

Telephone: 346-5643

P.O. Box 561
RED DEER, Alberta
T4N 5G1
September 4, 1984

To Whom It May Concern:

It is with great pleasure that the Central Alberta Women's Emergency Shelter endorses the endeavors of the Organization of Spouses of Military Members.

The current women's movement is for all women and we are very pleased to see organizations for women develop and take into account the different needs of different women.

The nation wide movement of O.S.O.M.M. indicates an awareness of the different needs of military wives.

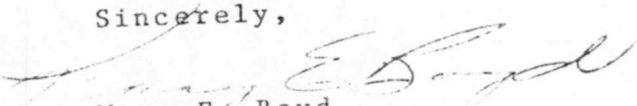
It is very important that these women be recognized as responsible contributing members of their military communities.

C.A.W.E.S. fully supports this new born organization whose stated purpose is "to improve the status of women and the quality of life of the members through mutual support and sharing of informations."

Congratulations O.S.O.M.M!!!!

If we can be of any assistance please call.

Sincerely,


Mary E. Boyd
Executive Director

ik/MB

Medley, Alta

July 7 /85-

Mrs Lucie Richardson

I saw you on Canada a.m.

Go for it! and Good Luck.

Norma Giroux

C. F. B. Cold Lake

NORMA

GIRoux

MRS. D. WADDELL
190-14023 101 ST.
EDMONTON, ALTA.
T5E 4G7
TEL. 456-0599

O.S.O.M.M.
BOX 26
NARSKI PARK, ALTA
T0M 1N0

AUG. 25, 1985

DEAR MEMBERS;

I AM SORRY FOR ANSWERING SO LATE, BUT MY HUSBAND AND I WERE ON VACATION. PLEASE FIND ENCLOSED MY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND FEE.

I FEEL VERY STRONGLY ABOUT SOME ISSUES CONCERNING SPOUSES OF MEMBERS OF THE CANADIAN FORCES. SADLY OUR PRESENT GOVERNMENT SEEMS AS UNCONCERNED AS OUR LAST.

WHILE BEING POSTED TO GERMANY IN 1980 I INQUIRED ABOUT COLLECTING UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE UNTIL I FOUND EMPLOYMENT ON THE BASE IN BADEN. I WAS TOLD THAT I COULD NOT COLLECT IT BUT COULD APPLY UPON RETURN. USING MY OWN INITIATIVE, I FOUND EMPLOYMENT AT CANEX AND PAID INTO U.I.C. UNTIL 1983 ONE YEAR PRIOR TO MY RETURN. WHEN APPLYING FOR U.I.C. BENEFITS IN 1984 I WAS TOLD I DID NOT QUALIFY BECAUSE I DID NOT WORK THE REQUIRED AMOUNT OF TIME IN 1984. I DO NOT ARGUE WITH THE RULES, I JUST FEEL THAT DEPENDANTS WHO QUALIFY BEFORE POSTING TO EUROPE SHOULD BE ABLE TO START U.I.C. BENEFITS UPON RETURN REGARDLESS WHETHER THEY WORKED OR NOT. PREGNANT DEPENDANTS ARE ALLOWED BENEFITS IN EUROPE BY THE WAY.

ANOTHER PLACE WHERE WE ARE DISCRIMINATED AGAINST IS IN THE ELECTION ACT. AS YOU KNOW 1984 WAS AN ELECTION YEAR. WHEN WE RETURNED TO CANADA MY TWO DAUGHTERS AND I TRIED TO PUT OUR NAMES ON THE VOTERS LIST IN B.C. WHERE MY HUSBAND HAS A RIGHT TO VOTE, BUT WAS REFUSED BECAUSE WE DID NOT HAVE RESIDENCE THERE FOR THE REQUIRED TIME. WE LOST OUR VOTING RIGHTS BECAUSE WE ARE DEPENDANTS OF A MILITARY MEMBER.

MY HUSBAND WROTE LETTERS TO HIS MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT AND COMPLAINED. WE RECEIVED NO SATISFACTION ABOUT THE U.I.C. BENEFITS AND RECEIVED SOME LEGAL MUMBLE JUMBLE ABOUT CHANGING THE ELECTION ACT IF SOME COMMITTEE AGREES. WHO CAN UNDERSTAND THE LANGUAGE UNLESS YOUR A LAWYER. I EXPECTED NO CHANGES WITH U.I.C. AFTER ALL THEY ARE EVEN PLANNING TO TAKE OUR HUSBANDS BENEFITS AWAY AREN'T THEY.

DID YOU SEE THE ARTICLES ABOUT TAKING INDEXING AWAY FROM OUR HUSBANDS PENSION? WE HAD BETTER DO SOMETHING ABOUT THAT ALSO AFTER ALL WE WILL HAVE TO LIVE ON THAT PENSION ONE DAY ALSO. MY HUSBAND AND OTHERS ARE THINKING ABOUT THEIR RELEASES NOW SO THAT THEY CAN GET UNDER THE WIRE.

I AM CONCERNED ABOUT THIS ISSUE AND OTHERS. I WILL TRY AND BE PRESENT FOR OUR NEXT MEETING SO THAT WE MAY DISCUSS THEM.

- bet: wadde -

Dear Mrs. Richardson:

Oct. 6/85.

I am writing to you in response to the two Canadian Press articles that appeared in the Ottawa Citizen Sept. 26th and 27th concerning the Organizational Society of Spouses of Military Members.

