



ALBERTA STATUS OF WOMEN ACTION COMMITTEE

Vol. 5 No. 2



Chilean Community Women

MODELLING THE MODEL

New Staff

One phrase rang home for me at this board meeting: 'modeling the model'. I became involved to help steer ASWAC in ways I would like to see her grow. I am also affected, deeply, by my involvement and participation; working as a group in a collective manner, learning to own my own power, learning to let others have responsibility for taking their own power. I am learning from the process of working through ASWAC's business how I can effect, in a more powerful and clearer manner, my own life.

After only a few months of being directly involved with ASWAC (actually the women and their interaction), I have felt a vague sense of 'being ASWAC'. This concept caused me much confused introspection.

I felt the truth of it in my gut but for the life of me I never could work it out logically and intellectually. I kept rejecting the idea. It couldn't be 'real' unless I could 'understand' it in concrete terms. And yet it came floating back into my mind - stronger each time - causing me a great deal of anguish. How can something be 'real' and 'useable' in my life if I can't understand it. And yet it was real and I kept feeling the confirmation that I am ASWAC.

It was struggling with these feelings that actually drew me to work on the board this year. The hope and trust that as I continued to work in this un-understandable way, that I would learn to under-

stand. The need to understand became less urgent and important as I involved myself in the work (my work).

So, out of the board meeting came the phrase 'modeling the model' as a description of ASWAC's work. Describing how we have worked in the past and how we see our work now and in the future.

Suddenly a connection made; a light coming on! This is why I have felt like I was ASWAC even while I have been working in other groups and with other women who are not members of ASWAC.

For me, ASWAC has been modeling - teaching me clearer ways to work, more connected and meaningful ways. So, from the first, I have been taking these skills and this philosophy into my life and work. Hence my feelings that somehow I am ASWAC and if I want to know what ASWAC is doing I need only to look into my own life.

I finally feel some understanding of a principle of ASWAC that I have never been able to comprehend from reading the BYLAWS or CONSTITUTION. For me, now, the connection is concrete and yet having it be concrete, affects not a bit how I continue to work and 'be ASWAC'. I am content with the point I have reached in this process and I hope that by my sharing, that some other woman may understand what I've written and perhaps take this analysis even further.

In Sisterhood and with hugs,
Suzn Morgan

ASWAC hired Donna Reed in January as our part-time bookkeeper. With Donna working between 8 and 16 hours per month we are expecting to pay her wages with the money we'll save by having our bills paid on time! Hiring a bookkeeper also frees up a lot of time for board members to work on other aspects of ASWAC.

Donna is a member of ASWAC, Every Woman's Place and Womospace and she was recently employed full-time at the Edmonton Sexual Assault Centre. Welcome aboard (or should we say astoard)!!



\$

We have received \$380.00 in donations since January 23rd. This is a lot of money to us!! Thanks so much to all of the following: Janice Yuzwenko, Kathleyn Krol, Helen Rusich Brown, Leona Shandruk, Elise Corbet, Patricia Browne, Marie Gordon, Leslie Ayre-Jaschke, Wendy Danson, Gloria Chambers, Wendy Bailer Palk, Marlene Campbell, Agnes Wiley, Rose Knoepfli, Inga Jesswein, Cathy Bray, Meaghan Dean, Adeline Miron, Virginia Cornish, Barbara Cameron, Alex Scott, Doris Malcolm and Mary Moore. Thanks also to Tanya Adler for the donation of books to our library.

\$

Documenting our work

I am currently putting together an ASWAC publications list from the herstory files, for members and others. It will include any written material that has been published by ASWAC from its beginnings, such as briefs, position papers, etc. and probably (hopefully?) it will be updated annually.

It occurred to me that many of us have done presentations or speaks as ASWAC members, and that these should be included on the list if possible. If you have any material like this, in written form, and you would like to have it included on the publications list, please send us a copy to the office. Thanks!

Marilyn Guille

LETTERS!



Dear Amanda LeRougetel (or other editors?),

Re. Notice about "We Are in Contempt of Court" -

I have been, and will continue to support ASWAC, however the Newsletter has gone too far in its notice about being in Contempt of Court. I support most of the views of the Newsletter, but this makes no sense at all and must surely insult the intelligence of most of your readership.

