

# ***DOMESTICS' CROSS-CULTURAL NEWS***

*monthly newsletter of the Toronto Organization for Domestic Workers' Rights*

November 1990

(INTERCEDE)

## **COME TO A DIALOGUE ABOUT THE FOREIGN DOMESTIC MOVEMENT PROGRAM**

*with*

**MINISTER BARBARA McDOUGALL**  
*Minister of Employment and Immigration*

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 28, 1990      3 P.M. - 5 P.M.**

*Cecil Community Centre  
58 Cecil Street, Toronto*

## **AGM SPEAKER FINDS REQUIREMENTS FOR DOMESTIC WORKERS "UNACCEPTABLE"**

Judy Rebick, President of the Canada-wide women's organization, National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC), promised the backing "all the way" of her organization for the campaign of foreign domestic workers to change the Foreign Domestic Movement (FDM) program and to gain equal status with other immigrant workers.

Rebick was the guest speaker at the October 14 Annual General Meeting of the Toronto Organization for Domestic Workers' Rights held at Cecil Community Centre.

She described as unacceptable the live-in requirement and the onerous criteria imposed by the program that brings foreign women to Canada to fill the demand for domestic work.

She also deplored the temporary status they must endure for three or more years and called for landed rights for all domestic workers entering Canada.

"While we try to attract skilled workers to come and take care of machines in our factories, we impose the most miserable conditions on workers who come to take care of our most precious possessions, our children," Rebick said.

According to Rebick, who was a Board member of INTERCEDE until her election to the presidency of NAC, the women's movement in Canada has seen some dramatic gains in women's rights - but principally for white, educated, middle-class women. "All women must fight for all women's rights," she said, noting that foreign

***INTERCEDE's next monthly meeting will be on Sunday, November 4, 1990  
from 3 to 5 p.m. at Cecil Community Centre, 58 Cecil Street.***

***Nora Angeles-Richardson will conduct workshops on Career Counselling  
Upgrading and Aptitude Assessment for domestic workers  
in the FDM Program and on open permit.***

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

domestic workers who suffer most from the FDM's restrictions are visible minority women from economically disadvantaged countries.

"To acknowledge the role of domestic workers is to value the work that they do, women's work - taking care of children and the elderly, taking care of the home," Rebick said.

Voters at the AGM elected nine new members to the Board of Directors and approved amendments to the By-Laws on Membership.

The second-term Board members: Sedef Arat-Koc, Thelma Coolen (Secretary), Rosemary Seymour (Vice President) and Annie Wong, will be joined by Eugenia Arevalo, Amelia Dizon, Herminia Palanca, Elaine Prescod, Maria Ramos, Andrea Timoll, Pura Velasco and reelectionists, Mary Jarrell, current President, and Carmencita Hernandez, current Treasurer.

Leaving the Board after five years of dedicated service is Clementina Martinez and after three, is Magda Aguada. Outgoing members include Brenda Wall, Herminia Andrade and Celia Tababan.

The amendment to the membership rules provides, among others, for renewal of membership in January of each year for all members. Application for renewals valid in January 1991 will start being processed during the November 4 meeting. At that time, all members, new or old, will be given an identification number to facilitate and expedite attendance at meetings.

INTERCEDE membership is open to all domestic workers. Applicants for membership

who are not domestic workers have to be sponsored by another member, a Board member or staff, and application must be approved by the Board.

A program prepared by members in their September meeting livened the afternoon AGM, starting with a poem about pining for the homeland during a mid-Autumn festival, recited in Chinese by Alice Leung, Ada Yim, Masie Mak, and Teresa Wong, and translated poetically by Counsellor, Teresa Mak.

Conchita Gummad, Shirley Quinto, Emma Furog and Luz Tayag danced with much gusto the Philippine hat dance, "Subli", followed by songs from Norma Ibasan accompanied on guitar by Ofelia Gonatice, and another by Carol Peters. Ning and Magdalena Ibe demonstrated the cha-cha before a skit presented by Magdalena, Ellen Benigno, Beth Becamon, Imelda Asuncion and Julie Giringan.

Mayette's Restaurant catered the event with trays of Shanghai roll, fried chicken wings and veggie dips.

***Express your opinions about the FDM Program***

***Dialogue with Minister Barbara McDougall***

*October 28, 1990 3:00-5:00 p.m.*

*Cecil Community Centre  
58 Cecil Street, near Spadina*

***Let the government hear domestic workers' concerns from concerned domestic workers.***

We wish to thank the Employment and Immigration Canada (Immigrant 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 for their continuing support.

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	\$ 5.00
Non-Profit Organizations	FREE	Others	\$10.00

## MESSAGE SENT TO AGM FROM CACSW PRESIDENT

Unable to come, Glenda Simms, President of the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, sent a message to INTERCEDE members during their Annual General Meeting, October 14.

