge a complaint or approach management.

In the questionnaire, Questions 1 to 9 deal with matters which are covered by the Ontario Human Rights Code. Questions 10 to 15 deal with equal pay and pregnancy leave, which come under the Employment Standards Branch. An important point to remember is that the Employment Standards Branch may initiate an investigation of a company as well as respond to a specific complaint. You may wish to ask for an investigation. If you wish to lodge a complaint, or obtain further information, contact the appropriate agency:

ONTARIO MINISTRY OF LABOUR

<u>HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION</u>		<u>EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS BRANCH</u>
12th floor, 400 University Ave. PH. 965-6841	<u>TORONTO</u>	3rd floor, 400 University Ave. PH. 965-7931
1 West Ave.S. PH. 527-2951	<u>HAMILTON</u>	1 West Ave.S. PH. 527-4501
808 Robertson St. PH. 468-3128	<u>KENORA</u>	808 Robertson St. PH.468-3128
	<u>KINGSTON</u>	1055 Princess St. PH.542-2853
824 King St.W. PH. 744-7308	<u>KITCHENER</u>	824 King St.W. PH. 744-5211
560 Wellington St. PH. 438-7291	<u>LONDON</u>	560 Wellington St. PH.438-7291
2197 Riverside Dr. PH. 731-2415	<u>OTTAWA</u>	2197 Riverside Dr. PH.731-7200
125 Brock St. PH. 949-3331	<u>SAULT STE. MARIE</u>	125 Brock St. PH.949-3331
1538 LaSalle Blvd. PH. 566-3071	<u>SUDBURY</u>	1538 LaSalle Blvd. PH.566-3071
435 James St.S. PH. 475-1693	<u>THUNDER BAY</u>	435 James St.S. PH.475-1691
500 Ouellette Ave. PH. 256-3611	<u>WINDSOR</u>	500 Ouellette Ave. PH.256-8278

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The Questionnaire was prepared by the ONTARIO COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN a voluntary women's group representing many women's groups all over Ontario. We can provide you with advice and assistance in making your complaint, or in following up on the complaint once it is lodged. We can also put you in touch with local women's groups who can offer their support. Write to us at P.O. Box 188, Station Q, Toronto, Ontario, M4T 2M1

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February, 1979