

THE ONTARIO COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

BOX 188, STATION "Q", TORONTO ONT. M4T 2M1

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NEWSLETTER

September 1979

NEXT GENERAL MEETING

The OCSW will hold its general meeting on Thursday, SEPTEMBER 13, at 8 p.m., in the home of Lorna Marsden, 206 Roxborough Drive, Toronto. Directions: By car: Go east off Mount Pleasant onto Roxborough Drive, and follow it almost to the end (beyond Glen Rd.) to 206. By TTC: Go to Rosedale station; take Rosedale bus to the corner of Glen Road and Whitney Ave.; go right (northeast) up Whitney to its end (2 blocks) and 206 Roxborough is across the street diagonally.

Since this is the first meeting of the autumn, members are urged to attend so that OCSW can get a good start on this year's projects. New members are especially encouraged to come in order to meet others informally over coffee, and to see how they can become active on issues of their choice. The meeting will be chaired by Chaviva Hošek.

RECENT OCSW ACTIVITY

Before the annual summer hiatus, the OCSW was active on several fronts. (Members who have attended our spring meetings will please bear with us as the Newsletter recaps for the benefit of out-of-town members.)

Visit to Provincial Cabinet -- "The Disadvantaged Majority" was the title of the brief presented to Ontario Cabinet ministers on March 29 by OCSW representatives Brigid O'Reilly, Wendy Lawrence, Milly Morton, Mary Eberts, Dorothy Gillmeister, and Pat Lundie. The brief followed the progress of an Ontario woman through her life, describing the effects of provincial government policies on her at each stage. Among the topics covered were: guidance counselling, job ghettos, equal pay, daycare, pensions (for working women and homemakers), and the poverty of senior women. The Honourable Margaret Birch, Provincial Secretary for Social Development chaired the meeting; she invited the OCSW to make an annual presentation to the Cabinet. Premier William Davis attended the meeting, as did Dr. Robert Elgie, Minister of Labour; Keith Norton, Minister of Community and Social Services; Provincial Treasurer Frank Miller; and observers Marnie Clarke, Director of the Women's Bureau; and Lynne Gordon, Chairman of the Ontario Status of Women Council.

Visit to Opposition Parties -- The OCSW took its brief to the caucuses of both the Liberal and New Democratic parties in early April. Very useful discussions resulted in each case.

Visit to Minister of Health -- In April, Karen Fejer, Pat Lundie and Wendy Lawrence represented the OCSW in a meeting with the Honourable Dennis Timbrell, Minister of Health. The OCSW's study of the Province's conception control program was discussed with the Minister, who indicated that local autonomy will continue to be the cornerstone of provincial policy on family planning. The OCSW called on the Minister to enforce the guidelines set down in 1975 in order to ensure a uniform standard of service throughout the province.

Visit to Minister of Labour -- A delegation consisting of Judith Davidson-Palmer, Mary Eberts, Dorothy Gillmeister, and Coleen Clark met with Dr. Robert Elgie in May to present a new OCSW brief on equal pay for work of equal value. According to Dr. Elgie, his Ministry is studying the implementation of the equal value concept under federal law. Our representatives informed the Minister that a brief with the OCSW's recommendations on affirmative action would soon be ready for presentation to him. (The brief has been completed over the summer.)

RECENT OCSW ACTIVITY (continued)EMPLOYMENTEqual Value Bill Receives Support

A private member's bill calling for equal pay for work of equal value in provincial labour legislation was sponsored by Dr. Ted Bounsall in the spring session of the Ontario Legislature, and received second reading in May. The OCSW sent a letter of support for the bill to a press conference organized by the Equal Pay Coalition.

On invitation, OCSW members Chaviva Hošek and Wendy Lawrence addressed the Executive of the Ontario Progressive-Conservative Women's Association at its meeting on June 2. The discussion focussed primarily on equal pay for work of equal value, with the OCSW position being set out in detail. Questions were also raised on topics (such as daycare) about which the OCSW had written in its March brief to the Ontario Cabinet. Robin Jeffrey, President of the Ontario P.C. Women's Executive has since informed us that it has passed a resolution saying that "equal pay for work of equal value should be a condition legislated under the Employment Standards Act". The resolution has been communicated to the Honourable Robert Elgie in a meeting with the P.C. Women's Executive.

