

# DOMESTICS' CROSS-CULTURAL NEWS

monthly newsletter of the Toronto Organization for Domestic Workers' Rights

June 1994



## PROTECTION FOR DOMESTIC CAREGIVERS A LOW PRIORITY FOR ONTARIO GOVERNMENT?

The Ontario government has not acted to improve labour protection and enforcement for domestic and caregiver workers despite last year's consultations held by the Ministry of Labour and despite INTERCEDE's submission asking for improvements and more effective enforcement.

INTERCEDE members have been discouraged at the long wait of over five months since Assistant Deputy Minister Thea Herman of Labour's Policy division wrote INTERCEDE to update us about the "Ministry of Labour's next steps following

the holding of consultations in September 1993 on possible improvements to the existing employment standards protections for domestic workers."

In her letter, Herman said that the "Ministry now expects to begin the Cabinet committee approval process for our proposed changes early in 1994" and that a "busy fall for the government and the Ministry" prevented from finding a "committee date that allowed us enough preparation time for this important issue".

*Continued Page 2*

## RAISE FUNDS FOR INTERCEDE: ONE WOMAN ONE BOOK

INTERCEDE is appealing to members and subscribers to raise funds for the organization by ordering books written by women for women.

Women's Voices Bookclub proposes to raise funds for INTERCEDE by giving us 10% of the proceeds from the sale of books listed in the enclosed catalogue.

We are eager to see the response from subscribers of *Domestics' Cross-Cultural News*, to see whether we can make this an ongoing project.

"Every time you buy a book, you provide direct support" to INTERCEDE according to Women's Voices Bookclub.

INTERCEDE is asking every member and subscriber to order one book or to convince a friend, an employer etc. to do so.

The catalogue includes books, cassettes and video that are for and by women, including children's books.

When totalling your orders, add shipping/handling charge of \$4.50 for the first order, and \$1 more for additional orders; also add GST of 7% for books only, and PST of 8% for cassettes and videos.

For more information about the catalogue, call Women's Voices Bookclub at (416) 488-4063.

## TO INTERCEDE CLIENTS

***The Service Unit at 489 College Street will be closed for one week from June 27 to July 1, 1994 to concentrate on office organization work. We will re-open on Monday, July 4, 1994***

Come to INTERCEDE's monthly meeting on Sunday, June 5, 1994, 3-5 p.m. at Cecil Community Centre, 58 Cecil Street, South of College & Spadina

2-3 p.m. New member application and renewals. Members with ID numbers **93-0388 to 93-0440** must renew or be dropped from membership list.

3-5 p.m. **CAMPAIGN FOR HOMEWORKERS' LABOUR PROTECTION** with Gayle Lebens - Coalition for Fair Wages and Working Conditions for Homeworkers

CLASP Legal Clinic will be open.

## ORIENTATION MEETING

Sunday, June 26, 1994 10 a.m. - to 5 p.m.  
George Brown College R-128  
200 King Street E. (St. James Campus)

### Topics:

1. **IMMIGRATION AND LABOUR RULES**
2. **WORKERS COOPERATIVE** with  
*Cathy Kennedy, Ontario Federation of Cooperatives*

Register by calling 324-8751  
and pay \$5 registration fee  
(refunded if you are present on June 26)

*Continued From Page 1 - Caregivers Protection*

"It makes us wonder how low a priority our concerns are to the Ontario government," remarked an INTERCEDE client who was asked to comment about the Labour Ministry's inaction.

### Hopes getting dimmer

The New Democratic Party counted as a voice in favour of domestic workers' rights during its years in the opposition and the victory of Bob Rae in the provincial election had been greeted with enthusiasm by domestic workers and their friends.

They were glad at the change in the Ontario Labour Relations Act that formally allowed domestic workers to unionize. But they had hoped that laws would soon follow that would enable them to effectively bargain for improved conditions.

INTERCEDE had proposed the mandating of a Central Registry of workers as a step towards enabling domestic workers to bargain as a group; it had also submitted ideas discussed by members to improve their protection and to enforce the rights they already have under the Ontario Employment Standards Act.

Among the changes domestic workers suggested were those that would limit the work day, pay all overtime, regulate board and lodging standards; they also called for limits to the employer's power to hire and fire, and

## INTERCEDE THEATRE GOERS

If you want to join other members to see a play, a musical, or any other entertainment,

### FOR FREE OR AT A DISCOUNT

then put your name on our Theatre-Goer List. Please register by calling 324-8751

We already had free tickets to the musicals "Miss Saigon" and "Heart of Mine" and to the Du Maurier Musical series at Harbourfront.

We wish to thank the Citizenship and Immigration Canada (Immigration Settlement and Adaptation Program); Canadian Heritage; Multiculturalism and Citizenship; 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 since May 1993 (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 JUNE, WE'LL REMOVE YOUR NAME FROM OUR MAILING LIST.

RENEWAL SUBSCRIPTION  NEW SUBSCRIPTION  CHANGE OF ADDRESS

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

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

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

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

CITY/PROVINCE : \_\_\_\_\_

POSTAL CODE : \_\_\_\_\_ TELEPHONE : \_\_\_\_\_

#### YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION RATES :

INTERCEDE Members :	FREE	Non-member Domestic :	\$20.00
Non-Profit Organizations:	FREE	Others	\$25.00

stiffer penalties for violators of the Employment Standards Act.

