



# UNION WOMAN

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NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 1984

Put  
women's  
rights  
on the  
agenda

## YUSA wins tech change clauses

By SHIRLEY ITTAS

The nature of the workplace is changing. With the introduction of microcomputers into clerical and secretarial positions there is concern with the de-skilling of positions and the loss of job satisfaction. There are also concerns related to health and safety such as provisions for proper furnishings, proper lighting and the concern for the health of a pregnant employee required to operate a video display terminal.

The York University Staff Association is a union representing approximately 1,000 employees primarily employed in secretarial, clerical and technical positions. Approximately 85 percent of our members are women.

During negotiations this year the Bargaining Committee concerned itself primarily with technological change and its related areas such as training for employees and better layoff provisions when jobs are declared redundant. The introduction of microcomputers into the workplace prompted our concern for the impact of technology on the employee.

The union wanted, and won, information on the proposed introduction of new technology prior to its being implemented. It also won training for employees affected by technological change to equip the individual to use the new equipment or provide the training to enable the employee to qualify for positions at a similar salary level to the one currently held.

Our old collective agreement provided for a committee to discuss the concept of equal pay for work of equal value. We had hoped this year to have included a clause requiring the committee's recommendations to be implemented. This, unfortunately, we were unable to win.

Until the final stages of mediation, during the strike, the administration was still trying to have the Committee's mandate changed to address equal pay for equal work, not at all the same issue.

Why then was it necessary to go on strike? I suspect it was a matter of attitude. It seems that management believed the employees were only concerned with money and that they could not be suggesting strike action for other reasons. There also seemed to be a feeling that the members would not stand up and take strike action given the currently poor job market.

One might hesitate to suggest a sexist attitude but many of our

members felt that the administration considered them to be 'just a group of women'. This became an issue of respect.

Unfortunately it seems that relations between management and labour are adversarial in nature rather than striving for a spirit of co-operation that could be of mutual benefit.

For the members of YUSA it is perceived that the fight is just beginning, we have just taken the first step. The experience of the library workers in Metro Toronto serves to remind us that those clauses fought for we may have to fight to preserve. Many of the positions in our bargaining unit are those considered to be 'female' positions, jobs that the new technology is altering. Now more than ever a united front is needed to ensure fairness in the workplace.

*Shirley Ittas, Chairperson, Bargaining Committee, York University Staff Association.*



photo — M. Phillips

### P2C2 just the beginning

About 8,500 people marched through downtown Toronto Oct. 20 to mark United Nations Disarmament week and the wrap-up of the Peace Petition Caravan Campaign. Five hundred city canvassers gathered 50,000 signatures on the petition calling for a ban on cruise missile testing, making Canada a nuclear weapons-free zone and diverting armaments spending to social needs. Toronto's signatures joined the 430,000 others collected across the country which were presented to the government in a ceremony on Parliament Hill the following Monday. At a rally

after the Toronto march, labour council president Wally Majesky said the petition campaign "was not the end, but the beginning of the struggle for what we believe in". Referring to the labour movement's support for the peace effort, he said labour "will be here, as long as the fight is here". Anne Adelson of the Toronto Disarmament Network, a coalition of 70 organizations which co-ordinated the work of P2C2 in the city, said the peace movement was "immeasurably stronger" coming out of the campaign, "we must go on now to organize, educate, agitate."

## Health and safety protection needed

By CATHI CARR

"There is no safe limit of exposure to ionizing radiation and it is unlikely that one will be found." This was one of the key points stressed on Radiation Education Day which was only one part of four day conference held in Winnipeg from October 9-12 entitled, "The Prevention of Occupational Disease".

Eminent speakers from the scientific community, labour, and government (in the form of the Atomic Energy Control Board of Canada-AECB) participated in a panel discussion on this very "controversial" subject — radiation.

David Gee, a trade unionist from Great Britain spoke about the long and bitter history of occupational disease where action is usually only taken after it is too late for many workers, "waiting for human evidence of occupational disease means many damaged and dead workers".