Women's Bureau Luncheon

The OCSW was invited to a luncheon in June at which the Women's Bureau staff discussed its programs with representatives of women's organizations in the city. Speakers from Times Change and YWCA employment services outlined their work to the gathering.

SOCIAL SERVICES

The members of this subcommittee have been regrouping and collecting information for action this fall. The most urgent issues seem to be daycare and the situation of senior women. Co-operation has already begun with other Toronto groups which share our concern about daycare.

The social services subcommittee will hold its next meeting on Wednesday, September 12 at 8 p.m. in the home of Sue Barkley, 16 Wellesley Avenue (off Wellesley St. east of Parliament). If interested in joining or obtaining more information, call Sue at 960-1581.

FIFTY YEARS OF PERSONHOOD

1979 marks the fiftieth anniversary of Canadian women being considered legally as "persons", since the British Privy Council decision granting us this status was handed down on October 18, 1929. The occasion is being celebrated in various ways around the country. For instance, the National Action Committee on the Status of Women has produced a commemorative medallion, designed by Toronto sculptor Dora dePédery-Hunt, and commemorative postage seals, designed by Sheridan College graduate Jamie Bennett. The medallions (in bronze or silver) and seals may be ordered from the NAC office at 40 St. Clair Ave. E., #306, Toronto (Phone: 922-3246). In addition, NAC will hold a semi-annual meeting in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Alberta Status of Women, in Edmonton in mid-October. Several events are being planned to honour the historic action of the Western women who pressed the original case.

The OCSW has been co-operating with representatives of the Ontario Status of Women Council, the Canadian Federation of University Women, and the Association of Women Executives in hopes of having the Ontario Government celebrate this important date in our history. At our meeting with the Cabinet, Premier William Davis indicated support for such action, but there has been no firm commitment yet as to what the Ontario Government is prepared to sponsor, although time for planning is running short.

CABBAGETOWN FESTIVAL

The OCSW has been invited to provide a display in Toronto's Cabbagetown Festival on September 15. Anyone wishing to participate by offering information about the OCSW at our booth for an hour or so, please contact Wendy Lawrence at 922-7646 (note new phone number).

OCSW EAR TRUMPET AWARD OUT OF STORAGE AGAIN

The Harriet Martineau Memorial Ear Trumpet Award, emblazoned with the motto "Am I Really Hearing This??", has had to be removed from our vaults and dusted off for presentation to journalist Barbara Amiel. In her June 4 Macleans review panning The Secret Oppression, Leah Cohen and Constance Backhouse's book about sexual harassment in Canada, Ms. Amiel dismissed the problem of sexual harassment as follows: "No one has ever sexually harassed me. Maybe I just don't have any appeal."

SUMMER NEWS ROUND-UPSexually Harassed Woman Receives Compensation

In August, Maria Ballesta, a former employee of a meat-packing company received a settlement of \$3,500 after filing a complaint with the Ontario Human Rights Commission. She charged that she was a victim of sexual harassment and assault by a co-worker, and that she was fired when she complained to her supervisor. According to the settlement, the employer and co-worker were to apologize to Ms. Ballesta; the company will also hold a seminar for its employees on the contents of the Ontario Human Rights Code.

Toronto Pub Desegregated

In July, a tavern was ordered to do away with its men-only room, according to a decision by a board of inquiry established by the Ontario Human Rights Commission. Dorothea Crittenden, Chairman of the Commission, told the press that she hopes the decision will set a precedent for such sexually segregated facilities.

YMCA Takes Daycare Initiative

In Etobicoke and York, the YMCA will provide daycare in 10 schools for those awkward time slots between school hours and parents' work schedules. These "First Base Centres" will be open from 8-9 a.m., 12-1:30 p.m., and 3:30-6 p.m. on school days, and 8 a.m.-6 p.m. on school vacation weekdays. For more information on this welcome program, call 236-2730.

St. Lawrence Housing Project To Have Daycare

In response to repeated requests from Toronto City Council, the Ontario Government has agreed to cover 80% of the cost for a daycare centre in the new St. Lawrence Neighborhood. The centre, which is expected to open in September, will accommodate 50 children.

In addition, Community and Social Services Minister Keith Norton has announced that the Province will subsidize daycare for another 225 children in Ontario this year.

