

**ORGANIZED  
WORKING WOMEN  
(PROVINCIAL)**

**GENERAL MEETING**

**When?**

**January 16, 1988  
1:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.**

**Where?**

**56 Wellesley Street West  
( Bay and Wellesley )  
Suite 300  
Toronto**

**ON THE AGENDA**

**Business:** ratify executive and pass minutes of last provincial meeting

**Video** on privatization of postal services: " **Holding the Line** "

**Keynote Speaker:** Nancy Riche, Executive Vice-President of the CLC  
**Topic:** Women and Free Trade  
Discussion

**Free Trade Policy Paper** - Discussion and adoption  
presented by **Kerry McQuaig**

**Pay Equity Policy Paper** - Ratification  
presented by **Jane Stinson**

**Childcare Policy Paper** - Ratification  
presented by **Barbara Cameron**

**New Business**

## CHILD CARE POLICY STATEMENT

At our founding convention in 1976, Organized Working Women placed support for universal child care at the centre of our policy programme. In 1980, our conference, "Unions and the Fight for Day Care" raised the issue of child care as key to the demands of union women. This conference was a catalyst in the decision of the Ontario Federation of Labour's Women's Committee to sponsor a conference on "Sharing the Caring" and the passing of a policy statement on child care at the 1980 OFL Convention.

Since 1980, there have been a number of significant events in the fight for universal child care. Following the 1980 OFL Convention, the OFL sponsored a series of forums across the province which provided the basis for a brief to the Ontario government outlining a programme of action for child care leading up to the year 1990. In co-operation with day care activists, the Ontario Federation of Labour launched the Ontario Coalition for Better Day Care, which has been a strong force in mobilizing support and pressuring the provincial government to move toward a system of universal child care. This spring, the OFL and the Ontario Coalition sponsored a series of forums across the province which focussed public attention on the demand for non-profit child care.

At the federal level, there has been considerable progress in organizing support for universal child care since 1980. In 1982, a Canada-wide coalition, the Canadian Day Care Advocacy Association, was created to fight for a universal system of quality, affordable child care. As a result of the persistent lobbying efforts of the CDCAA, supported by other organizations, the federal Liberals appointed a Task Force on Child Care, chaired by Dr. Katie Cooke. This Task Force reported in the fall of 1985 and endorsed the idea of a child care system available to all parents who choose to use it. In response to continuing pressure from day care advocates, the Mulroney government established a Special Parliamentary Committee on Child Care, which reported in March 1987. The recommendations of the special committee have been rejected by day care advocates and by both opposition parties in the federal Parliament. During May and June 1987, the Canadian Day Care Advocacy Association, the Canadian Labour Congress and the National Action Committee on the Status of Women jointly sponsored a country-wide petition, which was presented to the federal government on Monday, June 15.

As a result of pressure from day care activists, backed by the Ontario Federation of Labour, the Ontario government recently released a white paper on child care policy, "New Directions for Child Care". Some of the main elements of the policy announced in the white paper are: direct grants to child care services, available only to non-profit services pending the decision of the federal government on grants to profit child care; \$33 million in capital grants; a shift to the incomes test from the means test under the Canada Assistance Plan; the doubling of subsidized spaces; and a requirement that all new schools include spaces for child care.

The white paper has been greeted by the day care community as an important first step. But pressure needs to be kept up on the Ontario government to ensure that direct grants go to non-profit child care services, regardless of the federal decision. In addition, the Ontario government must be lobbied to argue in federal-provincial negotiations that grants should not go to profit-making child care and subsidies based on incomes testing under the Canada Assistance Plan should not be available to commercial child care. Subsidies to parents using non-profit child care services should be available at the federally allowed maximum.

The Mulroney government has promised to announce a National Child Care Policy in the near future. Scheduled for the end of June, the announcement has recently been postponed until the fall. It is essential that pressure be maintained on the federal government to ensure that any direct grants which are introduced go only to non-profit child care services. In addition, the opposition of day care advocates to using tax credits to parents as a way to finance a system of child care services must be continued. Any measures taken by the federal government must move in the direction of creating in Canada a comprehensive system of universally accessible, quality, non-profit child care.