How can a civilized society with a contempt of crimes such as rape, deal with the problem when the key witness refuses to testify after initiating proceedings. You say that you "hold nothing but CONTEMPT for a court which jails a woman who has been raped" (ie. "a victim") but I have nothing but contempt for a victim of a crime who refuses to prosecute. What utter rubbish to suggest that this woman, who pointed the finger on a person for rape, then who refused to cooperate, that justice might be fulfilled, deserves anything but contempt from society at large.

The most obvious result of failing to prosecute a rapist is that he goes free and he has firsthand experience with a woman's reluctance to testify in court.

I have had some unfortunate experiences which led me to have to testify in court and while the processes are intimidating, the end result of testifying, leading to a conviction of a criminal, is far more constructive than by not testifying.

I would hope that you might publish part or all of my letter to provide a balance to your rather simplistic, and perhaps thoughtless, emotional reaction to a Court which is frustrated by our demands for rape convictions & sentences on the one hand, and by "our" quick support of a woman who impedes justice (or misleads justice) on the other hand.

Yours truly,
Valerie Underwood
Edmonton

Dear Valerie,

I have chosen to respond personally to your letter, apart from printing it in our newsletter, to hopefully address some of your concerns more fully.

First of all, I must tell you that all of us who put energy into the newsletter production (there is no "editor", incidentally - we are a collective) appreciate getting feedback from readers, critical or otherwise, so I must thank-you for taking the time to express your views to us.

I was at the "stoard" meeting where the "contempt" issue was discussed, and the notice you refer to was written. The thing that influenced us most, I think, was some of the circumstances surrounding that particular rape case. Somewhat glossed over in the media coverage was the fact that originally three men had been charged [in the Ottawa case], the charges were dropped against one of them (after giving evidence) and his life was subsequently threatened by one of the others. In other words,

the woman was legitimately afraid for her life and so refused to testify. In a world where many of us have to make decisions based on our very survival, her refusal to testify makes good sense.

As we stated in our article, the fact of jailing the woman may fit within the legal concept of law and order, but it is not justice. How can we in any way justify punishing a woman who has already been victimized? And how will this reaction from the courts encourage women to lay charges and testify, especially if they fear for their lives and then may have to fear going to prison? The circumstances in the other two cases are different, but our stand is the same: jailing women is not a solution. We acknowledge the frustration of the police and courts, but cannot accept the means they have chosen to address it.

I am sorry that we disagree on the way ASWAC handled this particular issue, but look forward to your continued support on others.

Sincerely,
Marilyn Guille



Source: Ben Wicks

The next meeting of the ASWAC Stoard will be held in Calgary the weekend of March 17/18. We frequently have members come and participate in these meetings. Please phone one of the Calgary board members, Shelagh, Debra or Suzn (see board list) for more detail or to let us know that you'll be there.

Following the March meeting, the line-up is as follows:

May 5/6 - Fort McMurray
June 16/17
July 28/29
September 8/9
October 20/21 and
November 2/3/4 are the dates for the Annual Assembly. Where locations are not indicated it is probable that the meeting will be held in Edmonton. However, if you would like us to come to your community, please let us know and we'll take it into consideration.

Shelter Council presents demands

The Alberta Council of Women's Shelters has prepared a brief on Family Violence. The report addresses the issue of battering and presents direct recommendations to all levels of Government and associated authorities. A copy has been presented to the Federal Government, the Premier of Alberta, appropriate Ministers and all M.L.A.s.

In all, there are a total of 29 recommendations dealing with the following: coordination of services, education, working with men that batter, on-going support for battered women, the justice system and funding of shelters.

The brief has been prepared by a special ad hoc committee of the Alberta Council of Women's Shelters chaired by the Grande Prairie Women's Residence Association. Revision and refinement was provided by member shelters from across the province and numerous community agencies.

The brief asks that the Governments give priority to initiating, implementing and funding all programs relating to family violence. The Council wants to sharpen public awareness and have our elected officials and government agencies recognize and beneficially address this serious issue.