He spoke of occupational disease as a "generation game," that is it is usually into the third or fourth generation before any action is taken. By then it is far too late and by that time the industry is usually on its economic knees as is the case with asbestos.

Gee spoke of radiation as an international problem for which trade unions need to develop an international response. At the

moment, the International Council on Radiation Protection — ICRP, a self appointed and self-perpetuating group of "experts" with a strong connection to the nuclear industry, has set standards which are viewed as being too high by a factor of at least ten percent.

Trade unions, he stated, must take a position internationally which will juxtapose and oppose that of the ICRP. "Our objective must be to err on the side of caution — we must build dose limits into our collective agreements, and we must be prepared to accept a low level of proof. It is a question of expenditure of money vs. dead workers".

Gee stated that labour's demands concerning radiation are not utopian, most can be met in ninety percent of exposure areas.

Dr. Linda Murray spoke to the conference about what "we" can do about occupational disease. Murray is the director of the Manitoba Federation of Labour's Occupational Health Centre in Winnipeg; it is the only such centre run solely by labour in North America. She stated that we must educate our doctors, most of whom receive little or no training in occupational disease at medical school.

She urged workers to raise the issue of their dirty workplaces and the toxic chemicals that they

work with when trying to pinpoint the cause of their illnesses, it is unlikely that these questions will be raised in a standard medical history.

Murray also stated that workers must gain control over health and safety education in order to fight the propaganda that we see in the media everyday. This propaganda perpetuates the myth of the careless worker instead of insisting that workplaces should be cleaned up, and promoting employers' responsibility to provide healthy and safe workplaces.

Dr. Karen Messing, a geneticist from the University of Quebec, and Gary Cwitco, Health and Safety Representative with the Communications Workers of Canada presented a very thought-provoking and all-encompassing workshop on reproductive hazards.

They stressed that reproductive hazards affect men as well as women, and should, therefore, not be used to exclude women from certain jobs. Rather the focus should be on eliminating or controlling reproductive hazards at the source thereby protect all workers, both men and women.

Bob Sass, a well known health and safety activist, addressed the conference on day three and spoke eloquently about the centrality of work in all our lives.

He emphasized that workers must negotiate better than consensus health and safety standards as they have done with minimum labour standards.

Linda Jolley, an occupational health and safety consultant, and Colin Lambert, Canadian Union of Public Employees, Health and Safety Representative, carried on the theme of legislation and standard setting in their workshop.

After a revealing discussion which raised the frustration of enforcing standards, both federally and in the provinces, this workshop formulated a resolution urging the Canadian Labour Congress to press the government to enact legislation to provide for the development of national health and safety standards by a joint labour-management commission.

It is the hope of the many workers who attended the conference from all across Canada that the CLC will spearhead the drive for healthy and safe workplaces, and for the right of all workers in this country to be ensured of the three fundamental rights of occupational health and safety: the right to know; the right to participate; the right to refuse.

*Cathi Carr, Occupational Health and Safety Representative with the Ontario Nurses Association Staff Union.*



## EDITORIAL

# The job you save could be your own

By SUE CRAIG

"How can they go on strike when so many people have no jobs?"

It's a question many — especially those outside the labour movement — have been asking themselves as union after union has hit the bricks in recent months.

Transit workers, garbage collectors, college and university teachers and support staff, film crews, newspaper workers, auto workers and library workers, all have walked picket lines in towns and cities across Canada in 1984, although the turn-around in our depressed economy of which business and government leaders boast is a long way from "trickling down" to the majority of Canadians.

How can they strike when so many are out of work? It's a question that answers itself.

Business has cynically used the depression of the late 1970s and early '80s — if it did not deliberately cause it — to take away from workers many of the hard-fought gains of earlier years.

It has demanded and won concessions from workers in the name of mutual survival. Take wage cuts, companies have told workers, or we'll go out of business and you'll all be out of work. Workers have heeded and made sacrifices, in the name of the greater good of all.

Meanwhile, employers have introduced efficiencies and new technologies that have done away permanently with thousands of jobs.

