



The  
Ontario Committee  
on the Status of Women

NEWSLETTER

November 1979

P.O. Box 188, Station Q, Toronto, Ontario M4T 2M1

NEXT MEETING

The Ontario Committee on the Status of Women will hold its next general meeting on Tuesday, November 13 at 8 p.m. in the home of Chaviva Hošek, 152 Cambridge Avenue, Toronto.

Directions: by TTC: Take the Bloor subway to Broadview station. Walk west on Danforth Avenue for one block to Cambridge Avenue, then walk north three blocks to #152. By car: Cambridge Avenue is the first street east of the Bloor viaduct; it runs north off Danforth Avenue.

OCSW ACTIVITY

EMPLOYMENT ISSUES

EQUAL PAY FOR WORK OF EQUAL VALUE

Bill 3, the private member's bill sponsored by MPP Ted Bounsall, has been referred to the Ontario Legislature's General Government Committee, which is expected to hold hearings on this proposed equal value legislation in January. The OCSW hopes to be able to make a presentation before the Committee at that time, and a submission is now in preparation.

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

The OCSW's most recent brief on employment matters has been completed, and is about to be released. It will be presented to the Honourable Robert Elgie, Minister of Labour, shortly. Copies of the brief may be ordered for \$3 from Jennifer Pratt at the OCSW postal address above.

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

The OCSW is among many women's organizations across the country which are concerned about possible changes in the unemployment insurance legislation. Letters have been sent from the OCSW to the Honourable Ron Atkey, federal Minister of Employment and Immigration, and the Honourable Keith Norton, provincial Minister of Community and Social Services, requesting more information on the proposals for change. The OCSW has asked in particular for clarification regarding the continued eligibility for unemployment benefits on the part of women on maternity leave, and regarding the likelihood of a "two-tier" system being introduced into the plan. (Such a system would differentiate between claimants according to whether or not they have dependents.) It is understood that a federal government study will be sent to the provinces in mid-November.

Changes of the sort under discussion are expected to have adverse effects on women in general. Women suffer a higher rate of unemployment than do men. The OCSW will be following this issue as changes are proposed to the unemployment scheme. Meanwhile, the National Action Committee on the Status of Women has called for a publicly funded comprehensive maternity and parental leave scheme independent of unemployment insurance.

HUMAN RIGHTS

GIRLS IN SPORTS

In September, the OCSW wrote to the Honourable Reuben Baetz, Minister of Culture and Recreation, to inquire about the Ontario Court of Appeal decisions in the cases of Debbie Baszo and Gail Cummings. The Minister replied that the Ontario Human Rights Commission is recommending the appeal of the case involving the Ontario Rural Softball Association, but is not suggesting further action on the Ontario Minor Hockey Association case. In his letter, the Minister assured the OCSW of his concern about the lack of opportunity for girls to participate in team sports in Ontario. He is asking the Ministry's Sports and Fitness Branch to work with provincial sport governing bodies to develop more opportunities for girls to be active in sport through sex-integrated leagues and teams. The Minister wrote: "I am firmly committed to providing more sport opportunities, and I believe that, among young males and females of equal ability levels, the logical way of organizing sport activity is through integrated rather than segregated structures."

#### NEW HUMAN RIGHTS CODE?

In the light of statements from Minister of Labour Robert Elgie last spring that a proposed new provincial Human Rights Code would be presented to the Ontario Legislature this session, the OCSW is preparing a checklist of rights which ought to be guaranteed in any new legislation. Other changes to the existing Code will also be recommended. Contact person: Mary Eberts, 962-9439.

#### EDUCATION

##### ACCESS TO POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Low-income women returning to post-secondary education are among students who report difficulty in obtaining adequate financial aid to continue their studies. A new OCSW subcommittee is considering the present situation, and will be recommending changes in the provincial loan and grant system.

##### SCHOOL WINTER CLOSING PROPOSAL

Some public discussion has occurred about the possibility of closing the province's public schools during the month of January for purposes of transportation safety and energy conservation. The OCSW has written to the Honourable Bette Stephenson, Minister of Education, regarding other factors to be considered in making such a change. For instance, what alternate arrangements for child care would be available to working parents? Contact person: Nadine Winter, 498-7894.