### OWW Policy

At this Annual Meeting, Organized Working Women re-affirms its support for a comprehensive system of universally accessible, quality, non-profit child care services. As argued in our 1980 policy paper, "Union and the Fight for Day Care", such a system can only be built if the welfare orientation inherent in the Canada Assistance Plan is replaced by a recognition of child care as a basic social service which is available to all parents who choose to use it. We support the proposal advanced by the Canadian Day Care Advocacy Association that a Child Care Financing Act be introduced which would result in the introduction of grants which would gradually be increased as funding under the Canada Assistance Plan is phased out. Unlike the CDCAA which

supports the maintenance of parents' fees amounting to fifteen per cent of the total cost, OWW endorses the principle that child care services should be entirely funded out of public revenue. This position is also held by the National Action Committee on the Status of Women.

In supporting a comprehensive system of child care services, Organized Working Women calls for services which meet the needs of shift workers, parents of school age as well as pre-school children, parents faced with emergency situations and parents in rural as well as urban centres. OWW endorses licensed home care as a supplement appropriate in some special circumstances. However, OWW sees group care in child care centres as the main institution serving infants, pre-school and school age children.

By non-profit child care services, Organized Working Women means non-profit, parent controlled co-operative centres and public centres. It calls on governments to make start-up funds and other resources available to parents who wish to establish co-operative centres. At the same time, OWW recognizes that the primary responsibility for the establishment of child care services belongs to the government and calls for a great expansion of public child care centres. The public child care centres should incorporate the principles of parent and worker involvement in the running of centres.

Quality child care services are impossible without a well-trained and properly paid staff. Organized Working Women calls for a significant increase in the wages of child care workers. OWW further supports the unionization of child care workers, including those in licensed home child care as well as in centres.

#### Plan of Action

In keeping with this policy, Organized Working Women should carry out the following measures in the coming year:

1. Revise the 1980 policy paper "Unions and the Fight for Day Care" and make this available to our members and to unionists generally;
2. Continue to participate in the Ontario Coalitions for Better Day Care and seek affiliation with the Canadian Day Care Advocacy Association;
3. Participate actively in the campaigns organized by the Ontario Coalition and the CDCAA, keeping our membership informed through special notices and through the pages of Union Women.
4. Send letters to the federal and provincial government supporting measures consistent with the policy outlined here.

DRAFT  
OWW POLICY PAPER ON PAY EQUITY

**INTRODUCTION**

In Ontario today women still earn only 63 cents for every dollar earned by men. This inequity in average wage rates has not changed significantly over the past hundred years, despite the existence of equal pay legislation in the province for more than a decade and the bargaining efforts of some union locals.

The equal pay legislation that has been in force up until recently was ineffective largely because it only allowed for the comparison of jobs that were virtually identical. Since approximately eighty per cent of men and women work in different jobs such legislation was inadequate to establish equal pay between male and female workers.

Lobbying efforts over the past decade are finally paying off as new, more comprehensive legislation has been brought into effect in Ontario. It is far from perfect, however, and will present a new range of problems in attempting to rectify pay inequities between women and men. A more detailed discussion of the implications of the new legislation is found below.

Pressure at the bargaining table has also been growing as more unions try to reduce sex-based pay inequities. This is due to the growing strength of women in their unions, aided by organizations like OWW and internal union women's committees. As a result, there is a greater sensitivity to the problem now in many of our unions than there was a number of years ago.

While these developments are encouraging it is clear that there is still much to be done to raise working women's wages to be on par with men's.

**PAY EQUITY VS. EQUAL PAY FOR WORK OF EQUAL VALUE**

Attempting to establish equal pay for work of equal value has often been considered the way to overcome the current wage gap between men and women workers. Usually, this is a process of selecting a higher paid male position and a lower paid female job position and showing that the two are equal in value and therefore should be paid the same. This process often involves a formal job evaluation exercise (which will be described in detail below).

Recently the term "pay equity" has been used to replace "equal pay for work of equal value". In some people's minds there is no distinction between the two phrases or concepts. It is possible, however, that the

phrase "pay equity" could come to represent a broader approach to the problem of unequal pay. Pay equity is a more general phrase. It does not refer to the notion of establishing equal value between jobs. It may allow the door to be opened wider to a variety of different approaches which simply concentrate on narrowing the pay gap between men and women rather than trying to establish equal value between jobs and equal pay based on that.

The notion of overcoming injustice and inequity should come naturally to trade unionists. These are goals of the trade union movement from its inception. As advocates within our unions of equal rights for women, we should push for our unions to recognize the need for higher pay for female workers as a modern day extension of these historic goals. We may have better success in getting our fellow trade unionists to support pay equity wage demands when put in these familiar terms, rather than a more foreign notion and process attempting to establish "equal value" between jobs. As trade unionists it makes sense for us to address pay equity in terms of narrowing the pay gap between women and men rather than searching for the "holy scale" to establish equal value. This opens the door to a broader range of options to tackle the problem and it may be more effective in uniting our brothers in a basic trade union goal of raising wages for the lowest paid workers who, because of historic discrimination, tend to be female.