A copy of the brief can be obtained by writing the Alberta Council of Women's Shelters, c/o Edmonton Women's Shelter, 4 11602 40 St., Edmonton T5W 2K6.

LETTER FROM NICARAGUA

Managua, January 13, 1984

Dear Women:

Receive our sincere greetings from the women organized in the Women's Association of Nicaragua.

We want to manifest our deepest recognition for the solidarity that you have given us in different ways, in the struggle for peace and against the unjust war that the Reagan administration wants to impose on us.

Although we suffer continuous attacks by the counter-revolutionary bands, the solidarity and support that you have shown us has permitted us to advance in different social projects that are of great benefit to our people such as the construction of schools, health centres and day cares, etc.

In this new year we wish to establish a much closer relationship with you and try to project solidarity through the Nicaraguan women.

Attached to this letter we sent the bulletin, "SOMOS" and the calendars.

We are hoping for your response.

Fraternally,

Nubia Aguirre
Responsible for the U.S. Area
Women's Association of Nicaragua

"Constructing the new homeland, we are forging the new woman."

Last Gasp

Group Against Smoker's Pollution

Founded in 1975, this group's objectives are to:

- . support the right of the non-smoker to breathe smoke-free air;
- . educate the public about the health hazards and discomfort caused by second-hand smoke;
- . eliminate smoking from places used by non-smokers;
- . liaise with other health-related groups.

For more information, or to inquire about membership, contact

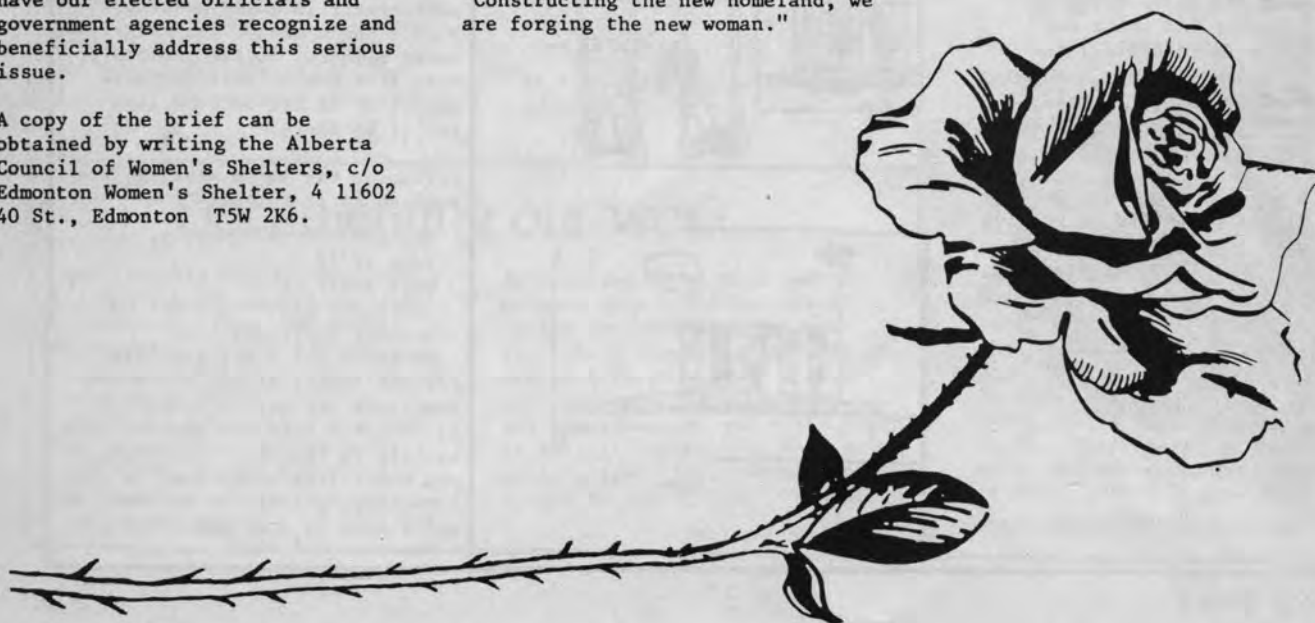
GASP

College of Physicians & Surgeons

9901 108 St., Edmonton

or call Roger Hodgkinson, MD

at 451-0074.



