

# DOMESTICS' CROSS-CULTURAL NEWS

monthly newsletter of the Toronto Organization for Domestic Workers' Rights

April 1992

(INTERCEDE)

## QUESTION & ANSWER ABOUT IMMIGRATION

Q. Is the new FDM now in force?

When the Immigration Minister announced changes to the FDM on January 30, 1992, he also announced a 12-week moratorium during which instructions on the new FDM would be written and no processing of new applicants to the FDM would be done abroad for the 12-week period.

Q. What can we do to prevent the government from going ahead with the new eligibility criteria, i.e. Grade 12 or equivalent and 6 months full time training?

Write to Hon. Bernard Valcourt, Minister of Employment and Immigration in Ottawa and say what you think about these new criteria.

Ask your friends, your employer, others to write their own members of Parliament if they oppose these changes. It takes a lot of letters and plenty of action to oppose government policies and change them.

Q. When I file my application for permanent residence I know I should pay a processing fee of \$350. Should I also pay additional fees for my husband and two children whose names are included in my application form?

*Contd Pg 2 - Questions & Answers*

## PARLIAMENT MEMBERS HEAR DOMESTIC WORKERS OPPOSE NEW FDM CRITERIA

In a hearing of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Labour, Employment and Immigration, representatives of domestic workers organizations called for the withdrawal of new criteria for admitting women to the Foreign Domestic program (FDM).

Spokespersons of INTERCEDE, West Coast Domestic Workers Association (Vancouver), Association for the Defence of Domestic Workers' Rights (Montreal) and Coalition of concerned Groups for Foreign Domestic Workers (Montreal) told members of parliament that the requirements of a Grade 12 or equivalent education and six months full-time training in related live-in care that were announced by Immigration Minister Bernard Valcourt on January 30 will worsen discrimination in the FDM against women of colour.

Instead, they all called for granting permanent residence status to foreign domestic workers and eliminating the system of temporary work permit. They also called for an end to the mandatory live-in requirement.

On the other hand, representatives from the Ministry of Immigration and from the Coalition for In-Home Child and Domestic Care justified the new education criteria as making domestic workers employable in the labour market.

*Contd Pg 2 - Parliament Members*

**Come to INTERCEDE's monthly meeting on Sunday, April 5, 1992 from 3-5 pm.**

**Volunteers will answer questions about filing your**

**INCOME TAX RETURNS.**

**BRING a tax return form, your T4, etc.**

**You can get blank tax return forms from a Revenue Canada Taxation office or post office or a library near you.**

**INTERCEDE counselling and CLASP Legal Clinic will be available.**

**2-3 pm - Member application and renewals will be processed. Members in 1991 with I.D. no. 1314 to 1503 must renew or be dropped from list of members.**

You only pay the processing fee of \$350 for yourself. In the future, when you are already a landed immigrant you can sponsor your family if you meet the requirements for sponsorship. At that time you will pay their processing fees.

Q. How come I have been asked to pay another \$250 by Immigration in addition to the \$350 fee I paid when I filed my application for permanent residence?

We have been informed that Immigration will charge \$250 more at a later date, in addition to the \$350 processing fee when foreign domestic workers file their application for permanent residence. On September 1, 1991, this additional amount was introduced to the Immigration Act Fees Regulations. This fee is for Order-In-Council Requests that used to be free.

An Order-In-Council request is for special authority from the Governor in Council to allow processing of an application for permanent residence from within Canada and to overcome other legal requirements.

INTERCEDE considers that Immigration fees charged to domestic workers in the FDM are exorbitant in relation to the minimum wages they receive. INTERCEDE has complained against hikes in Immigration fees for employment authorization

Contd Pg 3 - Questions & Answers

Among the questions asked by a Member of Parliament in the Committee was how a required level of education like Grade 12 assures that someone will be better able to take care of children, "to fold sheets, to iron, to wash the baby's fanny?" In her remarks, Lorina Serafico of the West Coast Domestic workers Association noted that "in British Columbia our former two premiers before the present one were not required to have a grade 12 education to do their job - to run a province."