### **MEMBERSHIP EDUCATION**

Education is essential to build a strong interest in the need for pay equity among the membership in our unions. It is crucial in order to:

- understand how to best rectify the pay inequities in one's workplace,
- develop the commitment to negotiate pay equity increases, especially if strike action is required,
- develop a broad-based lobby to win effective, comprehensive legislation, and
- understand the strengths and pitfalls to most effectively use current legislation.

#### **Resistance to pay equity**

It is not just employers who have to be convinced to pay working women more. There is usually resistance within our unions too, often by our higher paid brothers. This resistance is even greater during tough economic times for workers, since general wage increases are lower. This situation can create division between working men and women when one sex may benefit more than the other or even at the expense of the other.

Some workers also object to raising wages for lower paid, female workers because the gap between these wages and their own will no longer be as large. Unfortunately, many workers agree with maintaining pay differences as if it was a reflection of their greater worth rather than a wage system that benefits employers by allowing them to pay some workers less.

In some of the few workplaces where unions have successfully negotiated pay equity wage adjustments for the lower paid female workers, a backlash has developed for some of the reasons mentioned above. Those who feel that a group of workers got more money than they did have then tried to bargain a greater increase in the next round for the higher paid, often predominantly male classifications. This proposal is often justified on the basis of comparing their wages to those received by the same type of workers elsewhere.

### The Influence of the Market

This situation raises the negative influence of the labour market on trying to change women's wage rates. The only consistent factor in the market determination of wages is that of exploitation. Employers seek to keep wages as low as possible in order to keep their labour costs down and /or increase their profits. Yet other factors work to raise wages, such as labour militancy, labour or skills shortages, a minimum wage, etc. As a result, wages vary widely between classification, geographical locations and even specific workplaces.

Presently, such an erratic system of wage determination works in favour of male workers more than female workers. In the market, wages for jobs performed mainly by men are higher than for women. This is partly because men's work has been traditionally higher paid than women's and because it is mainly men who are in skilled trades or specific jobs where there are shortages and hence a higher demand.

It is difficult to narrow the wage gap between women's and men's wages when it is a relatively isolated effort in this broader economic context. Those who are reluctant to do so can easily point to prevailing market rates to support lower wages for women and higher wages for men.

This shows the need for extensive education to convince our members that pay equity is a valid and essential goal. It also illustrates the need for broader-based efforts to change the current pay gap between men and women.

There is no doubt that effective pay equity legislation is important. Like Employment Standards Legislation, it should provide a guarantee of basic minimums for all workers.

Legislation is crucial for unorganized women who are the vast majority of female workers in the province. In the absence of a union, pay equity legislation provides their only protections against inequitable and unjust wages as their employers seek to capitalize on discriminatory wage trends in order to make a higher profit.

Unfortunately, in practice, there are often many problems with pay equity legislation. Since workers do not exercise much control over governments today, legislation is not drafted to ideally meet our needs or address our concerns. At best it is the product of compromise between our interests and those of employers, attempting to satisfy at least some of the contradictory concerns of each group.

One of the main weaknesses of the equal pay legislation that was in effect in Ontario for over a decade is that one could only make a case for equal pay for jobs which were the same or almost the same. The problem is, however, that most women and men are employed in very different types of jobs in the labour market. The phrase "dual labour market" is used to describe this phenomenon. As a result, such equal pay legislation is quite ineffective at rectifying the pay gap between men's and women's work.

Another major weakness of Ontario's equal pay legislation to date was that it was "complaint based". In other words an individual had to file a complaint with the enforcement body (the Employment Standards Branch of the Ministry of Labour) in order to initiate an investigation into whether sex-based pay inequities existed in that workplace.

There are a number of problems with this approach. One is that employers are not required independantly to take steps to address sex-based pay inequities. They only have to if they are found guilty of the practice after a lengthy investigation prompted by a complaint. And it is glaringly obvious that filing such a complaint poses serious risks for non-unionized women who have little protection against a backlash by their employer.