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

IS FOR EVERYONE

Remember in the last newsletter Julie Walker suggested that we spend part of International Women's Day talking to three women we don't know - about their lives, their families, and what being a woman in Alberta means to them?

Well, for all of you who did this, and for those who forgot but will do it now, even though its not IWD, here is a way we can compile some of the things that we said to form ASWAC's own informal profile of Alberta women.

HOW DID YOU FIND YOUR WOMEN? WHAT MADE YOU PICK THEM?

WHAT WERE THEY LIKE? (OLD, YOUNG, URBAN RURAL, ETC.)

HOW DID IT FEEL TO APPROACH STRANGE WOMEN AND START TALKING?

WHAT DID YOU TALK ABOUT?

WHAT CONCERNS DID THEY RAISE?

WHAT DID THEY FEEL ABOUT THE RELEVANCE OF THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT TO THEIR LIVES?



ESTHER RAMIREZ VISIT

Esther Ramirez from the Women's Association of El Salvador was in Edmonton and Calgary early in February on a cross-country tour. Her visit was sponsored by ASWAC and I had the delightful experience of having her stay with me as well as co-ordinate her schedule in Edmonton. She is a very warm, intelligent and energetic woman and it was really sad to see her go.

Esther spoke very well for her people and for the women's association. She has been active for many years and has a thorough knowledge and analysis of El Salvador's history and the current struggle of which she is a part.

Esther studied at a private Catholic women's school where she first became socially aware of the conditions of the people through participation in active Christian groups which went to the slums, the hospitals and the rural communities. Following high school, Esther spent a year in Rochester, New York as part of an exchange program of American Field Service. She then returned to study philosophy for six years at the Central American University, run by Jesuits. There again, she worked with peasants displaced from the large coffee plantations, participating in literacy and health care classes. While studying, she taught philosophy at a Catholic boys' school.

In 1980, Esther's brother was named on television in a long list of people condemned to death by Roberto d'Abuisson, chief of the death squads, former president of the Constituent Assembly and candidate for the presidency of El Salvador. The list included the names of Archbishop Oscar Romero and Maria Zamora, both of whom were later assassinated. Her brother escaped two assassination attempts.

Her parents lived next door to General Jose Alberto Medrano (el Chele) who was chief of the National Guard. He threatened to turn them in to the police or the National Guard because they were not friendly toward him. Esther's husband was a professor in the University of El Salvador and she taught in a progressive Catholic



school both of which were viewed with disfavour by those in power, and they were watched by the death squads. She and her whole family had worked with Archbishop Romero and after his assassination were defenseless in the face of the repression. So, a month after giving birth to her third child, they slipped out of the country. Six months after their departure the army searched the house in which they had taken refuge for a month before leaving as well as her parents' house, robbing all of their things and, in the case of her brother's house, looked for arms, tunnels and propaganda.

The family has lived in Nicaragua for the past two and half years since escaping El Salvador. Esther started working for the Women's Association (Asociacion De Mujeres El El Salvador) and is now the woman responsible for the Association's External Relations Commission. This is her first tour abroad in this capacity.

The Association works primarily on day care, health, literacy and refugee programs, operating in the liberated zones within El Salvador and the adjoining countries. Currently, a major fundraising project of the Association is establishing and equipping day cares. Between 45 and 55% of the people are younger than 14 and caring for those under 6 years of age is the priority. The facilities care for a maximum of 50

children and \$1,000 per day care is required to equip them with basic kitchen utensils, sleeping mats, bed clothes, teaching materials, etc.

ASWAC is working with other groups in Edmonton on a fundraising project for the Women's Association. We'll keep you posted on our plans. If you have any great ideas, please give me a call.

Frances Adams

Writer's Contest

Donna Tink of the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women is sponsoring a Writers Contest to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of CACSW.

The contest is for Alberta women and entails writing about a memorable Alberta woman (and aren't we all!). The work should be a maximum of 15,000 words, the deadline is March 31 and the prize is \$100.00. The chances of a published anthology of the stories are good!