As a result of the many problems raised by domestic workers in the February 26 presentations, members of the House of Commons Standing Committee decided to continue hearings on the FDM.

Meanwhile, INTERCEDE thanks all organizations who have sent copies of their letters to Minister Bernard Valcourt of Immigration opposing the FDM admission criteria. A special thanks and "abrazos" to Colectivo Atabal for their letter. Colectivo Atabal is a support group in Mexico City that promotes domestic workers' rights and with whom INTERCEDE met last February.

We wish to thank the Employment and Immigration Canada (Immigration Settlement and Adaptation Program); Secretary of State (Multiculturalism and Women's Program); Ontario Ministry of Citizenship; Ontario Women's Directorate; the Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto (Community and Social Services); and the City of Toronto Grants Review Board for their continuing support.

**TO ALL SUBSCRIBERS (Does not apply to current members)**

INTERESTED TO CONTINUE RECEIVING THIS NEWSLETTER? SEND THE FORM BELOW WITH PAYMENT.  
IF NO RENEWAL SUBSCRIPTION BY END OF MARCH, WE'LL REMOVE YOUR NAME FROM OUR MAILING LIST.

RENEWAL SUBSCRIPTION :  (only until December 1992)  
NEW SUBSCRIPTION :  CHANGE OF ADDRESS :

MAIL TO : INTERCEDE, 489 College St., Suite 402, Toronto, Ontario M6G 1A5

Please send *DOMESTICS' CROSS-CULTURAL NEWS* to :

MEMBER ID NUMBER : \_\_\_\_\_ NAME : \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS : \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY/PROVINCE : \_\_\_\_\_  
POSTAL CODE : \_\_\_\_\_ TELEPHONE : \_\_\_\_\_

**YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION RATES :**

INTERCEDE Members :	FREE	Non-member Domestic :	\$5.00
Non-Profit Organizations:	FREE	Others	\$20.00

Contd from Pg 2 - Questions & Answers

renewals, student authorizations and fees for processing applications for permanent residence.

But so far, no consideration has been given to lowering these fees in proportion to domestic workers' wages.

### **About Income Taxes**

**Q. What documents should I have when filing my income tax return?**

It is that time of year: filing your income tax return! Make sure you have: T4 slips from all your employers in 1991; receipts of money orders, remittances, bank drafts etc. that you sent to your dependents who are not in Canada; receipts for school or upgrading course payments; receipts for dental and other medical services.

**Q. I corrected misrepresentation of my marital status with Immigration six months after I arrived in Canada. Can I now declare and claim dependent children when I file my tax return and not be questioned by Revenue Canada?**

Send a letter with your tax return explaining your circumstances and attaching copy of your letter to Immigration correcting your misrepresentation.

**Q. My employer issued me a T4 that showed no income tax deductions were made on my salary. I have been working more than 44 hour weeks for a net pay of \$600 a month. What should I do?**

Clarify this with your employer and ask that your T4 be corrected to show the amount of your gross earnings. If you have been receiving \$600 a month, it is clear this is your net pay and not your gross earnings and therefore, tax deductions have been made by the employer.

If your employer refuses to correct your T4 slip, you should still file your income tax return and show what you calculate as income tax deductions made from your salary; accompany your return with a letter of explanation.

### **CARIBBEAN DOMESTIC WORKERS MEETING**

Sunday, April 26, 1992  
3-5 pm at INTERCEDE  
489 College St., Room 402  
(College near Bathurst)

For Info call **324-8751**

Or, before sending your income tax return, you can go to a Revenue Canada district office and file a complaint about not receiving a correct T4 so that Revenue Canada can contact your employer for a corrected T4.

**Q. I worked February to December 1991 with an employer who now refuses to give me a T4 slip and who informs me that I was not declared as their employee because I was receiving \$700 in cash each month.**

Go ahead and file an income tax return and attach proof of your employment such as copy of contract with this employer, copy of your employment authorization showing the employer's name; and as well, attach proof that you were receiving \$700 a month net pay and that you were working as a live-in domestic worker.