I am the wife of a senior officer in the military and have often chafed under the regulations the CF imposes on military wives. During a tour in Europe I became particularly incensed at the "dependant wife" procedures whereby one had to transact all businesses, whether at Canex, the Bank of Montreal, or the Base Hospital, by repeatedly reciting my husband's SIN (Social Insurance Number), and carrying an I.D. card that specified I was his "dependant". We were constantly reminded that our status, and the 'priviledges' we got were totally dependant on the fact he was in the CF. At the time, I was completing an Honours B.A. from Acadia University by correspondence, and made the "dependant wife" syndrome the subject of a major paper (in 1977). I circulated this to a number of women in the community, and the comment I received back indicated many felt as I did - a sense of rage at being treated in a paternalistic way.

I am now in my second year of Law at the University of Ottawa, and I applaud your initiative in taking your case to court. I know many other women who feel as you do, and believe that many would want to join your organization and make it truly national. Please send me information on how I can become a member.

Enclosed please find a series of articles which you may find of interest. In the U.S., a similar organization has been lobbying for military benefits for families for years, and they are quite successful. Also, enclosed please find an extract from the Personnel Concept that speaks of the importance of support to military families. You may also be aware of the newsletter called "Military Family" from the U.S. Armed Services YMCA. A copy is included. It mentions a number of programs and resources that are taking place or are available to families in the U.S. forces.

I certainly hope to hear from you about your organization, and would be willing to suggest others who certainly are also interested in joining. My address is 7 Rigel Road, CFB Rockcliffe, Ontario, K1K 0A1. Telephone (613 - 744-2032). I am usually home anytime after 6:00 p.m.

Good luck in your endeavours.

Yours sincerely,

Judith A. Hanson.
Judith A. Hanson.

HANSON, Judith

Canex

100

Gayle

403-

6

25 Chipwood Cr.
Willowdale, Ont.
M2J 3X6
October 19, 1985

JOAN FERN SHAW TOKONTO

Dear Lucie Richardson,

I can't tell you how excited I am about your stand for military wives. Yes, I can tell you and that's why I'm writing to you. I got your address through the office of Sheila Copps; someone from Ottawa phoned and gave it to my 14-year-old daughter while I was still at work; I hope she got it straight.

I had just started typing this letter when my husband pointed out the article about you in today's Star. I'm so happy for you.

I am probably as interested in your cause as anyone in Canada, and yet, I am not a military wife. I see the problem-- and my God, there's a problem-- through the eyes of a child (my father was an officer in the RCAF) and through the eyes of a teacher (I taught elementary school on an ^{Canadian} Armed Forces Base in Germany). My mother was silent and afraid to do so many things on the base, in PMQ's... the pressures of being a military wife drove her to alcoholism. As a teacher, I saw the pressure put on the women to act in a certain way. The wives in Europe have it particularly hard. I hope someone is picking up the cause over there.

I want to encourage you and the OSSMM in any way I can. I am a "professional writer", and perhaps I can help you in that department. (Free of charge, of course!)

I want you to have a copy of my book. (Please believe me: I'm not trying to sell my book. But I know you'll enjoy it, if ever you can find the time to read it, especially the stories dealing with military life.) I'll enclose one of the reviews.

I'm a public school teacher, wife and mother; I write books in my spare time. I know what it's like. And I want to congratulate you and wish you well. Let me know if I have the right address and I'll send you a copy of the book, Raspberry Vinegar, compliments of the author!

- Joan Fern Shaw

27 October, 1985

Mrs. Lucie Richardson
Canadian Forces Base
Kingston, Ontario

Dear Mrs. Richardson,

I have read about your struggle
to improve the quality of life on military
wives.

This note is to say how I admire your
courage and hopefully offer you some
encouragement to keep up the fight.
It's worth it!

Sincerely,
Marie Marchand



ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE
THE UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA
WINNIPEG, CANADA R3T 2M5

October 28, 1985

Mrs. Lucie Richardson,
34 Brock Crescent, Fort Henry Heights
Kingston, Ontario
K7K 5K8

Dear Mrs. Richardson:

As a spouse of a military member, I was delighted to hear of you and the group you are attempting to form through the news reports of recent weeks.

Unfortunately, the papers here did not give a great deal of information about your group, and I would be most interested to hear more from you about your plans and concerns. Do you have any members in Winnipeg? I gather that you are primarily concerned about army bases. Have you had any input from airforce spouses?

My husband is a pilot; we have been married seven years and I have been trying to deal with the military as seldom as possible, but as you know, that is ignoring reality. Perhaps I am more fortunate than most because I have been able to pursue something of a career of my own (I am currently teaching History at the University of Manitoba). But I am interested in what you are trying to achieve and would like to know more so that I might consider how to assist you in some way.

Hope to hear from you soon, and the best of luck with your campaign.

Sincerely,

(Dr.) Kerry Abel

Abel (Dr. Kerry)
Winnipeg

1985?

I have been the spouse of a military member for over thirty years. My experience has been that the wives of military men are loyal Canadians, devoted wives and dedicated mothers. They are sensitive and supportive of their husbands' commitment to total obedience. They respect the restrictions of personal freedom in the line of duty.

However, many wives are also mothers. They have the challenge of raising children to become resourceful, creative, problem-solving, decision-making members of society. These characteristics are best modelled by mothers in their daily lives.

In addition, many wives and mothers want to recall those decades from their 20's to their 50's as years of personal growth, achievement and fulfilment.