Send to: Donna Tink
65B Prairie Mall
Grande Prairie, Ab
T8V 3Y2

RECOMMENDED READING

Donna Tink, who operates a book store in Grande Prairie, sent us a few titles to recommend to our readers. They are:

In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens by Alice Walker;
No More Hot Flashes by Penny Wise Budoff, MD;
Rape in Marriage by Diana Russell;
Women's Experience of Sex by Sheila Kitzinger and
She's Nobody's Baby, a Ms Book.



New D.E.S. Chapter

No doubt you are aware of DES (Diethylstilbestrol), the hormone drug that was used on pregnant women between 1941 and 1971. DES was never properly tested, though it was thought to help prevent miscarriages. It was used on an estimated 100,000 women, mainly women who had a history of bleeding or miscarriage in pregnancy, or who suffered from diabetes. However, it was later found to cause serious teratogenic effects on daughters and sons of women who took DES during pregnancy. Besides the many benign reproductive tract abnormalities, it has also been found to cause a rare form of vaginal and cervical adenocarcinoma in between 1:1000 to 1:10,000 DES daughters. This cancer seems to peak at about age 19, but girls as young as seven, and as old as 37, have been found to have DES-related cancer. There is also a 1:7 chance of cancer of the breast, particularly in DES mothers.

Since DES was taken by an estimated 100,000 women in Canada and in the U.S.A., many many people have been affected. The oldest mother would now be in her seventies, and the youngest girl or boy perhaps 11 or 12. However, some doctors may have continued to use DES after it was banned for use in pregnant women in 1971, in which case there may be some pre-adolescent children also affected.

THIRD WORLD FILM FEST

The Indian woman rises at 5:30 to prepare food for her family before taking the before dawn bus to the fields. A day's worth of piece work picking berries earns her enough to keep the small basement flat for her family.

The harsh life of the poor in the third world? No! It's the lot of an immigrant farm labourer in Vancouver. The story is told in "A Time to Rise", one of more than fifty films in this year's Third World Film Festival. Sponsored by the Edmonton Learner Centre, the fourth annual Festival runs two evenings, March 22 and 23 and a full Saturday and Sunday, March 24 and 25 on the University of Alberta campus.

Most of the feature and documentary films come from such countries around the world as the Philippines, Zimbabwe, Haiti, Lebanon and Greece. But "A Time to Rise" is one of a series of films called Facing the Good Life, starting at 1 p.m. on Sunday. The series is about racism and the situation of new immigrants to Canada and is co-sponsored by the Race Relations Council and the Edmonton Multicultural Society.

One of the photographers on "A Time to Rise", and a major Canadian documentary filmmaker, Martin Duckworth will be the speaker at the Festival. He will be speaking following several of his films: "A Wife's Tale", about the women of Sudbury who organized during the 1978 Inco strike, as well as "No More Hibukusha" and "Back to Kampuchea", a film that was a major hit at the Festival last year.

Because this issue is of such widespread concern to so many people, a central registry is being compiled by DES Action, to identify and assist the DES-exposed. DES Action/Canada is a government-funded organization with headquarters in Montreal, and has a doctors' referral list of doctors familiar with the management of the DES-exposed.

Marian Tobert, a registered nurse and a DES daughter, has started an Alberta chapter of DES Action and is attempting to contact as many of the community groups and



Other highlights of the Festival include:

- . State of Siege, a major feature by Costa Gavras, the maker of "Missing", with two documentaries in the Sub Theatre, March 22 at 7 p.m.
- . Disarmament Night, the latest and best in uplifting and energizing peace films, Friday evening, March 22 at 7 p.m. in the Sub Theatre.
- . Free films for elementary school aged children, Saturday and Sunday afternoons, organized by the YWCA Co-operation in Development Committee.
- . Free childcare, displays, booths, speakers and more ...

This year the Festival is charging an admission of \$3 or \$2 for unemployed people per afternoon or evening session.