These two major problems with Ontario's old equal pay legislation have been addressed in the new provincial pay equity legislation. Comparisons can be made between jobs of dissimilar nature and at least some employers are required to take action to address pay inequities without waiting for a complaint to be filed. Because of this later feature, the



legislation is called "pro-active" rather than just "complaint based".

Despite tremendous lobbying efforts on the part of the women's movement and the trade union movement, there are still a number of serious shortcomings in the new pay equity legislation. Take, for example, that there are two separate pieces of legislation. One is for provincial government employees (Bill 105) and the other is for all other workers in the province (Bill 154). Even within this second piece of legislation, Bill 154, there are different procedures depending on whether an employee is in the public or private sector and depending on the size of the establishment in which they are employed.

### Shortcomings in Bill 154

Ten serious shortcomings of Bill 154 are listed below. These indicate how this pay equity legislation, covering 98.3 per cent of the province's total female labour force, will fall far short of eliminating sex-based pay inequities.

1. No coverage for women working in all-female establishments (i.e. where there is no male comparison in the same establishment). It is ludicrous that pay equity legislation would not apply directly to this group that would need it the most, for example daycare or nursing home workers, many of whom still work for poverty level wages.
2. Voluntary compliance during the transition period and complete exemption for small establishments. Employers with fewer than 100 employees have a transition period of up to six years to comply with the legislation and even then they are not required to establish a pro-active plan. They are only covered by the complaint procedure. This substandard approach covers almost one-third of the province's female workforce. Almost half of these women (12.4%) are employed in establishments of less than 10 and are completely excluded from the legislation. Again, these are some of the women who need the benefits of pay equity legislation most.
3. Comparison to the lowest comparable male rate. This is an obvious way of minimizing the pay adjustments that will be owing to women by forcing the comparison to be with the lowest rather than highest male rate.
4. Gender predominance defined as 70 per cent. Requiring such a large majority for comparison of "male" and "female" positions will also limit the number and type of comparisonss which can be made.
5. Restricting pay equity wage adjustments to 1% per year. This means that women suffering the most wage discrimination will have to wait the longest for the necessary adjustment.

6. Allowing several factors to justify differences in compensation such as merit plans, red-circling, skills shortages, temporary training positions, casual positions, etc.) These simply create more loopholes which employers can use to justify lower wages for women.

7. No separate pay equity fund or pay equity negotiations. This will not only encourage the situation of robbing Peter to pay Paula, it will also encourage robbing Paula to pay Paula as employers will seek to take money away from general wage increases to pay for pay equity adjustments.

8. Union liability for unequal pay. This means that unions can be considered legally responsible and therefore financially liable for negotiating discriminatory wages. While it is important that unions be required to address sex-based pay inequities this approach suggests that unions have power equal to the employer's when it comes to negotiating. If only that were the case.

9. No third party complaints. There is no provision for an independent, third party to launch a complaint of pay inequity. This is another serious inadequacy for women who are not represented by a union and therefore need this protection the most.

10. A one-shot approach. There is no requirement to maintain pay equity into the future. This is justified on the basis of differences in bargaining strength. But there are too many examples in Ontario of hard fought battles by women at Fleck, Radio Shack or Eaton's for example, who failed to win high wages despite their militancy.

#### Problems with job evaluation.

A number of additional concerns are raised by the likelihood that job evaluation methods will be used to analyze pay inequities and to determine specific pay equity adjustments. Neither Bill 105 or Bill 154 specifically require job evaluation. But it is inferred by reference to using a method of job comparison taking into account skill, effort, responsibility and working conditions. And also because it is the most common legislative approach to pay equity.

Very simply, the process of job evaluation is generally as follows. The four categories of skill, effort, responsibility and working conditions are often used with a number of specific factors identified under each category. Each factor is assigned a certain number of maximum points. Positions in the workplace are analyzed according to these factors and assigned points. The jobs are then ranked according to their point score and the appropriate wage is assigned.

It is important to be aware that job evaluation was developed by management and thereby reflects a managerial, not trade union perspective on wage compensation. Job evaluation tends to promote a hierarchical wage system based on the differences between jobs. Value to the employer is emphasized and rewarded. For example, greater skill is usually valued more highly than unskilled work. Some trade unionists would argue instead that unskilled or semi-skilled work (jobs most often performed by women) should be rewarded more because of their monotony.

The popularity of job evaluation is based on the notion that it is a scientific and objective tool to use in determining value between dissimilar jobs. But this is far from true. Any determination of value is bound to be subjective, influenced by an individual or class perspective and by the dominant values at the time. Work performed by women has not been highly valued historically. This has only started to change within the last decade or so. And hopefully, views about the value of women's work will continue to change, to make it even more highly regarded.

