



Part-time work is a women's issue.

Workers at Pineland Co-op in Nipawin have been on strike for almost three years. Their concern is not only reasonable wages, but more importantly, the job security of part-time workers.

Connections applauds these workers for taking a firm stand on an issue that directly affects women. Therefore, the Connections Steering Committee has organized a demonstration of solidarity for 2:00 p.m., **Saturday, March 19 in Nipawin** as our International Women's Day event.

RWDSU is providing buses to take us to Nipawin on that day. In order to ensure that every one has a ride, we ask that you **call the contact in your area by Friday, March 11 to confirm your attendance.**

REGINA 8:30 a.m.
SGEU Hall
1440 Broadway Ave.,

Northgate Mall
Albert St. & 9th Ave. N.

Contact: Marg Brown
525-8329

SASKATOON 11:00 a.m.
Mac's Convenience Store
Lawson Heights Shopping Mall
Warman Road & Primrose Dr.

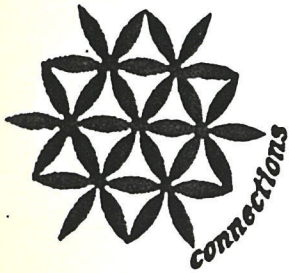
Contact: Merina Chapiel
242-7435

PRINCE ALBERT 12:00 noon
SGEU Hall
107 8th St. E.

Contact: Donna
764-5201 (9-5)

Cathy
922-3486 (after 5)

Bring your own lunch
****** See you in Nipawin******



International Women's Day



We've Always Had the Sense

by Arlene Mantle

Women have always been workers
In so many different ways.
Women have always been workers
But most never got any pay.
Not reflected in the pages of history,
We've always been around.
Too busy working,
No time to write it down.
(CHORUS)

Women have always been workers,
In so many different places.
Women have always been workers,
But we never saw their faces.
Not reflected in the pages of history,
In the home and in the factory.
As long as they don't acknowledge our dignity,
They can keep our value down.
(CHORUS)

CHORUS: Dignity and Co-operation
This is what our lives have meant.
We never had the dollars,
But we've always had the sense.

Women have always worked - in the home and in the workforce

Women make up over 40 percent of the workforce.

26 percent of working women hold part-time positions.

***Nearly 30 percent of part-time working women work
part-time because they cannot find full-time jobs.***

***Part-time workers receive low wages, few, if any,
seniority rights and employee benefits.***



February 18, 1988

Dear Connections Sisters:

As a result of our discussions regarding a Connections International Women's Day event, the Connections Steering Committee has planned a Demonstration of Solidarity with the Co-op strikers in Nipawin. On Saturday, March 19, 1988 buses will leave Regina (8:30 a.m.), Saskatoon (11:00 a.m.) and Prince Albert (12:00 noon) for Nipawin.

For almost three years, workers at Pineland Co-op in Nipawin have been on strike. 12 dedicated Retail Wholesale and Department Store Unionists (7 women and 5 men) have walked the picket line. Their issue is not only reasonable wages, but more importantly, the job security of part-time workers. Pineland's management has adopted regressive labour policies that:

eliminate full-time work in favor of lower paid part-time work;

do not extend employee benefits to part-time workers;

ignore the seniority and ability of part-time workers in scheduling shifts; and

freeze wages and utilize two-tier wage schedules.

Part-time work is a women's issue. Women now make up more than 40 percent of the workforce. 26 percent of working women hold part-time positions, not necessarily because they want to. In fact, nearly 30 percent of women working part-time do so because they cannot find full-time work. Furthermore, part-time workers often receive lower wages and few, if any, seniority rights and employee benefits.

As such, the Connections Steering Committee adopted a policy on part-time work at our February 14, 1988 meeting (attached). This policy will be presented for approval at the next Connections conference. Also attached is a copy of the leaflet we have prepared to advertise the March 19th demonstration. Feel free to distribute these to any groups or individuals (male or female) who may be interested in attending the event. Be sure to confirm your attendance with the contact person in your area by Friday, March 11, 1988. See you in Nipawin!