If you need assistance to file your Tax Return, you can call the following for an appointment:

Northwood Neighbourhood Services 748-0788  
Kababayan Community Centre 532-3888  
North York Community House 784-0920

### **ORIENTATION MEETING FOR DOMESTIC WORKERS SPECIALLY NEWCOMERS**

SUNDAY, APRIL 12, 1992

10 am - 4 pm

George Brown College, Room 541  
200 King Street East (King Subway)

Participants will receive Orientation Kits and Certificate of participation. Free Lunch.

Register by calling **324-8751**

### **WHAT I LEARNED FROM THE FACILITATOR WORKSHOPS!**

The facilitator workshop is all about how we can assist or help in small group discussions. To make learning easy; to assist others! We who participated felt the friendliness and good vibrations in the room. We gave the best of each of ourselves.

We learned about leadership, that it is in each of us. We learned about communicating and expressing our feelings.

I learned a lot about myself: that I'm not alone. That I can voice out my opinion, say what's on

**APPEAL FOR DONATIONS** We would appreciate donations from friends, supporters.

my mind. I learned to be tolerant of individual differences; to be understanding of human nature.

The facilitator workshop helped us regain our self-respect and build confidence in ourselves.

There are many problems before us that we must deal with. But with cooperation, together we can stand up as one and be heard. We can make the government feel, see that we exist.

So think about joining the next Facilitators workshop.

**By Mila Ibanez**

*(The Facilitators group of Ms. Ibanez will be practising their skills at the Orientation Meeting of Sunday, April 12)*

## VOLUNTEER STAFF BOLSTER INTERCEDE

Helen Diasanta, Zosimo Aquino and Rosary Alminaza are three INTERCEDE office volunteers who are earning work experience by

### IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Canada Immigration Centre	873-4444
Educ & Skills Training Ctr, Labour Council	971-5893
Employment Standards Enforcement	326-7180
Immigrant Women's Health Centre	367-1388
Immigrant Women's Job Placement Centre	656-8933
OHIP Toronto	482-1111
Scarborough	1-800-283-3814
Mississauga	275-2730
Ontario Human Rights Commission	326-9511
Unemployment Insurance	730-1211
Workers' Compensation	827-9555
Revenue Canada (taxation)	869-1500
Toronto Rape Crisis Center (24 Hr line)	597-8808
Assaulted Help Line	863-0511

### EMERGENCY HOUSING

Nellie's Hostel	461-1084
Evangelina's	782-9836

### LEGAL SERVICES

Parade Community Legal Services	531-2411
CLASP (Osgoode Law School) Legal Clinic	738-5029
Kensington-Bellwoods Community Legal Serv.	363-0304
Metro Tor. Chinese & SE Asian Legal Clinic	971-9874
Toronto Workers' Health & Safety Legal Clinic	971-8832

### REMINDER TO MEMBERS AND SUBSCRIBERS

Some 100 newsletters on average are being returned because addressees have moved. This is a waste of \$48 in postage every month. Please call us immediately if you are changing address or you want your subscription stopped.

accumulating 24 full days or 192 hours of volunteer work at the INTERCEDE office.

They went through a one-day training last March 23 to learn clerical skills and computer input. Part of their responsibility before they finish their stint is to train the next batch of office volunteers.

"Because we don't have much space we have to schedule the volunteers so that only a maximum of four volunteer staff are working on the same day," said Intake worker and administrator, Eva Jacob.

"Those interested in volunteering in the office to do clerical work or computer input should register for a one-day training then schedule the exact days they will be working."

### VOLUNTEERS FOR OFFICE WORK NEEDED

Learn clerical skills. Practice your computer skills. INTERCEDE will certify your work experience after 24 full-day work or 192 hours.

register now for all-day training on

Monday, April 27, 1992 from 10 am to 5 pm

Call Eva 324-8751

### INTERCEDE SERVICE UNIT

Place :  
Time :  
Telephone :

### INTERCEDE STAFF

Coordinator/Editor :  
Counsellors :

Intake Worker :

## DOMESTICS' CROSS-CULTURAL NEWS

c/o INTERCEDE

489 College Street., Suite 402  
Toronto, Ontario  
M6G 1A5

FIRST CLASS