The National Military Family Association, Inc. in the U.S.A. is playing "an important role in interpreting the needs of military families and communicating these needs to military policymakers." This "partnership" is mutually beneficial. The Canadian military could profit from a similar co-operative effort.

The office of the Secretary of State issues the booklet "The Canadian Citizen" which "deals with basic features of Canada's system of government and how Canadians can take part in social and political affairs." The section "You and your ideas for Canada" expresses the goals of O.S.S.O.M.M. very effectively. I quote the last sentence in the section, "The privileges and responsibilities of citizenship." "Although no one is obliged to vote or run for office, the survival

of our democratic form of government depends on people taking part in it."

Every Remembrance Day we honour the memory of those who fought and died to preserve our freedom and way of life. We show our appreciation for this freedom in our beautiful and peaceful country by exercising our basic rights. O Canada.

God Save the Queen.

Mary Ballantyne
Member of O.S.S.O.M.M.

replied soon → in person - week of 22 Nov. 1985.

November 4, 1985

1091 Bronson Place
Ottawa, Ontario
K1S 4H2

Dear Lucie:

Enclosed please find my application for membership into O.S.O.M.M., as well as my cheque to cover my membership fee. I wasn't sure to whom I should send it -- to you or to O.S.O.M.M. in Alberta. Since I am sending along the photocopies of the articles related to PMQ rent increases in 1979, thought I'd send it all in one package.

I hope all is going well with you and that you are able to maintain your courses while you work toward the organization and defence of O.S.O.M.M. Keep up the good (and I stress "good") work. There is a need in the military community for a democratic organization which "looks out for" and acts on the behalf of military spouses. For this reason, I would particularly support O.S.O.M.M. in the role of ombudsman or "go-between" between spouses and the organization. With this role in mind, only the women themselves, those who experience frequent mobility, frequent husband absences, as well as, pressures to conform (however insidious), are in a position to know with confidence what services are required and what issues are truly problematic.

With best wishes, I remain,

Yours truly,

Judy

Judy L. MacBride-King

MAC BRIDE KING

Nov 15/85

Sorry that this is late but hope it's of some use. Have had some difficulty getting all of the newsclippings reduced (they are large) - but decided to send you what I've done so far to speed my membership cheque + application along. Will see you get the remainder of the clippings next week.

→ at H. Andrie and others

P.S. Saw the Fifth Estate and fumed (of course). All in all, though, the tone was supportive. I would be interested, however, in hearing your response to the interview with the three women in Penhold. The interviewer sensed what I'm sure the audience did ~ that is, they were (or came across) as being somewhat hostile or at least ambivalent. Ah well.

November 15, 1985

Dear Lucy;

A number of things have occurred since our telephone conversation last month, one of them being a considerable soul-searching on my part. I began to talk to military wives about OSSMM, and to let people know that I had the papers you sent me, the application forms and the post cards. When all I was doing was complaining about the various injustices I perceived in military dependency, I heard a lot of supportive comments. As soon as I started to suggest solutions, even very minor, temporary ones, the change of tone was incredible! As soon as husband's career ambitions, or public profile came into the picture, nobody wanted to have anything to do with me. I was really hurt by the about-face. For instance, at our Protestant Ladies Guild meeting.....at the planning session, just before Tuesday night's Fifth Estate broadcast, I mentioned that Bill was quite willing to bring in our small colour TV and set it up in the Chapel kitchen so that those who were very interested in what OSSMM had to say could whisk out during the meeting and watch that, returning to the group later and finishing our "vitally important" charity budget planning, and pinecone wreath decorating project; the President, who had been quite sympathetic earlier when I spoke to her privately about OSSMM, suddenly suggested that those who wished to watch television should just stay home, that her meeting was too "busy" to be interrupted by such a program.....Well, needless to say, I stayed home, and so did my television. (And my pinecone wreath isn't finished, and I don't care which charities received our

HAWKEN, JACQUELINE

little contributions).

By the way, your program was super....General Liston has just left Base Valcartier this year, so I had heard him speak several times before....never so stumblingly, or with so much waffling, as he did Tuesday night in front of all Canada! One of the comments that I have heard repeatedly, though, was, "Where did they find those people who spoke from Penhold's Resource Centre?" I think some people honestly believe you deliberately went out and chose women who would come across as totally uneducated and un-articulate, and that it somehow it wasn't quite fair! The way I see it, those women, and countless others like them, are part of the main reason OSSMM needs to be continued.

As I mentioned to you on the telephone, I am a supply teacher in the DND schools, and it is through that I met an old friend of yours, Marie-Paule ST. Amand, from Moisie. She was quite excited to hear about your organization, and has been following with me, the programs, magazine and newspaper articles that have come out on the subject. Marie-Paule supply taught for 7 months last year in our DND school here on the base, but is taking things a little easier this year. She and her husband, Robert Crites, are expecting their first child at the end of June. Marie-Paule looks radiant!

I felt that possibly my contribution to your organization might best be in the realm of the problems with the DND school system, so I have written a small brief on the matter, with some suggestions for improvements in the system. At the

moment, Marie-Paule has the document, as she has a couple of notes she wants to add to it. We will get it in the mail for your thoughts on the matter as soon as we get it retyped.