Now — when the profit picture is turning rosy — employers are breaking faith with the workers who struggled to keep them alive.

Instead of sharing their rising fortunes, they have been demanding yet more concessions.

Many unions have nothing left to give, except the basic union security, job security and job retraining provisions without which they would hardly dare to call themselves unions.

Accordingly, employers are going after union security, job security and job retraining (for tech change) clauses.

Because technological change has turned to traditionally female office jobs, and because in non-traditional jobs women are at the bottom of seniority lists, women have been engaged in these battles not only by the side of men but often in the vanguard.

The strike at the Metropolitan Toronto Library is a prime example.

The employees — 80 percent of them female — have been held to provincial government wage restraint for two years. Even pay increases to eliminate sex discrimination have been outlawed for them.

Now, the municipally appointed library board is trying to gut the union's job-security language, even though, a management spokesman told the Toronto Star before the strike began, it does not believe technological change is a threat to jobs.

The board, in fact, may well have deliberately provoked the strike for the purpose of balancing its out-of-whack budget at the expense of its employees. According to an article in the Globe and Mail last spring, the board estimated costs would exceed its income by \$625,000 this year.

But whatever its motive in causing the strike, you may be assured the board will not settle without concessions if it can possibly get them. And we in the labour movement cannot afford more concessions.

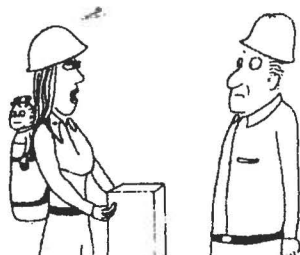
Women in the labour movement are proving once again that we can fight when we must.

OWW members and friends are urged to support the strike efforts of our sisters and brothers wherever and however you can.

Join support picket lines (you'll often see our banner). Boycott struck companies' products, invoke hot-cargo clauses, write letters, talk up the issues with co-workers.

The job you help save could be your own.

Sue Craig is on the executive of the Southern Ontario Newspaper Guild.



"What else can I do? The day care centers all close for second shift."

# The part-time professor, overworked and underpaid

By MAUREEN HAWKINS

As we all know, part-time workers (a disproportionate number of whom are women) comprise one of the most exploited groups in Canadian labour. Part-time workers receive poor salaries and no benefits or job security: attractive conditions for employers who want to be more "flexible". The part-time faculty at York University, who comprise half of Local 3 of the Canadian Union of Educational Workers are no exception. That's why we're on strike.

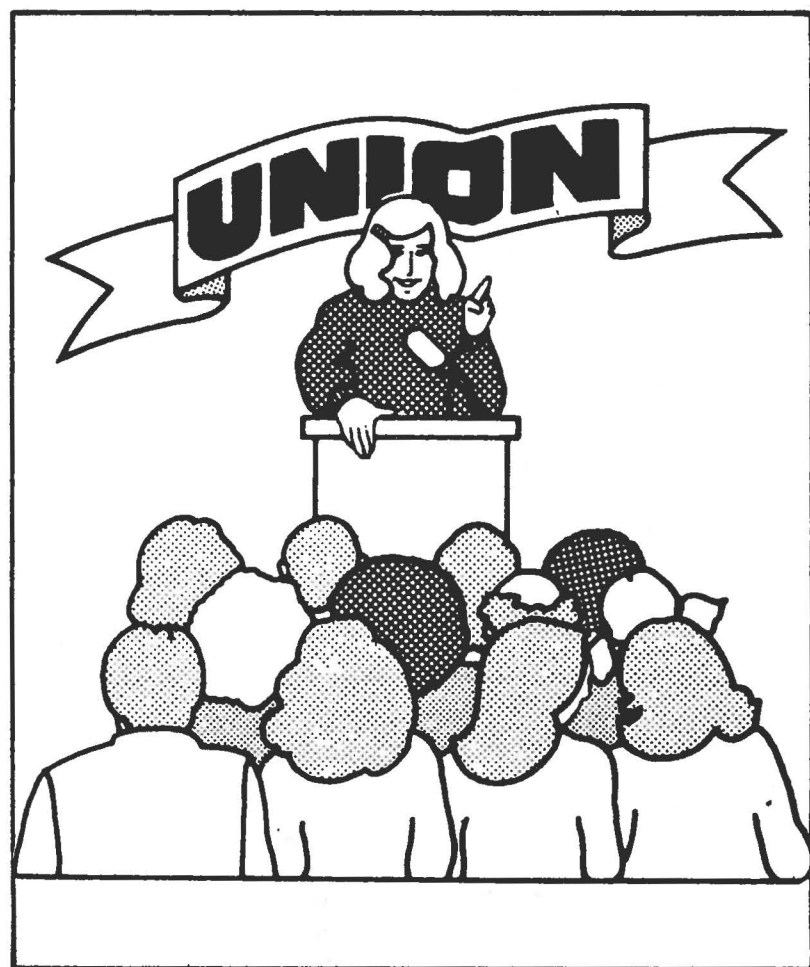
Like most part-time workers, we're underpaid. We teach about 30 percent of the courses at York but receive about 7 percent of its budget. Full-time professors receive an average of \$45,000 for teaching 2.5 courses; we receive an average of \$15,000 for the same workload. Full-time professors receive numerous fringe benefits; we don't. None of this is the fault of the full-time faculty; in fact, their union, the York University Faculty Association, supports our demands.