#### ELECTION STRATEGY

Realizing that preparation ahead of time will be necessary if women's issues are to receive adequate attention in any future provincial election, the OCSW is forming a special subcommittee to discuss election strategy. Members interested in participating are invited to come to a meeting on Sunday, November 25, at 2 p.m., in the home of Naomi Black, 19 Hawthorn Avenue, Toronto. (921-9772)

#### SOCIAL SERVICES

The poverty of senior women in Ontario will be the focus for the OCSW's social services subcommittee this year. If you would like to join in the project, please call Sue Barkley at 960-1581.

#### "PERSONHOOD" CELEBRATIONS

##### 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Around the country, Canadian women have been marking their 50th anniversary as legal "persons". Celebrations culminated on October 18, the date on which, in 1929, the Privy Council in England interpreted Section 24 of the British North America Act to include women as "persons". The Alberta Status of Women held its annual meeting that week-end in Edmonton, whence the "Alberta Five" launched their original legal appeal in 1929. Alberta feminists were joined by members of the Executive of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, who were also meeting in the city for the anniversary occasion. Calgary women celebrated October 18 with a gala banquet. Margaret Atwood read from her writings, Sylvia Tyson sang, and the Nellie McClung Theatre Troupe performed for the 900 women attending. Among those present were several Alberta women MLAs, including Minister Responsible for Women, the Honourable Mary LeMessurier. Kay Macpherson and Wendy Lawrence of the OCSW were very pleased to be able to attend.

##### BUT NOT IN ONTARIO

Although some women's organizations in the province did hold "personhood" celebrations, there was no event officially sponsored by the Government of Ontario, despite support indicated earlier by the Premier for such an occasion. On October 11, the OCSW expressed its disappointment "that the Ontario Government has decided not to take a truly celebratory approach to this historic date" in a letter sent to Premier Davis, the Honourable Margaret Birch, the Honourable Bette Stephenson, Opposition Leader Stuart Smith, NDP Leader Michael Cassidy, Lynne Gordon of the Ontario Status of Women Council, and press representatives. Elsewhere, activities were initiated by other governments. In Newfoundland, the Honourable Lynn Verge, Minister of Education, distributed kits about the Persons Case for use with students in the province's schools. In Ottawa, Governor-General Edward Schreyer held a banquet at which special awards were presented for efforts on behalf of Canadian women.

MEMBERS' PERSONAL NOTES

Elsie Gregory MacGill has received the gold medal of the Association of Professional Engineers. Elsie was the first woman to graduate in electrical engineering from the University of Toronto. The medal is the highest award granted by the organization. . . . Paula Caplan presented a paper, "Barriers Between Women", to the York-University of Toronto Women's Colloquium on October 26. . . . Kathryn Morgan will be appearing on an upcoming program of The Great Debate on television. She and Gregory Baum will be debating on the topic, "the Pope's theology is mediaeval".

NEWS FROM OTHER GROUPS

National Action Committee on the Status of Women -- has a new arrangement whereby individuals interested in national women's issues may become "friends of NAC". For \$20 a year, a "friend" will receive Status of Women News, NAC's Memo, and invitations to selected events. She may attend NAC meetings, but will not have voting rights. NAC hopes that this trial arrangement will allow those who are not part of any organization to make a link with the women's movement in Canada, while NAC will thereby expand its funding base. If interested in becoming a "friend of NAC", contact the office, 40 St. Clair Ave. E., suite 306, Toronto M4T 1M9 (phone: 922-3246).

Ontario Status of Women Council -- According to its new mandate, the Council may be consulted directly by Government ministries as policy is being developed. The Council has announced that it is preparing a position paper on employment strategies for women in the 1980s. The paper is due in March. Contact the Council at 700 Bay St., 3rd floor, Toronto (965-1111).

Feminist Party of Canada -- Volunteers are now being sought to staff the party's new office at 121 Avenue Road, Toronto (925-3777).

Action Day Care Committee -- This new coalition has been formed in Toronto to focus public attention on the continuing need for quality care for children. For more information, call Barbara Lyske at 461-5151, or Virginia Thomson at 531-6614.

Studio "D", National Film Board -- Producer Kathleen Shannon at the NFB has written to express her anxiety that, unless the public indicates support for the Board's work, the Women's Program may go out of existence when new budget cuts are made in the spring. Shannon gained recognition for her part in the "Challenge for Change" film series, while Studio "D" has given backing to women film-makers like Bonnie Sherr Klein, director of the award-winning Patricia's Moving Picture. Those wishing to see Studio D continue should write to the Prime Minister, Secretary of State, and local MPs.