Although there is no special section devoted to women's issues in this year's Festival, films of special interest are:

- . La Operacion: the sterilizing of Puerto Rican women;
- . On The Bias: women exploited by the textile industry;
- . Women in Nicaragua: their progress, and
- . Bottle Babies: Nestles and infant formula.

associations as possible to help stimulate public awareness and provide support for the DES-exposed.

A special introductory meeting is planned, with a talk on DES by Marian, a slide presentation and showing of DES documentaries on the agenda. Later in the year, Harriet Simand from Montreal and President of DES Action/Canada will be visiting Alberta to meet and talk to members of this new new chapter.

Marian can be contacted at 7216 33 Avenue, Edmonton, T6K 1K3, 463-7300.

Women Losers in False Economy

Since the mid-1970's I have been a member of both ASWAC and the Provincial Government Temporary Staff Service (TSS). Long may ASWAC prosper. Unfortunately for a lot of women like me (and some men), TSS is going down the drain.

In late January, TSS sent current TSS workers a letter informing us that the unit would be shut down as of June 1st, and that we secretaries, typists and clerks would no longer be assigned to coveroff for vacations, sick leave, maternity leave and work overload situations as of May 11th. Instead, Greg Stevens, Minister Responsible for Personnel is tendering out temporary placement to private agencies, many of which are big American "transnationals".

What does this really mean to TSS workers? We're now getting the union wage rate (and paying 1% union dues) plus 10.8% holiday/vacation pay. Once the private companies have government contracts, there's no guarantee they'll take us on despite Mr. Stevens' "encouragement" that they do so. They already have enough people "on inventory" to "rent out" to government. Personally, I refuse to work for government through a private agency at \$3 to \$4 less per hour than I'm making now, knowing that the agency is charging the government close to twice my wage rate.

Greg Stevens says this move is "appropriate and economical". This is untrue. Some companies bidding on the tender, and a spokesperson for the Canadian Federation of Independent Business have found this viewpoint to be incorrect. Jack Foster of CFIB has said: "Laying off 700 people in the name of restraint isn't going to do a thing if you hire people, whether skilled or unskilled, and end up paying more." (Edmonton Journal, Feb. 16, 1984). The government requirement for a line of credit was too large for

some companies to even submit a tender. Also, there will be

extra costs associated with submitting monthly reports to the government on the volume of service provided to each department.

Both the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees (AUPE) and the private sector are upset about the lack of consultation before the decision to dump experienced TSS workers was made. In management terms, many "man-years" of experience in government departments such as Energy and Natural Resources, Environment, Treasury, Social Services and Community Health, etc. will be lost. I guess that faithful, hardworking support staff are just viewed as servants who have "earned their salary" and may be disposed of at will. Except that in this case, we're actually expected to continue to work for the government, through private agencies--TSS will be sending us a list of approved agencies near the end of March, and government departments will be "ill-advised" not to use these agencies.

Right now, a cycle of work overload/time off in lieu of overtime pay/work overload with little, if any temporary help in some government units means that work piles up, and permanent support staff (mostly women) suffer. The public suffers too because their inquiries take longer to deal with. Some government departments are trying to get TSS employees on wages right now while the getting's good, especially for maternity leaves which run past June 1st, because they know we're reliable and experienced in government procedures.

The government is throwing out the baby instead of the bath water. Greg Stevens is reassigning (cutting) six administrative TSS people. I'd love to be "cut" this way!

AUPE held a meeting for TSS workers on February 13th. A Committee for TSS made up of 5 persons (Kate Fowler, Chairperson; Anne McLaggan, Secretary; members Phyllis Hennig, Oleh Lysak and the writer) was formed at that meeting. Since then, we've met several times to formulate our goals and strategies. We've had some publicity, and we've tried to get in touch with other TSS workers, not an easy task since our names are buried among those of 5,000 casuals in computer lists which the government provides to AUPE from time to time. We want people to know that we refuse to be pawns of the government in the union busting that is now going on, and their policy to "privatize" as many government functions as possible.

Many of us support our families on the wages we earn as temps. We all have rent or mortgages to pay. We all must put food on the table and clothes on our backs. Personally, I refuse to work for minimum wage or just above it, knowing temporary placement company shareholders are putting furs on their backs and rings on their fingers by charging their clients double what I earn. If I ever do go through an agency, it'll be to find a permanent job with decent wages and benefits.