The other subject dear to my heart is that of divorce, and related marital stresses. I have been through it myself, having recently divorced Dennis Harris (formerly of A Squadron, now Air Liaison Attaché in Washington), and my present husband, Bill Hawken is also a divorcé. There are three other women here on the base who have been through the same thing, either dragging children along, or losing them on the way. Now, my neighbour two doors down, is suing for divorce, after her husband's six-month "vacation/honeymoon" in Cyprus with someone else. Surely, in a community as closed as ours, this is too high an incidence to be purely accidental, or just a sign of the times. I know that Headquarters is doing a study on "Common-law relationships in the Forces", but will they ever release any of their findings, and really, do we need research, or common-sense help coping with the problem. We know it exists, now help us, and our children, to deal with it.

I enclose a short article I wrote on assignment for my U. of Waterloo French (obviously!) course.

At the moment, Bill's next session in Kingston occurs in mid-December. He is looking forward to spending some time with Larry, and would very much like to meet you, then, too.

Please let me know if there are any ways in which Marie-Paule and I can be of help.....concrete or otherwise....

*Jacquie
Hawken*

La Ségrégation du Canada

Un aspect: La discrimination des épouses militaires

Si vous avez écouté le radio, ou regardé la télévision cet automne, vous savez quelque chose de notre problème. Nous sommes les épouses militaires!

Nous voulons avoir tout simplement les mêmes droits que tout autre Canadien. Nous voulons établir un groupe national pour discuter, et travailler sur, nos problèmes distinctifs. C'est défendu par le ministre de la Défense Nationale, Eric Nielsen. Son député, Harvie André a dit au parlement, "C'est acceptable pour les femmes de donner les "Tupperware parties," mais jamais à former un group sérieux. Ça c'est une action politique, et c'est interdit!"

Jé vous demande, Monsieur André, ne suis-je pas une vraie Canadienne, ou ne paie-je pas mes impôts? Non, ce n'est pas votre raison! Vous avez peur que si je former un tel groupe, je vais discuter aussi avec les media, les injustices flagrantes que nous avons toléré sur votre haute main.

Nous n'avons pas accès à un plan dentaire; nous sommes obligées de déménager souvent; nos enfants reçoivent un éducation inférieure et sans suite à cause de ces déménagements; nos maris se tiennent éloigné de la ville trop souvent; les divorces se produisent de plus en plus sous ces contraintes militaires; il est interdit pour les candidats politiques de faire des discours sur une base (ce qui est notre communautaire!).

La liste ne prend pas fin.

Mais, maintenant, nous sommes ensemble, les épouses militaires, monsieur! Donc, préparez-vous; nous sommes prêt à livrer bataille contre le gouvernement et ses législations anciennes.

Jacqueline
Hawken

ONTARIO ASSOCIATION OF INTERVAL & TRANSITION HOUSES

229 COLLEGE STREET, SUITE 202, TORONTO, ONTARIO, M5T 1R4 TELEPHONE: (416) 977-6619



December 2, 1985.

Ms. Lucie Richardson,
34 Brock FHH,
Kingston, Ontario
K7K 5K8

Dear Lucie:

Last Friday and Saturday, November 29 and 30, the membership of our organization met for the Fall Business Meeting in Toronto.

I told the membership about OSSOMM, and about meeting with you in Winnipeg on November 24.

The membership unanimously voted in favour of support for OSSOMM and for the issues you are facing and gave me the mandate to inform you.

Please send me any further information on developments or issues we can support you on - and don't hesitate to call me (collect) at (416) 977-6619.

Yours truly,

Trudy Don,
Coordinator.

TD/mk.

Don, Trudy
(416) 714

Lennoxville and District
Women's Centre
109 Queen Street
Lennoxville, Quebec
December 12, 1985

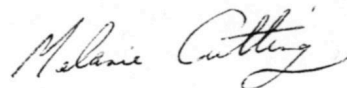
Mary Anne Jablonski,
Vice President, OSSOMM
CFB Penhold
Penhold, Alberta
TOM 1R0

Dear Ms. Jablonski:

On behalf of the members of the Lennoxville and District Women's Centre we wish to extend our wholehearted moral support for your cause. We feel that you and your organization are more than justified in pursuing your human and civil rights, and we deplore the actions of certain members of the Government and armed forces in response to your actions.

We would be happy to provide a more tangible expression of our support should your group be in need of funds. Please do not hesitate to contact us in this regard.

Sincerely,



Melanie Cutting,
Funding Officer

/cc

February 17
1986

Mrs Richardson,

As I was unsure of your address I addressed the letter to your husband and you. My name is Sarah Collom and I am a 4th year student at Queen's, who has been following your situation closely. It is of extreme interest to me, as I am doing my thesis on 'Military Wives', and I am also going to become a military wife in about a year.

I hope this letter reaches you, for I want you to know how important I feel what you are doing is. You and your husband must both be very strong and independent people, for what you are doing is something that a weak-hearted individual could not. I realize the difficulty of your situation and I commend you for keeping the fighting spirit up, it is important that the military and the rest of society realize the situation can no longer continue as is. Military wives must be granted more rights as we move into the 1980's; the military can no longer have its cake and ~~not~~ eat it too!

Mrs. Richardson please get back to me, even if it is just to let me know you got this letter. I would honestly love to speak to you at your convenience, either in person or on the phone. Confidence is assured; I am not doing this really for anyone but myself, as my thesis will only be read by the teacher who marks it. More importantly, I haven't had a chance to meet a woman with as much 'guts' as you, and I would consider it an honour.

My phone number is 546-9625, or write me at:

#2-234 Victoria St.

Kingston, Ont.

K7L-3V8

Thank-you for your time!