Movement for Christian Feminism -- This organization closed its office in July, as had been planned. Co-ordinator Shelly Finson reports that the Movement is entering a new phase; it has challenged the institutional church to take up women's issues, and it has created a network of women who will continue to seek a new understanding of the role of women in church and society.

Support Services for Assaulted Women -- This non-profit organization aims to change public and professional attitudes to wife assault. It has published a brochure, "Wife Assault: The Silent Crime" (5¢ a copy); a factsheet, "Wife Assault in Canada" (35¢); and an overview essay by Shirley Small (\$1.25). Bulk rates are available. Order from Box 245, Station K, Toronto M4P 2G5.

EVENTS TO NOTE

NORWEGIAN WOMAN MP TO SPEAK

Dr. Berit Ås, distinguished social psychologist, feminist leader, and member of the Norwegian Parliament will discuss "a five-dimensional model for change: contradictions and feminist consciousness" at a special seminar on Tuesday, November 6 at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. The talk is scheduled for 2 p.m. in the OISE Board Room, 12th floor, 252 Bloor St. W., Toronto.

THE ENVIRONMENT: A FEMINIST VISION OF THE FUTURE

On Saturday, November 10, the National Action Committee will hold this workshop on energy, health, and environmental planning. Among the participants are Ursula Franklin (author of the Science Council report, "The Conserver Society"), Laurel Shugarman (feminist physician), Berit Ås (Norwegian MP), and Gerda Werkerle and Rebecca Peterson of York University's Faculty of Environmental Studies. The workshop will run from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Bloor Collegiate, 1141 Bloor St. W., Toronto (at Dufferin subway). Registration costs \$2, and daycare is available upon advance request. For information or registration, call 922-3246.

NEWS AROUND AND ABOUT

Jamaican Women Not Deported -- "Steps are being taken to grant permanent resident (landed immigrant) status" to the Jamaican women who were formerly threatened with deportation. So said Ron Atkey, Minister of Employment and Immigration, in a letter to the National Action Committee. The women had not declared their dependents back in Jamaica when they originally entered Canada to take up domestic service employment.

Affirmative Action Benefits Employers -- In a speech to the Ontario Status of Women Council on September 14, Premier William Davis noted that companies which introduced voluntary affirmative action plans are reporting a 20% drop in employee turnover.

Non-Traditional Jobs Still Elusive -- In Ontario in 1976-77, less than one per cent of apprentices in trades other than hair-dressing were women. Stelco is one of the large corporations where women are hoping to make inroads into the traditionally male-dominated areas. Female job applicants in Ontario and Alberta are receiving support in their initiatives from women's organizations and unions.

More Firsts -- Alberta has its first woman Senator. She is Martha Bielish, who is known for her work in the Women's Institute, of which she has been national President. . . . Suzanne Laberge of Montreal has been named Assistant General Manager of the Royal Bank--the first female bank executive in Canada.

Women's Service Closes -- The Centre des femmes de St.-Leonard in Quebec has closed because of lack of funding. Its applications for grants were refused.

Man Protests Contest -- The Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women has supported the protest of home economics student David Dranchuk against a provincial Milk Producers Marketing Board "Dairy Princess Contest". The contest is open to women aged 18-23, and offers a cash award and summer employment opportunities. Dranchuk has lodged a complaint with the Manitoba Human Rights Commission, alleging that the contest is discriminatory on grounds of sex and age.

American Equal Value Coalition -- Women's organizations, unions, and federal agencies such as the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission have set up a new coalition to promote the concept of equal pay for work of equal value. The coalition's members see the equal value principle as the route to take to close the male/female wage gap, which has widened during the 16 years of American experience with "equal pay for equal work" legislation.

NOW Stresses Health Issues -- The National Organization of Women has begun a nation-wide effort to ensure that health issues related to pregnancy become major topics in the 1980 American elections.