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL SCENE

INDIAN WOMEN'S PROTESTS HEARD -- Indian Affairs Minister Jake Epp has promised a delegation of Indian women that the federal government will amend Section 12 of the Indian Act, without waiting for a full revision of the Act. (Section 12 allows for stripping a woman of her Indian status when she marries a non-Indian. The Indian Act is currently excluded from the jurisdiction of the Canadian Human Rights Act.)

WOMEN'S MEDIA MONITORING COMMITTEE DISBANDED -- A committee set up by the Liberal government to study and make recommendations on the portrayal of women in the Canadian information media has been dismantled by the Progressive-Conservative government.

BOARDS STILL NEGLECT WOMEN -- A study on corporate directorships released in July by the Conference Board in Canada shows that women hold less than 1% of the 13,000 positions on boards of directors in this country. This compares unfavourably with the 28% of board seats held by American women. Women were notably absent from the list of directors of the new Continental Bank.

QUEBEC DOMESTICS PROTECTED -- Under new legislation, domestic workers in Quebec will have a minimum wage, set working hours, statutory holidays, and paid vacations.

FEW PUBLIC SERVICE WOMEN REACH TOP -- The federal Public Service Commission's most recent report shows that only 2.9% of senior executives are women, and only 4% of the jobs leading to those positions are held by women. Meanwhile, 98% of secretaries and 75% of clerks in the civil service are women. Although women comprise 1/3 of civil servants, they accounted for more than half of the resignations in 1978.

CANADIAN FILM FETED -- Patricia's Moving Picture, a 30-minute film about a homemaker's mid-life crisis received an award at the American Film Festival in New York. It was directed by Bonnie Sherr Klein of Montreal, and is available from the National Film Board.

WOMEN IN THE FOREFRONT -- Newfoundland's new Minister of Education is Lynn Verge, a member of Corner Brook Status of Women who sits on the Executive of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women.... In Portugal, Maria deLourdes Pintassilgo became the country's first woman Premier, while France's former Cabinet minister Simone Veil was elected the first President of the European Parliament.... The American Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences elected Fay Kanin, a writer and producer, as its second woman President.... And in Toronto, Ferne Alexander has been chosen the city's first woman super-intendant of police. She moves from being the Metro force's only police inspector to command the staff support services branch.

NEWS FROM OTHER GROUPS

Rape Crisis Centres -- The province's centres are being encouraged by the Ontario Government to apply for special project funding. Some have received such grants, but there is no guarantee of continuing financial support from the government for centres such as the one in Toronto. MPP Evelyn Gigantes has circulated a letter which she sent to the Honourable Robert Welch, then Provincial Secretary for Justice, in which she said, "Women who are fortunate enough never to use these services will nevertheless be rightfully angry with a government which deliberately chokes off the access to that support."

Women's Counselling and Referral Centre -- With no further government funding in sight, volunteers at the Centre fear that it likely will not be able to continue operating past the end of the year.

Times Change Employment Service -- Following a 45% cutback in its funding from the federal government, Times Change has had to reduce its staff by 1/3 and drop some programs, as well as shorten its office hours. It has moved to smaller quarters--at 932 Bathurst St., Toronto M5R 3G5 (Phone: 534-1161).

Employment Services for Immigrant Women -- A federal government grant of \$23,500 will keep this project operating until the end of March 1980. The service has 4 placement counsellors speaking several languages among them. It succeeds in finding jobs for 25% of its clients, who are new immigrants facing language difficulties and discrimination in job hiring.

Ontario Status of Women Council -- Appointments to this year's Council were announced in July by Premier William Davis. Broadcaster Lynne Gordon continues as Chairman for a second three-year term, with Olive Ritchie as Vice-Chairman. Other members are: Linda Silver Dranoff; Muriel Beatty (Provincial Council of Women); Maud Turner (IODE); Georgina Calder; Roberta Jamieson; Joan Maw; Dr. Josephine Somerville; Beverly Salmon; Mike McManus; and Professor William Kelloway.

The Council will hold its first fall meeting on September 14 from 9:30 to 4 at Sutton Place, Toronto. The meeting is open to the public, and Premier Davis will present opening remarks. This year, the Council expects to concentrate on employment strategies and support services for women in the 1980's.