"We're very concerned about the plight of foreign domestic workers in Canada," her message read, "and we will do all we can to bring your concerns to the government, and to other women across the country."

Simms vowed to step up "our fight for rights for domestic workers..." and said that consultations have begun "with groups like INTERCEDE". According to her message: "Discriminatory immigration policies put an unfair burden on workers when they must do upgrading and volunteer work in order to stay in Canada. The mandatory live-in requirement is unnecessary and dangerous" and "opens the doors to abuse and dependence on the employer."

Simms assured that CACSW's voice has been added "to yours in pressing the government for change -- I have been in contact with the Minister of Employment and Immigration, and I urged her to investigate and rectify this situation."

---

## ANNOUNCEMENT

A Discussion of the Needs of Domestic Workers and Information Meeting will be held on Sunday, November 25, 1990, from 1-5 p.m., at the London Cross-Cultural Learner Centre, 617 Dundas St. E. in London, Ontario

For information, call: in London, 432-2123; in Toronto, 324-8751

### ATTENTION: Renewal of Membership for 1991

Members wishing their membership renewed for 1991 can do so during the November 4 monthly meeting, by:

- filling a Renewal Form
- paying \$5 Renewal Fee, and
- having their Membership Cards stamped and numbered.

## COCO's CALENDAR

### ***Congratulations!...***

to former Board member and Treasurer, Yola Grant, who recently gave birth to Philip Elliott.

and to Lolita Obra who got her landed papers recently.

### ***Best Wishes!...***

to Amelia Pascual, may your marriage be truly blessed.

### ***Hello...***

to Silayan's Annabelle and Edna, active organizers of a Sharing session with INTERCEDE in Mississauga last October 6. Greetings to their active senior volunteers and to our new friends who asked lots of questions about the FDM.

### ***Overheard...***

these comments about AGM guest speaker Judy Rebick's rousing message:

*"I'm impressed that a big national organization like NAC is endorsing the work of INTERCEDE!"* (Sr. Tomasita)

*"Judy's speech greatly touched me! I realize the big difference between domestic workers and other immigrant workers!"* (Mary Jane)

*"Rebick's speech inspired us because there is a national group of women willing to support domestic workers."* (unnamed)

### ***and also these other comments:***

*"Volunteer work at INTERCEDE is recognized. I may as well volunteer and join the facilitators' workshops!"* (Lily)

*"Wish I could be a Board member one day - I'll make sure to attend INTERCEDE meetings regularly."* (Beth)

*"It's worth being a member of INTERCEDE, I learn many of my rights!"* (Linda)

See you all on Oct 28 for the dialogue with Minister McDougall! Don't forget, our regular monthly meeting is on Nov 4. We will be preparing for our Christmas party first Sunday of December!

*by Columbia Tarape-Diaz*

# COORDINATOR'S REPORT TO AGM

A report of the Coordinator of INTERCEDE, Fely Villasin, covering the period from January 1989 to September 1990, was issued at the Annual General Meeting on October 14th.

The Report highlights the expansion experienced in all areas of the organization's work and details the status of the issues that have been INTERCEDE's focus during the period: the Foreign Domestic Movement program, the Employment Standards Act, the Occupational Health and Safety Act, and Misrepresentation, among them.

According to the report, the number of client contacts made with the Service Unit had increased by 26 per cent from 1988 to 1989-90. From 555 members at December 1988, total

membership was 2,827 at August 1990. These increases have been accompanied by emphasis in Staff training during the same years.

New activities that have received glowing evaluation from clients and members were the Newcomers Orientation workshops, the volunteer Facilitators Workshops, and the Counsellor training workshop.

Mary Jarrell, President of INTERCEDE, praised the work done by the Board, Staff, Coordinator and members and expressed the hope that INTERCEDE would be able to continue relying on them to be able to implement the goals of the organization.

## IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

Canada Immigration Centre	973-4444
Educ & Skills Training Ctr, Labour Council	971-5893
Employment Standards Enforcement	326-7160
Immigrant Women's Health Centre	367-1388
Immigrant Women's Job Placement Centre	656-8933
OHIP	
Toronto	482-1111
Scarborough	1-800-263-3814
Mississauga	275-2730
Ontario Human Rights Commission	326-9511
Revenue Canada (Taxation)	869-1500
Toronto Rape Crisis Centre (24-hour line)	597-8808
Unemployment Insurance	730-1211
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 Serv.	363-0304
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, Ontario

Time: Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Telephone: (416) 324-8751

## INTERCEDE STAFF

Coordinator/Editor: Fely Villasin

Counsellors: Columbia Tarape-Diaz  
Teresa Mak Karen Serwonka

## DOMESTICS' CROSS-CULTURAL NEWS

c/o INTERCEDE  
489 College St., Suite 402  
Toronto, Ontario  
M6G 1A5

FIRST CLASS