If you or someone you know is affected by Greg Stevens' decision to toss TSS workers out on the street, please write him (as an M.L.A. for Banff-Cochrane, at Room 222, Legislature Building, Edmonton T5K 2B6), your M.L.A., and your local newspaper "Letters to the Editor" page to let them know how you feel about being fired or being related to someone who's being fired as of June 1st.

The Committee for TSS will do all in its power to try to reverse this unjust government decision, and we need your support. Please contact your local AUPE office directly, or phone 1-800-232-7284 (out of town callers, toll free). Phone 483-1020 in Edmonton and ask for Mary Guido. We'll keep in touch with you on our progress because we know our strength lies in working together. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Mary-Ann Warunkiv



♀ ORGANIZE

IMPOSSIBLE ODDS FOR SINGLE PARENTS

While Dick Johnston, Minister Responsible for the Status of Women and Minister of Advanced Education has announced a Women's Secretariat and new government committees to study and improve the status of women, the Student Finance Board, under his jurisdiction, is putting impossible demands on single parents (read women) in post-secondary education. The student maintenance grant which was created specifically for single parents and the handicapped will be restricted to those students who are taking a five-course load. No other student in the post-secondary system is forced to meet such terms. The usual course load requirement for full-time students receiving student assistance is three courses. The special grant, up to \$6,000 per year, has enabled single parents to obtain degrees and look after their children at the same time. It is unreasonable to expect them to carry the triple load of school, family and part-time work which would be necessary should their grants be withdrawn. The excessive demands will force many women out of the universities and, for many, back on welfare.

The Student Finance Board is penalizing highly motivated women who are making every effort to improve their condition and their prospects

for full employment. It is also denying and devaluing the work that these women are doing in the home and the contribution that they are making to society. In this era of female job ghettos, limited advancement opportunities and an overall upward qualification spiral the importance of education in finding work that will adequately provide for a family is obvious.

A University of Alberta Senate Task Force Report on Mature Students showed that: 1. mature students, particularly those who have been away from school for some years, do better academically if they do not assume a heavy course load in the first two years, and 2. married students/parents tend to have fewer problems than single parents. U. of A. President, Myer Horowitz, told the Edmonton Journal that he would fight any move by the province to place restrictions on education grants to single parents.

Presentations by single parents to the Student Finance Board have met with little success. Their desire to save money is outweighing any other consideration. To protest this ill-conceived plan, write or phone Dick Johnston at 127 Legislature Building, Edmonton, 427-2291.

Animating Feminist Films

How many times have we in the women's movement been asked to speak or show a film to a public audience? How many times have we tried to facilitate a discussion on a particularly gut-wrenching film about women's experience, strength, and pain which seems to evoke no response? How many times have we left divisive and volatile public forums and film discussions feeling dissatisfied, discouraged, and hurt by the experience of not being heard or not even getting the chance to speak?

Well, thanks to ASWAC's organizing, Every Woman's Place space, the efforts of NFB Studio D film animator, Maureen McEvoy, and the participation of a number of animated women, a special and much needed learning process was undertaken to address these questions over the weekend of March 3 and 4.

Maureen brought with her the collective musings of many other women who have attempted feminist film animation or facilitation over many years. A manual may be forthcoming, but for now women working with Studio are sharing their concerns and techniques with other women in the form of workshops.

It is impossible to compress a weekend's worth of work in a few paragraphs; however, we can say that there are now a number of women from most parts of the province who are willing to share their new knowledge on film animation which is applicable to all kinds of public presentations. Connect with us by contacting the ASWAC office. Also an expanded version of NFB Studio D's film catalogue, "Beyond the Image", should emerge sometime in the next month and can be acquired for free through NFB or the Secretary of State. Since this will include films and videos produced by women outside the NFB, we encourage women producing such media to let Studio D know this for future inclusions in the catalogue. Do share this information with ASWAC as well to aid in our own cataloguing and networking process.