Sincerely,

Sarah Collom

COLLUM

Box 119
Lisle, Ontario
LOM 1M0

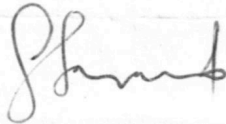
15 Feb 86

Mrs. Lucie Richardson
34 Brock Cres.
Kingston, Ontario
K7K 5K7

Dear Mrs. Richarson:

Thank you for spending so much time on the phone with me, describing your efforts in organizing the Military Spouses group. As per our conversation, please find \$10.00 to cover the cost of photocopying the various materials we discussed. I'll be looking forward to talking with you again when I've made a bit more progress on my paper. Thanks again,

Sincerely yours,



Suzanne Savard

*replied 5/march/86.
sent brief, newsletters*

*SAVARD,
Suzanne*

Read of interest to all of OSSOMM

Project Mayday
P.O. Box 148
SCHREIBER, Ontario
POT 2S0

May 7th, 1986

Mary Anne Jablonski
Vice President
Organizational Society of Spouses of Military Members
Penhold Armed Forces Base
EDMONTON, Alberta

Dear Ms. Jablonski:

Project Mayday, an organization of women from the North Shore of Lake Superior communities, has been active since 1982, seeking to increase the capacity of women to participate fully in improving the status of their lives.

We on the Mayday Board of Directors, read of your difficulties in the Alberta Status of Women Action Committee newsletter, and wish OSSOMM the best of luck in your endeavors. We identified with your feelings of powerlessness and realize how endemic these feelings are. Being women and military wives, you have this problem compounded. Women in our resource-based industry economy know what it is like not to be able to find a job, but no-one can tell us that we cannot get together in groups to talk about the isolation and our needs. No one should ever have that right!

Your adoption of a Tupperware motif made us think about the speech that Leni Untinen, Co-ordinator of the Northwestern Ontario Women's Decade Council, gave at a Mayday Annual Meeting last June. It is about women (and Tupperware) and Leni was very pleased that we wanted to share it with you.

We are inspired by your efforts and the creativeness with which you approach your isolation. Again, best of luck!

Sincerely,



Mary Burnett
Chairperson, Project Mayday

MB/ehr
encl.

Women in Northwestern Ontario

Most certainly resource based industry will be credited with shaping Northwestern Ontario. Their steel and concrete structures standing strong; shafts sunk deeply into the earth, vast areas stripped and flattened, and river banks carved by log drivers; all signifying habitation and progress. There is and will be for generations to come, no dispute as to whom the north belongs.

Just as certainly the men of the area will be credited with establishing the stereotyped flavour of the north. A place where a man's a man--a picture of hard working, hard living; controlling the environment and all that surrounds him. Demanding minerals from the earth, wood from the land, respect from his fellow man and loyalty from his family, who have followed him to his place in the sun, or the fog, or the snow as the case may be. Miner, logger, trucker, hunter, sportsman of the north to the rest of the country. But for the interference of women, the north would stand today as a shrine to all that is considered masculine; brutul, strong, and rugged; carved in stone and wood.

As I was preparing this, my son came and took me to lunch and I kept on thinking about it, and when I had gotten this far I asked him "So what did the women bring to the north," and jokingly he said "the women brought tupperware". And I thought no, the women are tupperware.

They are flexible.

They protect and preserve.

They are marvellous caretakers of the leftovers.

If they are the real thing they wear the good housekeeping seal of approval.

If they don't have the seal of approval they lack credibility.

They never break when you drop them.

And they are never at the table on really important occasions.

But with all that, where would we be without tupperware?

And where would the north be without women?

Women have brought to the north all of the stereotyped feminine characteristics--warmth, tradition, caring, sharing, and a strength

and staying power fed by love and preservation.

Industry's role in the north, has been to extract from the area, materials to be sold and shipped away. Women's role has been to plant roots, to add substance, to build a place to live, to stay in Northwestern Ontario.

There is conflict in these roles. A conflict between women and the industry on which she is dependant. A conflict that women attempt to balance rather than have it erupt between company and people, which would have direct financial repercussions.

Industry recognizes the role of their men. The work men do for the company is valued and is paid for. The work women do is not paid for and therefore is devalued or not recognized at all. Companies realize that in order to have good production, they must have satisfied workers. They also realize that the most stable and happy workers are family men. The function of women from the perspective of the company is to act as a stabilizing force. Viewing women in an auxiliary rather than a primary role; the company has little interest in providing for her needs. To date there has been little recognition that women have needs, as her role revolves around the needs of her husband and family. For years women have accepted this role and have made tremendous contributions to the building of Northwestern Ontario. It has been women who defined what was needed in order for families to exist in the north and in order for towns to survive. Schools, churches, stores, access to medical and other services. In many instances it was women that initiated the processes which resulted in the establishment of facilities. And certainly women are credited as being the fund-raisers that provided for initial service. Women as initiators, women as builders, always stopping just short of sitting at the table on the important occasions where the very big decisions were made.

Women take from their own experiences, the skills and the energy to cope and to provide for others and generally lastly for themselves.

From a letter from a woman in Atikokan, I take the following excerpt.