Like most part-time workers, we have no job security. Most of us are unemployed from April to September — nor do we usually know if we will have a September position until late August or later. We may spend the summer preparing a course only to find it won't be offered. We aren't paid for that work.

York is also trying to take back our present seniority provisions; if they succeed, an experienced part-time faculty member could be denied a course in favour of someone who has never taught at York. Nor do we have priority for the rare full-time positions that open; in fact we are seldom considered for them.

We have little input into our work conditions. Though we have taught for as many as 15 years at York, few departments allow us to sit on the committees that determine our and our students' academic lives.

It is often argued that part-time faculty are less qualified than full-time faculty and therefore de-



serve a lower salary. But 75 percent of the part-time faculty at York have a Ph.D. or equivalent degree; most of the remainder are not only highly qualified, but are increasing those qualifications. 87 percent of us have research published and/or in progress. Most of us have extensive teaching experience. Our qualifications clearly compare well with those of the full-time faculty.

It is also argued that part-time faculty have well-paid spouses, are working only for interest's sake or pin money and don't want to work full-time. Many of us, however, receive our only income from teaching and would gladly teach full-time. Indeed, many who are lucky enough to find the work teach more courses than a full-time faculty member — in order to piece together an income totaling less than a third of his. Unfortunately, full-time posi-

tions are rare — and rarer still for those of us who cannot relocate.

Unlike most part-time workers, we have a union and the power to strike. We need it; the university is unwilling to concede us more than a 6 percent increase on our meager salaries, though we have an unallocated surplus of 6-9 million dollars, have paid off their deficit and gave a larger raise to YUFA. Support our strike: telephone or write the York University administration, its Board of Governors and/or your MPP to support our demands, don't cross our picket lines — better yet, come join us there!

Maureen Hawkins is a member of the Canadian Union of Educational Workers, Local 3.

As Union Woman went to press the CUEW agreed to binding arbitration.

## Renfrew strike settled

A two-month strike by 23 social workers and clerical staff at the Renfrew County Family and Children's Services ended when a tentative agreement was reached Sept. 29.

The settlement was a major victory for the members of Local 459 who were seeking a greater share of the wage increase for the lower-paid clerical staff.

Before the strike, the employer was offering six percent to the social workers, but only five percent to support staff.

The settlement gives social workers 5.5 percent, retroactive to Feb. 1, 1984, and clerical staff six percent. Both groups receive an additional three percent Nov. 1 under the new 18-month contract.

The settlement was ratified unanimously. An employer's demand to add 2.5 hours to the clerical work week was withdrawn.

The strike achieved what the members wanted — basically a redistribution of the money which the employer had originally offered so that more of it would go to the six clerical members.