Because under the Live-in Caregiver Program foreign domestic and caregiver workers have only temporary status for up to five years, they are helpless to enforce their rights or to bargain for better terms. And unless the provincial government enacts measures to strengthen enforcement of these rights, it only contributes to the abuses that workers are ordinarily subjected to.

### Action needed

INTERCEDE is asking its members and friends to pressure the Ontario government by writing to the Minister of Labour, Bob McKenzie, and asking him to act on the recommendations we submitted in September 1993 to improve employment protections for domestic workers under the Employment Standards Act. Address letters to:

**Hon. Bob McKenzie**  
**Minister of Labour**  
**400 University Avenue**  
**Toronto, Ontario M7A 1T7**

## **IMMIGRATION FEES GO UP AGAIN !**

Here we go again - Immigration fees are being increased effective June 1st and domestic caregiver workers in the Live-in Caregiver Program are groaning under the weight of the change.

From June 1st, everytime they apply for an Employment Authorization, they will have to pay \$125 - \$25 more than previously. If they want to study regular credit courses, a Student Authorization has also gone up to \$125 from \$100.

Those who apply for permanent residence will have to dig deep into their minimum

### **DID YOU CHANGE ADDRESS?**

Please inform us by phone or mail so that you can continue getting your newsletter and we don't waste postage expenses for returned mail!

## **INTERCEDE WELCOMES VOLUNTEERS**

**at monthly meetings and in the  
office to help in newsletter mailing.**

**Call 324-8751 for dates.**

wage pocket - \$500 for the applicant alone. If sponsoring a spouse or dependent over 19, she will have to pay an additional \$500 for each one; if the dependent is less than 19, she will add \$100.

Immigration background information about the increase justifies the change by saying that "Canadian fees in general remain lower than those in other countries."

There is no exemption made for poorer people. Successful refugee claimants will also now have to pay the same processing fee. No consideration has ever been given for domestic workers' limited financial resources - the fact that they come from the lower economic strata in their own countries or that in Canada they are notoriously underpaid.

When it comes to expensive Immigration fees, for once, domestic workers are treated equally with other immigrants - isn't this ironic indeed?

## **FIRST AID FOR EMERGENCIES**

*(By: St. John Ambulance, First of a Series)*

To handle an emergency situation properly, use Priority Action Approach.

What is Priority Action Approach ?

1. Take charge.
2. Call out for help.
3. Assess the Hazards.
4. Make area safe. Protect yourself and others by wearing latex or vinyl gloves when giving first aid. Use a shield or face mask with a one way valve.
5. Identify yourself and offer to help.
6. Assess the casualty for responsiveness. If unresponsive, send or go for medical help.
7. Assess the casualty and give first aid for stopped breathing. Assess the casualty and give first aid for severe bleeding. Give

## VANCOUVER CDWCR

**Committee for Domestic Workers'  
& Caregivers' Rights  
(an INTERCEDE Affiliate)  
Contact Julie or Lorina (604) 222-1897**

first aid for unconsciousness.

8. Send or go for help - Ambulance, Police, etc.

If head and/or spinal injury is suspected, do not move the casualty. Send for medical help.

### BLEEDING

Perform steps 1 to 5 of Priority Action Approach.

To control severe bleeding ...

- Apply pressure to the wound over a dressing, if available.
- Elevate the injured part.
- Keep the casualty sitting or lying down.
- Get medical help.

If dressing becomes blood soaked, do not remove it. Put another one on top and continue pressure until bleeding is controlled. Bandage dressings in place.

*(Continuation of this info series next newsletter).*

### PILIPINAS MEETING

**Saturday, July 16, 1994**

**2 p.m. to 5 p.m.**

**"PREPARING TO BECOME  
A PERMANENT RESIDENT"**

**Call 324-8751 for place**

### DOMESTICS' CROSS CULTURAL NEWS

c/o INTERCEDE

489 College Street, Sui  
Toronto, Ontario  
M6G 1A5

**FIRST CLASS**

## IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Canada Immigration Centre	973-4444
Canada Employment Centre	730-1211
Educ & Skills Training Ctr, Labour Council	345-9312
Employment Standards Enforcement	326-7160
Immigrant Women's Health Centre	323-9986
Immigrant Women's Job Placement Centre	488-0084
OHIP Toronto	482-1111
Scarborough	1-800-263-3814
Mississauga	275-2730
Ontario Human Rights Commission	326-9511
Unemployment Insurance	730-1211
Workers' Compensation	927-9555
Revenue Canada (taxation)	869-1500
Centro Para Gente de Habla Hispana	533-8545

### CRISIS LINE

Toronto Rape Crisis Center (24 Hr line)	597-8808
Assaulted Women's Help Line	863-0511

### EMERGENCY HOUSING

Nellie's Hostel	461-1084
Evangeline's	762-9636

### LEGAL SERVICES

Parkdale Community Legal Services	531-2411
CLASP (Osgoode Law School) Legal Clinic	736-5029
Kensington-Bellwoods Community Legal Services	924-4244
Metro Tor. Chinese & SE Asian Legal Clinic	971-9674
Toronto Workers' Health & Safety Legal Clinic	971-8832

### INTERCEDE SERVICE UNIT

Place: 489 College St., Suite 402, Toronto, Ont.

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