"Winters were bitter cold, and long, no transportation, except one taxi that ran if the weather was condusive and there wasn't any place to shop. The Hudson Bay post was out at the mine site and the hospital was a box car on a railway siding. When a baby was due, first the doctor had to be found and sobered up. Then came the fun of just getting to the hospital. If it was in the winter, it was hardly worth the effort. The mother lay in state in one of the two beds with diapers hung to dry from a rope strung back and forth across the room, and she was kept busy wiping the condensation off the walls to keep her bed reasonably dry. Roads and shopping improved somewhat, but women had to look after their own food for the soul. They started women's groups, agitated for a new hospital and churches, taught classes in arts, crafts, sewing and cooking, started singing and little theatres groups. Council didn't think an indoor skating rink was necessary, so women raised the money and had a regulation size rink built so their kids wouldn't freeze to death, playing hockey or figure skating. Women coped with pay cut backs, mud, cold, frozen fuel lines, booze, tears, isolation, boarders in their homes, lost friends and homesickness."

NATIVE WOMEN

I was,
before you came,
daughter of the ojibway,
Mollie is my name.
From the townsite of Mac Diarmid,
where the founders bones
are still entombed
inside a mining tunnell,
is my home,
and reservation. Smaller
than an open hand
made of wilderness and water,
home of the beaver and the bear
likewise muskrat
and the otter.
There my people sit and rot
drugged and drunken
like as not,
for the merchant knows us well
we will buy,
what he will sell.
As on a mountain top, I watch
your search for liberty

and you cry "justice Now"
but not for me, no not for me
I am the archer,
arrow drawn and ready,
no hand can hold me fast
no compass steady
Wild stream and berry patch
cowslips and clover,
I am the quiet path,
the bridge crossed over,
I am the leaf and vine
the root....exposed
solid as rock I am
but a flower closed.
Still I am a storm within
Lightening and Thunder,
I curse the faceless ones,
who rob and plunder.
Swift as the red deer runs
form the bullets bite,
so to my own I turn
to lighten my darkest night.
My values were writ in stone
no Indian stand alone,
Our drums keep us alive
the magic still survives.
we worship the sacred land
mother of all the tribes.
Our soul is in her hands
our heartbeat in her vibes.
Our brother finds his voice
and will be heard,
He crys out "Justice Now"
but not for us he strings his bow
and plans to-morrow.
I have left the reservation
for I gambled on a man there
lost my status in the tribe,
when he took me for his bride.
We together made a child there
little maiden like myself.
In the house of Beendigan
where my sisters find some shelter
for the healing of their bruises.
I am witness to her pain
every battle that she loses.
Indian women such as I
Loving earth and sun and sky
Prodded down the whitemans train
call by him a piece of tail
must fight back or else we die.
Sisters look no further for
a feminist Issue,
I am a Feminist Issue.

Women are indeed part of Northwestern Ontario.

During the 1983 Cabin Fever workshops in 20 communities,
many described feeling of being in a small town in Northwestern
Ontario.

Frustrated,

Resentful,

Guilty,

Lonely,

Apathetic,

Unmotivated,

Lethargic,

Board,

Depressed,

Isolated,

Cut off,

Confined - physically and emotionally,

Suffocated,

Anxious,

Hostile,

Helpless,

Trapped,

Left Out,

Angry,

Harassed,

Dissatisfied,

Overwhelmed,

Victimized,

Restrained,

Cramped,

Unsociable,

Frightened,

Tense,

Sad,

Powerless,

and a Sense of Not Belonging

When the women were asked what causes these feelings they said:

- cold weather/long winters,
- unemployment
- too far from facilities
- staying at home
- labelling; housewife, supermom, superwomen,
- isolation
- lack of work
- lack of career opportunities
- shift work
- transiency
- living away from family and friends
- lack of babysitting and reliable child care
- transportation
- lack of places to go
- lack of resources
- long distance from family and friends
- lack of community programs
- very limited shopping
- distance to cities
- prices in the north
- lifestyle is controlled by spouse's job
- small town life
- lack of living space
- envious of husband's leisure activities/freedom

And so why do women stay?

Because it is a good place to raise kids - away from the dangers and temptations of an urban environment.

Because their families are financially secure, which should not be confused with a woman's personal financial security.

Because they love their husbands and their families and this is where they are.

Another conflict between what is good for those she loves and what is good for her.

Women attempt to play the perfect role.

Perfect mother, perfect company wife, perfect soul mate.

Building for the children an environment which will insure that they are clean and healthy but also exposing them to the cultural and social amenities, often with very little to work with.

Often taking exact model company houses or sometimes sub-standard housing and making them into warm, personalized homes where they prepare the meals, wash the socks, relieve the stress and send their men back each day to the company.

Often gearing her own interests and recreation to his in order to keep the family emotionally happy. And so she trecks the ski-doo trails, sits in the boat or the bar, longing to take an academic course that isn't available or to see a play, which will never come to town or to be recognized as herself, which will likely be minimized.

And so we come to the latest conflict. Also known as the women's movement or the Feminist invasion.

Women's roles have traditionally isolated them from other women.

Family schedules and needs allow little time for women to get together in a structured fashion. But in the 70's, partly due to some time saving appliances and probably more due to a recognition that child care must be built into meetings and seminars, women were allowed the luxury of at least some time to share concerns and ideas. Groups were established dealing with what, some men and women alike construed as totally selfish subjects - such as women and violence or women and economics. A large conference was held in Thunder Bay in International Women's Year, followed by a Where do we go from here Conference.

What women found out was that their concerns, needs and interests were shared by other women living in much the same circumstances. From this situation a series of mini explosions in terms of commitment and energies happened throughout Northwestern Ontario. In Thunder Bay, Atikokan, and Kenora the issue of battered women and lack of services was a major concern. Thunder Bay identified

the need for a Women's Centre and a Rape Centre. Area women wanted a way to communicate with each other and so The Northern Woman Journal bi-monthly newspaper was started. As women initiated one to one services, there was a need for a broader based lobbying and resource sharing group was expressed and so the Decade Council began. Council was mandated to networks and to facilitate the sharing of resources so that each group did not need to re-invent the wheel.