Password, OPSEU Local 459



— ONTARIO LABOUR  
Three leaders from the Canadian Union of Public Employees, from left: Shirley Carr, new CLC secretary-treasurer, previously executive vice-president of the Congress; Grace Hartman, who retired from the position of national president of CUPE last year; and Lucie Nicholson, president of the Ontario Division of CUPE, who was elected a vice-president-at-large of the CLC.



# Immigrant women a workshop

By JILL JONES

On October 13, Women Working With Immigrant Women, and the Ontario Immigrant Women's Network Co-sponsored a workshop dealing with unemployment among immigrant women. Seventy women of different ethnic backgrounds met to share their views and concerns. Organized Working Women sent two executive council members to the workshop to act as resource persons and to share information.

Briefs were presented from the three main sectors where immigrant women are employed. The first brief was from the textile-clothing sector which has seen the loss of many jobs in the last ten years. Grants given to these companies by government have been used to modernize existing facilities and in the process to lay off workers, the majority of whom are immigrant women.

The second brief was presented by the Hotel and Restaurant Workers who are employed in a sector where minimum legal protection is yet to be won. The Employment Standards Act allows these workers to be paid a lower minimum wage than other workers and employers do not have to pay time and a half for work performed on a holiday, rather they are allowed to give an employee a day off at regular pay before or after a holiday.

These workers who work in kitchens and dining rooms also spoke about the health and safety problems they face on the job such as burns, cuts, falls and back problems.

The workshop heard from workers employed as cleaners. These women usually make only the minimum wage with no other benefits. Contracting out of work is a problem for workers in both the hotel/restaurant and cleaning sectors.

Last year at the Eaton Centre unionized cleaners lost their jobs and their union when the contractor was changed; the new contractor came in and hired workers at lower wage rates. In the last year there has been one significant victory for better

wages, working conditions, and job security. Cleaners, who were mainly Portuguese, struck at First Canadian Place in Toronto and made many gains showing that success is possible through union solidarity.

Heather Webster of the Amalgamated Transit Union explained the policies of the Canadian Labour Congress concerning the problems of unemployment.

Many problems, needs and solutions, were identified in the workshops including:

- labour legislation which only provides minimum standards for most workers in Canada
- lack of protection for part-time workers
- the need for a shorter work week with no loss in pay to create more jobs
- adequate and accessible retraining programs which pay reasonable living allowances
- enforcement of basic human rights
- organization of all workers
- mandatory affirmative action programs
- education and organization around the problems of technological change
- controls on capital leaving the country
- international worker solidarity

The workshop also stressed the importance of creating better links with the media to create more public awareness. It was suggested that community cable television can be an excellent vehicle to inform both workers and the general public about issues of concern.

This discussion was exciting and stimulating. For many of the women there it was their first opportunity to share their concerns with other women. All agreed that more such conferences are needed to bring people together to identify common problems and to work on common solutions.

*Jill Jones is a member of the United Electrical Workers and sits on the executive council of OWW.*

## UNION WOMAN

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Union Woman is free to members of OWW and is available for distribution to union locals on request.

Letters to the editor, opinion pieces and news stories should be sent to:  
**Organized Working Women,  
366 Adelaide Street East, Suite 426,  
Toronto, Ontario. M5A 3K9 Tel. 364-2161**

## Robichaud appeal in court

By KERRY McCUAIG

The federal government has taken a victim of sexual harassment to court because it does not want to be held liable for damages because one of its employees harassed her.

Bonnie Robichaud, a cleaner at the Canadian Forces Base in North Bay, first complained to the Human Rights Commission in Jan. 1980 that her foreman, Dennis Brennan, used his position to demand sexual favors from her while she was on probation.

The commission substantiated Robichaud's complaint, but a one-man tribunal dismissed the charge despite what he called "considerable doubt" about Brennan's credibility.

Robichaud appealed the decision and in Feb. 1983, a three-member tribunal found both Brennan and the Department of National Defence liable for damages on the grounds they had created "a poisoned work environment".

