



The Ontario Committee on the Status of Women

Newsletter, October 1982
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FIRST AND ONLY NOTICE OF ALL OCSW MEETINGS FOR 1982-83

Pardon the stridency of tone, but we can no longer afford to send notices for each meeting. Please accept this listing as the only one for the year.

Do tear off this page, pin it up in a prominent place in your home or office and plan to attend all of the sessions. And bring your friends.

| <u>date</u> | <u>subject</u> | <u>at the home of</u> |
|-------------|--|--|
| Oct. 21 | general--the coming year | Upper Club Room, Bloor St. United Church, 300 Bloor St. West |
| Dec. 1 | Affirmative Action | Lee Grills, 555 Balliol |
| Jan. 11 | Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value | Lorna Marsden, 206 Roxborough |
| March 2 | Violence Against Women, with Trudy Don | Chaviva Hosek, 152 Cambridge |
| May 5 | Pornography | Lenore Davidson, 80 Coldstream |

All meetings begin at 8:00 p.m.

MILLER WON'T MEET WITH US

Ontario Treasurer Frank Miller has declined to meet with OCSW members to review the provisions of the Canada Pension Plan child-rearing drop-out provision. A meeting was proposed because Ontario is the only province which has not approved the drop-out provision.

In responding to our request Miller states: "The views of the supporters of the drop-out provision have been clearly expressed and are well understood by the Ontario government. In light of this I do not believe a further meeting on the issue is necessary at this time. ... I cannot say when a decision will be made."

Yet at the CPP conference in May, Miller gave his audience the distinct impression that a decision was imminent.

Other women's groups also have prompted him to announce the Ontario government's decision. Two of them have been granted time with Miller. Emily Uncles is working now on behalf of OCSW to meet with them before they see Miller, to arrange for them to carry our name and information, too.

(Re the drop-out provision: A woman's CPP benefits at retirement today are based on the total number of years worked for wages averaged with the number of years without wages, spent raising children. This brings the salary on which benefits are calculated down. Women's groups are pressing for a change which will allow those years without wages to be disregarded when calculating CPP benefits. Some women have thus suggested that we refer to this not as a "drop-out" but rather a "drop-in" provision.)

CARAL FIGHTS ABORTION ATTACK

The Canadian Abortion Rights Action League (CARAL) has taken action in the B.C. case questioning the section of the Criminal Code which allows abortions.

CARAL writes: "the legal right to abortion is currently under its most serious attack since the inception of the current law in 1969. In a 7-to-2 decision, the Supreme Court of Canada has granted Joseph Borowski, an avowed opponent of a woman's right to choose abortion, legal standing to contest the law. This means that he has been given the right to argue his point of view on abortion in the courts.

"Borowski contends Section 251 of the Criminal Code, which allows abortions to be performed under certain circumstances, should be declared invalid because it contravenes the Diefenbaker Bill of Rights. In his arguments, Borowski maintains that fetuses are entitled to the legal status of persons and are thus protected by the Bill of Rights.

"The court also granted Borowski his legal costs, some \$70,000 to date, which were awarded against the federal government. The irony of this is that Canadian taxpayers are paying to allow this man to challenge in the courts what is already a limited right to abortion.

"The granting of standing represents a marked departure from previous decisions in the area. If Borowski wins his battle, abortion will become illegal again in Canada.

"... His recognition by the Supreme Court as a person with a right to be heard on this issue was a major victory in his fight to make abortion illegal once again."

The Board of Directors of CARAL has decided to take legal action to counter Borowski's case. For more information--Kathleen Martindale, CARAL, 40 St. Clair Ave. East, Suite 300, Toronto, 961-1507.

YW PROGRAM STARTS SOON

Teens Involve, a free job preparation training program for young women 15 to 21 years of age, includes training in self-awareness, communication, group and child behaviour, community service, health information and job-seeking techniques. Teens Involve starts the

week of October 11, hours after school, and locations in the west end of Toronto will be established according to registration. No Cost. Call YWCA children and teens department, 961-8100.

NOTES FROM ALL OVER

U.S. women's groups have been fighting fire with ... humor. In response to moral majority and anti-ERA forces they have developed names like Ladies Against Women and CHICKS (Coalition for Harbouring Indefinite Chastity and Kaffeeklatsch Sentimentality. They demonstrate outside Phyllis Schafly's speeches with signs that read "Sperm are people, too," "You're nobody until you're Mrs. Somebody," and chant "Hit us again! Hit us again! Harder! Harder!"

Other group names satirize the oppressiveness of the moral majority: Another Mother for World Domination, The Vulture Forum, Future Fetuses of America, and the National Association of the Advancement of Rich, White, Straight Men.

The Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women newsletter recently ran a book review on Ancient Mirrors of Womanhood, Our Goddesses and Heroine Heritage, by Merlin Stone, 1979, New Sybilline Press. Review by Kathy Martens.

According to Ms. Martens the author "spent 15 years researching obscure references to female goddesses to give us our legacy from the past. ... All Goddess stories are referred to in literature as mythology. This 'relegates them

to a topic closer to a fairy tale or fantasy rather than to the religious belief of a particular society.'"

CONFERENCE ON WOMEN AND DEVELOPMENT

Presented by the Manitoba Council for International Cooperation, "Women hold up half the sky: Perspectives on Women and Development" will be held October 15 and 16 at St. Paul's College, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, to bring together international and national speakers to address the issues of women's work and women's health in both the Third World and Canada. For information, M.C.I.C., 418 Wardlaw Ave., Winnipeg, Man. R3L 0L7 (204) 475-4169/453-6231.

FIRST OCSW FUNDRAISER A SUCCESS

For the approximately 80 people who attended our wine, cheese and auction, September 23 was a fun time. For all OCSW members it also was a financial boon. We raised about \$1200. (Maybe more. Not all of the accounting had been done at the time of this writing.)

Baked goodies were in great demand and were auctioned off for staggeringly large sums: pecan pies, tourtieres, chocolate chip cookies, pickles and jam. Our thanks to the Men's Auxiliary and others who baked.

Some other auction items came from the women members of the Ontario Parliament: Sheila Copps (auto-graphed caricature of herself), Marion Bryden (non-sexist playing cards), Bette Stephenson (an old school bell), Susan Fish (an auto-graphed fish kite), Margaret

Scrivener (flowers) and Margaret Birch (jewellery, a pin). Jogging with long-distance runner Bruce Kidd was a hit as was a dinner cooked in one's own home.

Louise Brown, Toronto Star journalist, attended, had a great time and covered the event in the paper the following Monday.

Thanks are due to those who worked hard selling tickets. And all ideas for this or some other sort of fund raiser for next year will be appreciated. Contact any of the steering committee members listed in the last newsletter with their phone numbers.