In Solidarity,

Connections Steering Committee

attachments

Part-Time Work The Dark Side

Connections, an umbrella group representing women and women's groups throughout Saskatchewan, is speaking out against the nature of part-time work because of its detrimental effect on women.

The fragmentation of the labour market caused by part-time work has been described, powerfully and effectively, as "industrial apartheid".¹ The majority of part-time work is done by women, who accept the diminished value of part-time work in an attempt either to balance their family responsibilities with their financial need or because they have no other choice.

The problems with part-time work are many. Part-time workers, the majority of whom are women, are often paid minimum wage and may not work enough hours per week to qualify for pension deductions or company health care benefits. The fewer hours per week means when they are laid off, it is difficult to qualify for Unemployment Insurance benefits. Frequently, part-time workers are hired on a casual basis, which means problems in scheduling child care, other work or education opportunities. Apart from these obvious drawbacks of lower wages and being treated as cheap labour, part-time workers are often seen as a threat to full-time workers. Part-time workers are also often a barrier to unionization because the definition of employee entitled to the rights of a collectively bargained union contract often excludes part-time workers. The temptation for employers to hire more part-time workers and reduce the numbers and bargaining power of the union is overwhelming.

Part-time employees are cheap labour because they receive, on average, lower wages and are entitled to receive few benefits. As a result, part-time workers also have little job security. But

¹ Ron Todd, General Secretary, Transport and General Workers Union, Britain, cited by Elaine Crebo, "Women and Part time Employment" Labour Research Paper, April, 1987.

women continue to take part-time work in spite of the drawbacks because they have little other choice.

Given the reality of women's lives, we believe that the value of part-time work needs to be recognized and adapted, so that women need not be exploited by their circumstances, and that the labour movement itself not be threatened and undermined by that exploitation. We believe this recognition could achieve the expansion and improvement of part-time work, job sharing and flex time if the following objectives, advocated by Saskatchewan Working Women, and endorsed by the Connections Steering Committee were followed:²

1. The same basic rate of pay and fringe benefits should be applicable to a job, regardless of number of hours worked with no differential between part-time and full-time workers.
2. Regularly scheduled hours of work, with work schedules posted well in advance.
3. Guaranteed minimum hours of work per week, and the right to refuse overtime without penalty.
4. Support of permanent part-time and the elimination of casual part-time work.
5. The payment of overtime work performed beyond normal working hours.
6. Seniority accumulated on a calendar year basis, so that part-time workers have the same access to various promotions and salary increases as full-time employees.
7. Increased unionization of part-time workers through a greater effort on part of unions and job sharing agreements which the workers determine and which preserve the nature and benefits of the job.

² Similar recommendations have been made by numerous other women's organizations in Canada. See: Part Time Work in Canada: The Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Part Time Work. Ottawa: Labour Canada, 1983.

Further, the Connections Steering Committee advocates high quality, accessible and flexible child care, which is affordable and available. Company benefits should cover all employees regardless of status:

...the majority of women's organizations are in favour of expanding opportunities for part time work because they see it as the best way for women to combine a career with home responsibilities. They emphasize, however, that part time work must be taken out of the job ghettos, in which it now exists, and made available in all industries and all levels of an organization. They all raised many of the same issues brought forward by unions, that is, that part time workers must have better access to unionization, better child care facilities, equal pay, pro-rated fringe benefits and pensions, and opportunities for promotion and training.³

These changes to the reality of part-time work would improve the reality of the women who are compelled by necessity to seek and keep part-time work.

³ Taken from the recommendations, Part Time Work in Canada: Report of the Commission of Inquiry into Part Time Work. p. 107.

Please tear off and return this section if you would like to receive the following reports:

_____ Connections Conference Supplementary Report
[lists of concerns from small group discussions]
_____ # of copies @ \$2 per copy \$ _____

_____ Frances Wasserlein speech on coalition building
_____ # of copies @ \$2 per copy \$ _____

Make cheque or money order payable to "Connections" and send to:

2149 Albert Street
Regins, Saskatchewan
S4P 2V1