The Treasury Board is appealing the liability. Brennan is contesting the Board's agreement that sexual harassment took place.

Robichaud and her husband Larry sat through the three days of testimony Nov. 7-9, accompanied by several supporters and members of her union, the Public Service Alliance.

Brennan was not present. His lawyer, William Sangster, admitted Brennan had sex with Robichaud but argued she had consented. During the initial tribunal, Brennan denied sexual contact took place.

Robichaud said she found the repetition of the harassment details "pretty depressing" but felt the case was "going well".

The mother of five children, Robichaud said she would not have been able to withstand the ordeal of the past five years without the support of her husband. She has also been encouraged by the recent moral and financial backing she has received from the labor movement and women's groups.

"It's important that women have the right to say no. (Sexual harassment) is a way of keeping women as second class citizens." She said unions have to do more education so everyone will "recognize the importance of achieving a harassment-free workplace".

During his two-day charge to the court, Robichaud's lawyer Scott McLean, referred to a "confidential memorandum" by her base commander stating she was to be made "an example of" and a separate file kept on her.

He showed the court the petitions and letters against Robichaud since she filed her complaint.

The review tribunal had said the defence department was liable for damages because it had "no

clearly defined policy against sexual harassment which had been communicated to the employees" and there was no proper investigation into Robichaud's complaint.

Federal lawyer Peter Dooley conceded there was no written policy but said the federal government had shown its opposition to sexual harassment by establishing an anti-discrimination office in the public service. He argued that an investigation into the complaint had taken place.

The department however continued punitive action against Robichaud, and another worker who testified on her behalf was reprimanded.

Although Robichaud has retained her supervisor's title and pay scale, she has been transferred off base to what her colleagues refer to as "the punishment block". Brennan has never been disciplined

and an employee who supported his claim was given time off.

A successful outcome to the case will offer an important precedent for sexual harassment victims. For the first time the question of a poisoned work environment is being tested. If it is upheld a woman will no longer have to prove she was coerced into sexual activity. Being subjected to sexual innuendo, conversation or activity will be considered grounds for "adverse differentiation in relation to an employee on the basis of sex," an offence under the human rights act.

The case resumes Nov. 23, with Chief Justice Thurlow, Justice Pratt and former justice minister Mark MacGuigan presiding.

*Kerry McCuaig is a member of the Southern Ontario Newspaper Guild, Local 87.*

## Jury acquits Morgentaler

Dr. Henry Morgentaler and two associates were acquitted by an Ontario Supreme Court jury, Nov. 8 on charges of conspiracy to procure a miscarriage. Calling the jury's decision a "victory for everyone", Dr. Morgentaler said it supports "the rights of women to have decent medical care when they need it. It has shown that abortion is not a criminal issue".

Despite a charge to the jury, which was almost unanimously considered to be biased against the doctors, the six men and six women apparently concurred with defense lawyer Morris Manning's argument that the physicians set up an abortion clinic in Toronto last year to protect the health and lives of women facing long delays in obtaining abortion.

As *Union Woman* went to press it wasn't yet known if Attorney-General Roy McMurtry would appeal the conviction. He has 30 days to file. Manitoba's Roland Penner said he would wait until Ontario announced its intentions before deciding how to proceed with outstanding charges against Dr. Morgentaler in the province.

Dr. Morgentaler said he would re-open his Harbord Street clinic as soon as police returned equipment they had seized in the raid conducted when charges were laid.

It took six years and three jury acquittals before Quebec halted raids on Dr. Morgentaler's Montreal clinics and recommended to the federal government that the law be amended.

It remains to be seen if that process will have to be repeated province by province until Ottawa recognizes that its abortion law is both unjust and unworkable.