Conferences were held including

Working Women's Conference

Older Women's Conference

Violence Against Women's Conference

Pension Conference

Women and the Economy

Conferences were held in Thunder Bay, Dryden, Kenora, Fort Frances, Sudbury and we joined with the Ontario Association of Interval and Transition Houses and the National Action Committee on the Status of Women.

Conferences became our lifelines; we used them to tie into each other and to women in parts of the country, BC women, Newfoundland women, Southern Ontario women. We listened to women when she raised a concern, we talked about it, we printed it and studied it and more women added their voice to that concern. More important when we came together, was the support we gave each other. Women's feelings and concerns were validated and we realized we had skills. Whether we used them for paid work - however poorly that pay was, used them to volunteer for our communities or as a labour of love for our families, our skills are important.

As fast as women came together, they were labelled - homewreckers, women's libbers, and women were forced to defend a stereotyped image. When I was researching another presentation I found a clipping from a press release on Decade Council's formation in 1976.

"Contrary to general public opinion, The Northwestern Ontario Women's Group is composed of sincere women of all ages and all walks of life who will direct their activities and energies into eliminating the barriers that prevent women from realizing their full potential in

society; rather than a group of radicals who burn bras and denounce all males as chauvinists."

But more importantly it said "In the past, women have been idolized, patronized and exploited - it is time they are humanized, utilized and recognized."

But the media had a field day in their interpretation of the women's movement. What that did unfortunately was successfully isolate women who didn't want to be portrayed as a man hating reactionary who dresses in bush boots and braids. But women are used to dealing with isolating tactics.

They learned to push ahead. They took the issue of violence and forced it on to the front pages and into government.

They learned to write briefs and they learned to lobby.

More important, they learned the value of supporting each other and standing together. There was and still is a resistance to women wanting change. Change costs money. It isn't going to cost us any, because women have never had it in the first place. And so men, industry and government have a vested interest in resisting the issues raised by women.

But the movement moves on. Not as an army because there are no generals, no lieutenants. There is not even a long term game plan. But there is a goal. There are committed enthusiastic women, in Kenora, in Red Lake, in Dryden, in Fort Frances, in Thunder Bay, in Geraldton, on the Northshore of Lake Superior and in many other communities, dedicated to removing barriers to insure that women reach their individual goals whether in education, employment, the home or the community.

The next few years may be critical to women, as the country moves to a big and little conservative pace. Cut back always affect women. In addition as women have brought issues and services into existence, they question the professionalism, of we who identified it, established programs, fought for its existence. But I am forever the optimist, because women cannot unlearn what they have learned in the past 10 years. That they have the right to feel, the right to dream, the right to think and the right to act on those feelings, thoughts and dreams.

Women will no longer accept that some of us are beaten in our own homes and there is no help available.

We will no longer accept that we work at positions equal to mens' and we are paid less.

We will no longer accept that we aren't at the table on important occasions, the board table, the town council table, the political table.

We will no longer accept that after we have dedicated our lives to raising children and homemaking we run the risk of being left extremely poor because we have inadequate pensions.

We want affordable daycare.

We want training, and employment, and equal access to good paying jobs.

We want economic equality.

We want our contributions recognized - to our jobs, to our towns to our families.

So let them label us and let them howl, we still ain't satisfied.

Foreign Service Community Association

Association de la communauté du service extérieur

c/o Dept. of External Affairs (CXC)
a/s Ministère des Affaires extérieures (CXC)
Edifice Lester B. Pearson Building B-1-106
125 Promenade Sussex Drive
Ottawa K1A 0G2 — Tel. (59)3-5729

June 9, 1986

Lucie Richardson, President,
Organizational Society of Spouses of Military Members,
34 Brock Crescent,
Kingston, Ontario,
K7H 5K8


Dear Ms. Richardson,

The Foreign Service Community Association is a voluntary organization concerned with the non-professional needs of employees and dependents relating directly to a mobile life style. As such, we offer information and mutual support to members of the Canadian foreign service. The FSCA also meets with designated representatives of the Department of External Affairs to discuss, in a spirit of co-operation, matters of mutual concern, with a view to resolving issues before they become problems.

The FSCA, supported by the Department of External Affairs, organizes conferences and symposia to examine issues resulting from mobility, and to devise methods whereby interested foreign service members may become more effective in planning their lives within the reality imposed by rotationality.

Since many of our concerns, such as frequent moves and lack of continuity in children's education, parallel those of the military, we support spouses and dependents of the military in their quest to have a stronger voice with which to express their needs and concerns, and for participation in resolving issues that affect their lives.

Yours sincerely,


Nancy Fraser,
Vice-president.

November 9, 1096
551 Cole Avenue
Ottawa Ontario
K2A2B4

Replied June 1987

Dear Lucie,

Just a note in case I'm not able to get through to you this evg. I feel almost guilty for even trying when your time together must be at such a premium. However, do take a look at the reprint from the Citizen on pg 17 of Liaison. Better late than....! Liaison is a publication of the Dept of ExtAff, produced under an editing contract, so it ~~find~~ is and isn't official, if you know what I mean. The second editor has just started, and both she and her predecessor are of the spouse persuasion, though have to work under advisory committees of employees. Their contracts are let by a highly competitive process that follows all the conflict of interest guidelines, and then some since everyone is so skittish.