Feminist Party of Canada -- was launched officially in June, when 600 women attended its first meeting in Toronto. It now puts out a bilingual newsletter, and will hold an educational day from 11 to 4 on September 29, at St. Paul's Church, 121 Avenue Road, Toronto. Discussion groups are also being formed. To join, send \$5 to the party at: Box 5717, Station A, Toronto M5W 1A0.

OCSW ANNOUNCES MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 1979-80

In response to suggestions from members, some general meetings of the Ontario Committee this year will concentrate on aiding us all to become more comprehensively informed on particular subjects. Guest speakers are being invited to bring us up to date, for example, on the economic situation for women, and on recent research into male-female differences. We are also considering film evenings and other fund-raising events.

Why not bring your ideas to the September meeting? Hands to help with the organizing of these projects will be welcome. Volunteer on September 13, or contact Kathy Livingston at 487-9975.

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| September 13/79<br>Thursday<br>8:00 p.m. | Lorna Marsden's<br>206 Roxborough Drive<br>(Rosedale, east of Glen Road)               |
| October 10/79<br>Wednesday<br>8:00 p.m.  | Anne Hill's<br>11 Albermarle Avenue<br>(Near the Chester Station, south of Danforth)   |
| November 13/79<br>Tuesday<br>8:00 p.m.   | Chaviva Hosek's<br>152 Cambridge Avenue<br>(Near Broadview Station, north of Danforth) |
| January 17/80<br>Thursday<br>8:00 p.m.   | Mary Eberts'<br>46 Nanton Avenue<br>(Near Castlefrank Station)                         |
| March 12/80<br>Wednesday<br>8:00 p.m.    | Naomi Black's<br>19 Hawthorn Avenue<br>(Near Castlefrank Station)                      |
| May 13/80<br>Tuesday<br>8:00 p.m.        | Susan Barkley's<br>16 Wellesley Avenue East<br>(Near Wellesley and Parliament)         |

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DO YOU NEED INFORMATION ABOUT THE OCSW?

Membership

The Ontario Committee on the Status of Women is a Toronto-based voluntary organization formed in 1971 by women wishing to see the implementation of those recommendations of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women which fall under provincial jurisdiction (equal pay, social services, education, family law, family planning, etc.) It is composed of women from a cross-section of backgrounds and occupations.

The OCSW holds about 6 general meetings a year. Its projects are carried out by subcommittees working on specific issues. Past activities have included taking briefs to government, and educating the public via press conferences or open information meetings. A Newsletter is published three times annually. There is a membership fee of \$5 a year.

To join the OCSW, clip the following coupon and send it, with \$5, to: Ontario Committee on the Status of Women  
P. O. Box 188, Station Q  
Toronto, Ontario. M4T 2M1.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

POSTAL CODE: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

I AM INTERESTED IN: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact People for Information

|  |                     |          |
|--|---------------------|----------|
| Requests for publications,<br>correspondence generally | Beth Atcheson       | 961-6551 |
| Employment   | Dorothy Gillmeister | 536-7733 |
| Social Services  | Sue Barkley         | 960-1581 |
| Family Planning  | Karen Fejer         | 445-0239 |
| Membership   | Marilyn Boynton     | 494-2391 |
| Newsletter   | Kathy Livingston    | 487-9975 |
| Accounting   | Sheila Laing        | 481-0512 |
| Family Law   | Irma Melville       | 294-5762 |
| Pensions   | Brigid O'Reilly     | 533-2194 |
| General  | Wendy Lawrence      | 922-7646 |

Remember: you can always contact the OCSW by mail through our postal address.

OCSW Publications

The recent briefs "The Disadvantaged Majority", "Ontario's Conception Control Program", and "Equal Pay for Women" can be ordered from our postal address for \$2.50 a copy. Our brief on affirmative action may also be ordered in advance, and will soon be out.

A brochure describing our aims, activities, and membership application is also available free for the asking, as is a full list of our publications. Write for them to our postal address.

NEEDED !!! A VOLUNTEER FOR THE OCSW

The OCSW needs a volunteer co-ordinator to a) collect the mail  
b) route it to the appropriate sub-committee and deal with sundry miscellany. At most this should take two hours a week. Wendy Lawrence has been doing it for a long time and needs help. Please phone Brigid O'Reilly 533-2194 if you could do the job.

September, 1979

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

Wendy Lawrence  
32 Aberdeen Ave.  
Toronto  
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