## OWW's executive

**The Executive Council of Organized Working Women for the Year 1984/85 is comprised of:**

**President: Sue Craig, SONG**  
**Vice-President: Maureen O'Halloran, ONASU**  
**Secretary: Lois Bedard, OSSTF (retired)**  
**Treasurer: Joyce Rosenthal, OPEIU**

**Council Members: Barbara Cameron, YUFA**  
**Cathi Carr, ONASU**  
**Valerie Hunnius OPEIU**  
**Jill Jones, UE**  
**Irene Kuusela, CUPE**  
**Barbara Linds, OPSSU**  
**Sheila McNeill, GUSA**  
**Jan Newson, YUFA**

**OWW has three exciting committees which you are invited to participate on. You will be made very welcome. The committees are: Newspaper; Membership; Education. International Decade of Women — Celebration 1985. For further information please phone the OWW office at 364-2161.**

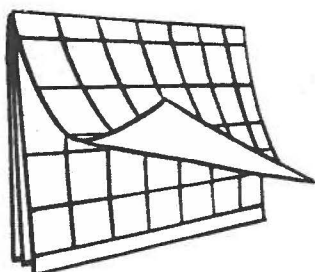


—ONTARIO LABOUR

### New CLC V-Ps

Four new vice-presidents-at-large of the CLC: Roxie Baker, president of Local 1325 of the United Automobile Workers, Stratford, Ont.; Louise Hinton, director of the Women's Bureau of the United Food and Commercial Workers for the province of Quebec; Doreen Morton, a regional vice-president of PSAC for Northern Alberta and the Northwest Territories; and Diane Wood, second vice-president of the B.C. Government Employees' Union, a component of the National Union of Provincial Government Employees.





## CLEAR YOUR CALENDAR

November 18-22

Ontario Federation of Labour Convention  
Sheraton Centre, Toronto

January 4-6

OWW Residential Seminar

March

International Women's Day Celebrations

May

International Decade of Women Celebration

# NDP meets on equality

By MARY ROWLES

The Ontario New Democratic Party sponsored a conference in Toronto at the end of October that brought together more than 600 feminist activists from community-based groups, trade unions, and the NDP, to discuss a wide range of issues confronting women in our society.

The event was loosely billed as a conference in "Women's Equality" and was intended to provide an opportunity for activists from across the province to meet, exchange information, review campaigns and announce strategies.

The day-long meeting was also intended to provide an opportunity for the New Democrats to make better known their policies on women's issues and for mem-

bers of the party to become better acquainted with community-based campaigns on specific issues.

NDP leader Bob Rae opened the conference with a review of economic barriers to equality in Ontario. He criticized the Tory government for its abject failure to institute meaningful pay legislation, and he ridiculed the "voluntary" affirmative action program the government has sponsored. Rae pointed out that at the current rate of progress, it should take 1,800 years for affirmative action to reach the major employer in the Province.

He invited participants to face the political reality that no substantial changes for women are likely to occur in Ontario until

there is a dramatic political change and the forty-year hegemony of the Tories is ended.

The conference was structured into 14 workshops. Topics for discussion ranging from family law reform, the education system, health care, peace and workplace organizing and ones which examined problems facing particular groups of women, for example, the elderly, immigrants, rural and northern women. An additional workshop was conducted over the lunch hour to discuss the use of community television program by feminists. One workshop was also offered in which women who had campaigned successfully and unsuccessfully for public office at all levels of government offered practical advice for women interested in running.

While some participants felt that the workshops lacked focus because of their size, and the variety of topics covered in each, most of those attending reported they were pleased to meet women from across the province who are actively involved in lobbying and organizing community-based support action. Participants found opportunities to exchange information and strategies, and for New Democrats it was a good chance to evaluate our policy in terms of contemporary campaigns.

Several motions were brought to the final plenary session and accepted by participants there including a motion that a telegram of support be sent to the Morgentaler trial defence. Conference organizers were also instructed to send a message of support to Quebec Shipbuilders whose jobs are being eliminated by new technology. Participants in the workshop discussing economic equality/affirmative action apparently felt a particular sense of solidarity with these workers threatened by new methods of production.

Michelle Landsberg closed the conference with a witty and personable speech in which she picked on the theme of direct electoral action mentioned by Bob Rae earlier in the day. She discussed women's frustration with the traditional political process in general terms and from personal experience, but urged her audience to recognize and build on the energy and experience represented at the conference and to work towards gaining direct political power to effect social change.