Also thought I'd let you know that we all fight the same battles over and over again. Suddenly this Summer felt like deja vu...rumours started to float about spouses being barred from getting language teaching contracts, and when we looked into it, sure enough we discovered that they were few and far between. Now it's not directed at us, but it might just as well be. Treasury Board has passed down a directive that instead of giving individual contracts (with all the administrative costs that entails), large standing order contracts should be given to language schools. What is worse is that to get these contracts, the schools are being very competitive and charging \$22.00 per hour. Take off one third for the schol, and the individual teacher will get about \$ 15.00. Last year ExtAff was paying \$ 34.00. At our first mtg with the new Assistant Deputy Minister for Personnel he said that they'd saved as many as they could for spouses (somewhere around half) but the policy would have to be reviewed at the end of the year. At that point we assume it will be difficult to save any. He admitted that it goes against the Spousal Employment Policy, but that was inside the Dept, and Treasury Board wields incredible power. They are all terrified of Ken Dye and his mighty pen. The ADM seemed discouraged by it all, but recommended strongly, as have others, that spouses set themselves up in consulting firms to get work in the public and private sectors, selling their shares whenever they go on posting.

I pointed out that (a) spouses have precious little in the way of financial resources when they return from abroad since chances of getting employment abroad are few, and the companies that go under are those that are under-capitalized, and (b) just as a company was getting going we'd be again on our way to a posting. He pooh-poohed the first argument by saying that it costs almost nothing to set up, and we just have to use some get up and go, that our entrepreneurial spirit was lacking, and the second by saying that was why we should sell off our shares. The unspoken question was who would want to buy the shares for a new and barely limping along company after just two years.

The ADM is a divorced swinger from a moneyed family who has no real idea of the reality all the rest of us live under.

The Posting Services Centre, through which most of our liaison with the Dept takes place is to be re-examined, and we will be allowed to contribute to the process. One of its major responsibilities is to deal with dependents' issues, and in the past has always been led by someone who is not rotational. There's anew director and he is rotational,

FRASER, MANNING

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however, he's a very senior officer in his late fifties who has never been married. Oy!! The question is to laugh or to cry! He is very sweet, and courtly and is doing his best to understand his constituency, but that facet may be beyond him. He'd asked me to brief him on the way the Americans function, and suggested we go out to lunch, muttering something about the Market. Instead he took me to the best restaurant in town to really wine and dine (Dawn said it was the perks of office; I was just dumbfounded). As some of the preliminary chitchat he asked me if I had kids etc, and when I told him three boys, 17, 15 and 11 there was a long silence while he looked perplexed. His response finally was that we must have very large grocery bills. Well yes. This is between the two of us, but I had a hard time not cracking up.

We will do our best to influence the process to improve program delivery, and have met with the first community coordinators to return from filling those positions abroad and are in the midst of preparing a brief to present at a meeting with senior management. Our effect may be minimal, but we'll keep trying.

Our new executive is almost all neophytes, but ready to work, and our members back from posting are eager to get into issues, quite different from the last couple of years, so as fast as I come up with projects they get going on them. Of course in each case it means a meeting ortwo with each group to let them into the history, but so far all the balls are in the air still. I'm getting some contracts at CIDA so we manage to keep most of the wolves from the door; there really aren't any jobs in this town so this is the only bet there is. Perhaps luckily, the course I planned to take at Algonquin on Employee Assistance Counselling didn't go for lack of students, but I hope it does in the new year. It would be two full days of classes a week.

We have an executive meeting on the 18th at which I hope to include an appeal to support OSSOMM financially, so hold the right thought. If a cheque arrives, you'll know I've been successful. I know they are interested, but we didn't have time to go into it deeply enough at the last mtg so I choose my time carefully.

It must be incredibly difficult for you to do all you have to at school and at home, so if there is someone else you'd rather I kept up with, just drop me a note...another task to pile on your already overflowing desk? In any case, let me know if you'll be in Ottawa at any time and I'll make time to see you, or if there is anything we can do, ditto. Keep in mind that we're behind you, and sympathise with all your travails. Of course we're also in awe of your strength and resolve.

Take Care
Rance Fraser

Lydia - Please
call Betty about this L
234-7457

Nancy L. Carson
Fax # 204-787-3846

December 9, 1996

Lucie Laliberte
Gahrns and Laliberte
Fax # 613-235-4704

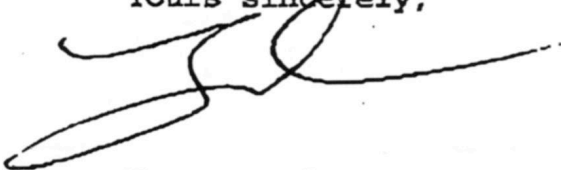
Dear Ms. Laliberte:

I was wondering if you had the Email address for OSOMM. I am a military wife looking for some information, however, when I tried the Email address indicated on the OSOMM homepage, my mail was undelivered.

If I am not able to communicate with OSOMM via Email, what I am really looking for is someone to talk to. I have recently been through the experience of having my husband brought back from a deployment as I was not able to cope with his absence. It was a traumatic experience for me and I was hoping there would be someone out there who had been through a similar experience and would be willing to talk to me - preferably by Email. If you know of anyone, I would appreciate the information.

Sorry to bother you at work, I didn't know how else to find out this information!

Yours sincerely,



Nancy L. Carson