

LESBIANS JOIN THE FAMILY ALLOWANCE PROTEST

Wages Due Lesbians is a group of lesbian women active in the Wages for Housework Campaign, and the Family Allowance Protest. Since January 1976, we have distributed 10,000 copies of our original endorsement of the petition across the country. We've also spoken about the protest to women's, community, trade union and gay groups, local media, rallies against the cutbacks, door-to-door, and at shopping centres.

We endorse the petition because the freeze on the family allowance is the biggest in a number of cuts that deepen the crisis in our standard of living. We, as lesbian women, feel the attack of higher prices, lower wages, and disappearing social services, in a number of ways:

- * many of us, without a man's wage behind us, must support ourselves entirely on the low pay of 'women's jobs'. We've often had to fight to keep them, and been forced to hide our lesbianism. Now those same jobs, in health and social services and some industries, are being eliminated. We're having to accept lower wages and longer hours in the ones we're 'lucky' enough to find. Cuts in welfare and unemployment benefits make it harder for many more women. This attack on our income undermines the possibility of our making it on our own, independently of men.
- * as a result, many single women are being pushed to look for a man, for economic security. Many married women are finding it harder to 'come out' of their marriages. And for those of us who remain single, or with another woman, this reduction in our money and leisure time severely strains our relationships.
- * if we have children, or want to, we have even fewer choices. If there's a separation, with or without a court battle, we often lose the kids to the men, who have more money. If we keep them, our low standard of living drops even lower.

As lesbian women, we have fought long and hard for the rights denied us under this system. These latest measures make it even more difficult for us to fight publicly. That's why, whether we have children or not, we are fighting to win the family allowance increase and wages for housework for ourselves and all other women. We don't accept that it's our nature to look after men. Demanding to be paid for the housework we now do makes it harder to harass or fire us for being 'unnatural' women. If we had that money, and didn't have to hide our lesbianism, the scare of being 'queer' couldn't be used to keep women 'in their place'.

Wages for housework would mean the power to run our own lives: to have and keep the children we might want; to have a real choice in the jobs we might want; to live with whoever we want, not having to hide our lesbianism; and to have the time to build relationships we want.

We urge all women to sign this petition. For further information, and if you'd like us to speak to you or your group, phone (416) 466-7457 or (416) 465-6822.

Wages Due Lesbians
Box 38, Station E,
Toronto, Ontario
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