But with a job evaluation system, if even one factor or the weight assigned to it is changed, all of the jobs would need to be re-evaluated again. This has the effect then of establishing job hierarchies which are hard to change.

There are other problems with the use of job evaluation as a way of making pay more equitable between men and women. To date, job evaluation plans (which vary in their specific characteristics) have not been designed specifically to rectify sex-based discrimination in wages. Many of the existing plans use factors and weights which more highly value characteristics of work traditionally done by men. There is ample evidence of this in the wage gaps between predominantly male and female jobs where job evaluation has been applied.

Another problem is that job evaluation does not usually challenge the allocation of money paid to workers as a group. Put another way, it does not attempt to change the way the "pie is divided" between wage costs and company profits. Job evaluation establishes a wage hierarchy and redistributes income only between the group of workers who have been evaluated. The effect is that some workers get "green-circled" (their wages jump ahead) while other workers are "red-circled". (Their wages are effectively lowered by keeping them at their current wage rate until the level they are supposed to be at catches up with them.) This effect of job evaluation plans has created tremendous controversy and divisions between workers once the results are known. Using job evaluation to address sex-based pay inequities may then create sharp divisions between men and women rather than uniting them in support of higher wages for the lower paid female workers.. These divisive conditions are created by

the fact that the results flow from a rather technical exercise of rating jobs that requires little membership involvement.

Given these problems with the use of job evaluation to bring about pay equity and the fact that it is not explicitly required by the new legislation, we should press our unions to develop more effective alternatives.

### Other Legislative Changes

There are other legislative changes which should also be made to raise wages for lower paid women. For example, raising the minimum wage would be the most simple and most effective way to boost wages for the lowest paid women. Given that women tend to be concentrated in the lowest rungs of the pay ladder, increasing the minimum wage would certainly help to narrow the average pay gap between men and women. And it would be particularly beneficial to the thousands of non-unionized women working for minimum wage in the private service sector. Precisely those women who will benefit least from the new Ontario pay equity legislation.

Legislation prohibiting lower pay for part-time workers is another example of legislation which would also help to close the pay gap between women and men. This would be of particular benefit to women since approximately 80 per cent of part-time workers are women.

And also, legislation promoting affirmative action or employment equity would be beneficial. It would help to equalize average women's and men's wages by breaking down the current distinctions of "women's" and "men's" jobs.

### The Union's Role

Our unions should be in the forefront to lobby and pressure for effective legislative changes in conjunction with women's groups and other interested parties. As long as there is the will to do so, our unions can be one of the most effective organizations to press for legislative changes. Unlike many women's organizations, the Union has a stable financial base to allow people to be hired on to co-ordinate and direct such a campaign. Plus we have thousands of members who can be mobilized to take action. As active women within our unions, it is our job to pressure the leadership, where necessary, to devote the resources to make this issue the priority it should be.

Even though new pay equity legislation has been passed in Ontario, we should continue to press for other legislative changes which would also help to narrow the pay gap, such as those mentioned above.

Collective Bargaining

Bargaining for pay equity is now on the agenda in a way it has never been before. There is now a legal obligation to rectify pay gaps between women and men.

Our unions need to develop clear strategies of how to tackle pay inequities through collective bargaining. The legislation creates a framework for doing so. Bargaining also represents the key to plugging the loopholes in the legislation. In other words, the legislation establishes the basic requirements or floor. But through collective bargaining we should still push to go beyond the legislation and build above that floor as unions have traditionally done with other types of employment legislation. As trade unionists with the right to collectively bargain, it is important that we not let inadequate aspects of pay equity legislation establish a lower ceiling for our goals.

Methods for acheiving pay equity.

A number of potential problems with job evaluation as a method for acheiving pay equity have been described in the preceeding section. If this is the method chosen by the union or if in time it becomes clear that this method is being required by the legislation, it is essential that the union insist that all of the details of selecting the plan and carrying it out are subject to collective bargaining.

But we should also look at other ways to address pay equity through collective bargaining, either as alternatives to, or in addition to job evaluation.

A number of other methods for addressing pay equity were listed in the Ontario Federation of Labour's model pay equity legislation and in the 1985 policy statement on equal pay for work of equal value. They included, among others:

- equalization of base wage entry rates,
- negotiated benchmark jobs, and
- allocating monies directly to lower paid female dominated categories.