RESOURCES, PUBLICATIONS

ONTARIO REPORT: TODAY AND TOMORROW -- is a new report approved by the Ontario Cabinet, describing Ontario's progress on the status of women from 1973 to the present. It outlines the direction of future policy on issues relating to women. The report is free on request from the Ministry of Labour, Information Services, 2nd floor, 400 University Ave., Toronto. (965-7941)

TEN YEARS LATER -- The Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women has produced this report assessing the implementation of the Royal Commission's recommendations. Of the original 122 recommendations under federal jurisdiction, the Council found 2 no longer applicable, 43 implemented, 53 partially implemented, and the remaining 24 not implemented. Copies of the report are available free from the Council at Box 1541, Station B, Ottawa K1P 5R5.

WOMEN AND POVERTY -- This new report by the National Council of Welfare details the considerable extent of women's poverty in Canada. It analyzes the reasons for such poverty, and suggests solutions. For a copy, write to the Council at the Brooke Claxton Building, Ottawa K1A 0K9.

WOMEN ARE PERSONS! -- This booklet is a tribute to the women of Canada and the Persons Case. Order it from the Alberta Women's Bureau, 1402 Centennial Building, 10015 - 103 Ave., Edmonton, Alberta T5J 0H1.

PERSONS POSTER -- To commemorate the achievement of the "Famous Five" women of the Persons Case, the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women, the Honourable David MacDonald has commissioned this poster. Copies may be ordered free from the Office of the Co-ordinator, Status of Women, 10th floor, 151 Sparks St., Ottawa K1A 1C3.

STATUS OF WOMEN NEWS -- The special issue for the International Year of the Child is now available. Articles concentrate on the female child in Canada; art and writing by girls are featured. Price is \$1.25 a copy. Better yet, subscribe for a year, or give a gift subscription--4 issues for \$5 (\$8 for institutions and out-of-Canada persons).

RESOURCES, PUBLICATIONS (continued)

MEDALLIONS -- There is still an opportunity to order a medallion honouring the fiftieth anniversary of Canadian women's personhood. Designed by Toronto sculptor Dora DePedery-Hunt, the medallions are available in either bronze (\$20) or silver (\$45). Colourful commemorative seals are also still available at \$1 a sheet of 54 seals (+ 50¢ an order for handling). Order now for seasonal holiday gift-giving and mailings.

Write to NAC, 40 St. Clair Ave. E., suite 306, Toronto M4T 1M9. (922-3246)

EVERYWOMAN'S ALMANAC 1980 -- This annual appointment calendar and handbook makes a popular seasonal gift. It is available at \$4.95 (or \$3.95 each for orders of 5 or more) from the Women's Press, suite 313, 280 Bloor St. W., Toronto M5S 1W1. Please add postage costs of 35¢ for the first book and 15¢ per book up to ten.

A NOT UNREASONABLE CLAIM -- Linda Kealey has edited this collection of articles in which 12 women historians examine women and reform in Canada between 1880 and 1920. Order at \$7.95 paper (or \$17.95 hardcover) from the Women's Press. (Note address and postal cost instructions above.)

INTERCHANGE -- The September issue concentrating on sex-role stereotyping contains articles by Lorna Marsden and Margrit Eichler, among others. Single issues are \$4.50; annual subscriptions \$12 (\$8 for students, \$16 for institutions). Order Interchange from Publications Sales, OISE, 252 Bloor St. West, Toronto M5S 1V6.

PERSONS HASTY NOTES -- Notecards celebrating the 5 women of the Persons Case have been designed by Alberta artist Jeanette Walker. Order them (\$2 for 6 cards and envelopes, + 50¢ an order for handling) from the artist at Box 2430, Lacombe, Alberta T0C 1S0.

WOMEN IN MEDIA: A DOCUMENTARY SOURCE BOOK -- This book about women's role in the American media is now in its second printing. Order at \$5.95 (U.S.) from Women's Institute for Freedom of the Press, 3306 Ross Place, N. W., Washington, D. C. 20008.

MEMBERSHIP IN THE OCSW

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 Committee holds about six general meetings per year. 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.

Membership Fee -- The OCSW covers its costs solely by means of a fee paid by each member, and other voluntary donations. Because of the increased costs involved in the Newsletter and other publications, the OCSW has had to raise the membership fee for 1980 to \$10 per person (\$7 for students, seniors, or unemployed). Donations above the membership dues are always welcome.

To join the OCSW, send the following coupon with \$10 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:	_____
I ENCLOSE \$	_____ AS A: NEW MEMBER _____ RENEWAL _____ DONATION _____