A report on the conference is being prepared by the organizers and will be sent out to those who registered. Extra copies should be available for others who are interested, and enquiries should be made at NDP Caucus Outreach (Toronto) 965-3700.

## Commentary

Commentary is a forum for debate and discussion on issues of interest to trade union women. Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of Organized Working Women.

# What's happening to Ont. education?

For the first time ever, the 7,600 teachers, librarians and counsellors at Ontario's 22 community colleges resorted to legal strike action.

We have undertaken this province-wide strike because of serious issues we have been trying to resolve through bargaining for the past three years.

In the previous round of negotiations, we were prevented from bargaining effectively by provincial wage restraints because our demands — which were not wage demands — were considered "monetary" by our employer.

The current round of negotiations (since June, 1984) has produced a deadlock between our employer, the province of Ontario (through its appointed body, the Council of Regents) and our union, the Ontario Public Service Employees' Union.

### What are the issues?

We have identified workload as the main issue in the last two rounds of negotiations because this issue affects not only our working conditions, but also our job security and — most importantly to you — the quality of education in Ontario.

What we are asking for is not a utopian contract; we want a workload formula similar to the one in place at Ryerson. This kind of formula recognizes things like class size, marking of papers, supervision of students in job training settings, counselling on a one-to-one basis, placement, testing, the preparation differential for old and new courses, meetings and committee work as part of our jobs beyond the number of teaching hours.

In response to our demand for a formula similar to the one at Ryerson, the province countered that we be assigned an unlimited number of teaching hours per week!

Faced with this kind of an offer, we felt we had no choice but to seek a strike mandate. Our members were not only insulted, but provoked by management's refusal to budget on our main demand.

All of us, like you, desperately need our regular incomes to meet our bills and support our children. Yet why are we willing to take this financial risk to go on strike?

We are deeply concerned about the quality of education in Ontario. When classes are too large, when students are placed in labs without enough supervision, when courses are run haphazardly and a teacher is given 48 hours notice to prepare an entirely new course, when nursing students are not given the supervision they used to receive in clinics and hospitals, when facilities are cut, when resigning teachers are not replaced in ongoing programs — what happens? The colleges and province save on money.

But something else also takes place. What we see happening is a dramatic reduction in the quality of education for our young people, for the unemployed who are seeking retraining, and for immigrants and other disadvantaged groups. We are physically no longer capable of giving the same quality education we gave even a few years ago.

Ontario is a province whose per capita spending on education has dropped from first place in Canada to tenth over the past 10 years. Under the present government education has turned into a "warm body" affair — just place a teacher in front of as big a class as possible, with no concern for the content and the process of education.

At the same time, we see record numbers of applications to community college programs, and record numbers of rejections to our job training courses.

Is this the kind of educational system you want in Ontario?

S. Stylianos, chairperson, strike committee, Local 556 OPSEU.

As Union Woman went to press, the Davis government passed back-to-work legislation breaking the college teachers' strike. Under the legislation all issues are to go to binding arbitration with the exception of workload which is to be studied by a special committee.



### Happy retirement, Dorothy

Members of OWW joined Dorothy McKinnon in celebrating her retirement. Dorothy was for many years an active member of CUPE 79, where she had served as chairperson of its women's committee. Dorothy has also served on the executive council of OWW. From l to r are: Sheila McNeill, Joyce Rosenthal, Dorothy McKinnon, Irene Kuusela and Lois Bedard.

## Join OWW!



Membership in OWW is open to all women who are members of a bona fide collective bargaining unit or a bona fide organizing committee of a union. Membership is \$20.00 per year.

To join OWW, send in this application form with proof of union membership to the OWW office, address below.

Name .....

Address .....

..... Telephone .....

Union ..... Local .....

Organized Working Women,  
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ATTEND  
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MEETINGS

### Correction

The last issue of the newspaper incorrectly identified Jan Newson's union affiliation. Jan Newson is the past chairperson of the York University Faculty Association.