Other bargaining strategies include:

- reducing or eliminating increment steps,
- merging or eliminating separate classifications with different wage rates,
- negotiating dollar rather than percentage wage increases, and
- establishing the same wage rates for part-time workers.

Equalizing base wage entry rates means to establish the same wage rate for the lowest paid female classification as that of the lowest paid male classification in the same establishment. It is an approach adopted as policy by CUPE and pursued by some of its locals. For example, it would mean that in a municipality the wage of a clerk-typist (the lowest paid classification held mainly by women) would be raised to be the same as that of a labourer (the lowest paid classification held mainly by men.) Other wage rates for the predominantly female classifications may also need to be adjusted upwards as a result of having raised the entry level rate.

This approach is based on the simple notion of equity ; that women have to pay the same amount in living costs as men, therefore they should start off getting paid the same amount. It does not require any complex procedure to try to determine comparable "value" between the jobs.

Negotiating benchmark jobs usually refers to identifying specific job classifications, often held by a fairly large number of employees, and negotiating equal wage rates for them. As a pay equity tool, the union would identify key classifications held by a large number of female employees and key classifications held by male employees. The wage rates between these male and female classifications would then be matched. The process of determining which classifications should be matched may involve a job evaluation for those classifications or may simply be done on the basis of what is considered a fair match.

Allocating monies directly to lower paid female dominated categories is a form of wage adjustment. This bargaining strategy has been pursued by unions for years, although not as a specific pay equity measure.

Reducing or eliminating increment steps. Increments are the wage steps one must progress through over a period of time in one classification before reaching the top or real job rate. Moving to the next step is automatic after a specified period of time in some workplaces but in others progress may be based on merit or satisfactory work performance.

This method is particularly important for clerical workers since the increment system prevents them from reaching the full job rate for as many as three to six years and sometimes longer.

As well, the increment system may be used to justify lower pay for women, under the Ontario pay equity legislation.

With this approach the union would seek to bargain away the number of increment steps and the length of time it takes to reach the full job rate.

Merging or eliminating separate classifications with different wage rates. Another way the employers keep wage costs down is by establishing a variety of different classifications or levels for jobs that are very similar. This also seems to be most common for office jobs usually held

by women. For example, in the federal or provincial government there are many different levels of clerks often with little difference between one level and the next.

Using this method the Union would bargain to eliminate or merge certain levels and thereby reclassify all of the incumbents into the higher paying level.

Negotiating dollar rather than percentage wage increase. This is one of the simplest ways of preventing the wage gap between lower paid women and higher paid men from growing even wider.

A 5% increase for a clerk-typist earning \$10.00 an hour is only worth 50 cents. Whereas the same percentage increase is worth twice as much, \$1.00, to a skilled tradesman earning \$20.00 an hour. Negotiating percentage increase successively over a number of years causes the gap that already exists to widen even further. It also undercuts the effect of any one-shot adjustments to raise wages at the bottom.

Establishing the same wage rates for part-time workers. It is clear that this would help these women in particular and raise women's wages on average since the vast majority of all part-time workers are women. This strategy is especially important now since so many of the new jobs created are part-time rather than full-time. Part-time work now accounts for a rapidly growing share of all paid employment.

This strategy also plugs a loophole in the Ontario pay equity legislation which does not apply to casuals, a type of part-time worker.

These are only some of the approaches we should put forward in our unions to achieve greater pay equity through collective bargaining. Deciding on the most appropriate route to follow in one's workplace will depend on the type of pay inequities that exist and what the membership can be united to support as the most effective and fairest method.

## MOVING FORWARD

In striving to narrow the pay gap between women and men we should go beyond the specific battle in our workplace to also try to develop community support for this goal. This is important for a number of reasons. By doing so we can play an important role in shaping public opinion about the need to raise women's wages. Community support can be an important lever in forcing our employers to move on this issue. And it will also show our unorganized sisters that a union can help them fight to overcome historic wage discrimination. It will encourage them to unionize in order to pursue pay equity, especially since the current legislation provides little direct benefit to many of them.

Organized Working Women can play an important and unique role in fulfilling such a strategy. As an organization composed of trade union women we have a community base. And as promoters of women's equality within the trade union movement we have connections in both the trade union and women's movements.

We should make use of these unique organizational attributes to play a leadership role in developing broader based community support for pay equity struggles. In this way OWW can make an important contribution to promoting pay equity in Ontario.