Anne Runyan

GREENHAM COMMON

Since cruise missiles arrived at Greenham Common (U.S. Airforce base near Newbury, England) women at the peace camp have been subjected to continual harassment by the troops inside the perimeter fence. Many women believe that this harassment is a positive invitation for the women to retaliate in kind; however the women are sticking with their commitment to non-violent action.

Greenham women have documented the abuse and harassment. If you would like a copy of this documentation, the ASWAC office can supply it. Please send 50¢ to cover costs.



A Sentimental Journey

Last night I went to see "The Big Chill" for the second time.

Today, in a fit of nostalgia, I closed myself in the bathroom with an extension cord and cassette player and took a (rare) hour-long bath with Simon & Garfunkel Live in Central Park.

Those were the days, I sniffed to myself. My eyes moved around the room focussing wistfully on the trimmings of the 60's still so evident in our lifestyle. Beads, buddhas and batiks. I could feel the presence of old, comfortable familiars elsewhere in the house: a music collection that ended around 1974, a wardrobe which no one can possibly call fashionable (inclusive of a couple of anachronistic long dresses), various symbols of ongoing hope - peace, love, freedom and revolution.

I'm not sorry that I grew up in a time when Dylan told our Truth and hours were spent analyzing Leonard Cohen's poetry:

I do not know if the world has lied
I have lied.

It was a romantic time, a meaningful time.

I ache for the intensity of it all ...

And sometimes I try to be fair. To remember also the incredible anger, the confusion, the desperate sexuality, the pill-induced highs and lows, the lack of coherence to it all. Part of it was adolescence, but part of it was the analysis, I believe.

I think I was always a feminist. I loved my female friends with a passion I reserved only for them, books and horses. I was very much involved with boys too, but never to the (what I considered extreme) point of parties, dressing up and competition with girlfriends. I was considered a bit "different" - bright, but anti-social and uncooperative, rebellious and inconsiderate of my appearance. Inconsiderate of all appearances, actually, including my "reputation", (which is what you get for being openly sexual). The girl with everything going for her - including large breasts - if she would just pass through her "stage", get rid of the chip on her shoulder, get some priorities and ambitions in order.



And then came the 70's, and my introduction to the Women and the Movement. My "priorities" didn't change, but my analysis of them did. I found a community and lifestyle where everyone is considered just as weird as I am and we all think we're the healthy ones!

I'm still not particularly ambitious, I still dress funny, I still like to be naked with friends. But most of the loneliness of it has gone. And the self-assurance I've gained through the experiential nature of maturity allows me to stand alone when I must, and scream for help when I must.

So, as a child of the sixties I came of age in the seventies and grew stronger and more secure through my identification with feminism and my work in the Movement.

Nostalgia is odd; a yearning for the intangible - a smell, a feeling, a time. But thank the Goddess for how far I've come... to a place where my relationships with close women friends are real, loyal and beautiful; where I can love a few select men without being compulsively sexual or subtly abused; where my husband is learning about what it really means to be a man and can share and support through real anger and pain; where I have the luxury of meaningful work; where I can be friends with my parents and sisters.

Still, if my kids turn out to be Punks, I'm retiring to a commune.

Jeni Ellman

INTER NATIONAL FEMINIST FORUM

Are you interested in helping to create international cohesiveness among women; in helping to break the silence that is created by our social and geographical distances; In creating a forum for women to communicate with women from a feminist analysis?

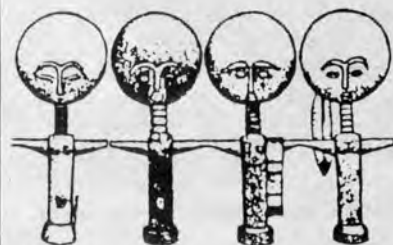
In 1988 the Winter Olympics are being held in Canada and the eyes of the world will be on Calgary. We have a choice opportunity to do something of great political/feminist significance right in our own back yard! Feminist athletes and support personnel in the hundreds will be converging upon Calgary. A unique chance is created for many hundreds more women to use, attending the Olympics as a vehicle to also attend the largest international feminist event ever held. Given four years for advance planning and fund raising many hundreds of women can attend.

Calgary needs only to provide leadership, an organizational structure and the physical co-ordination required for such a large event. Women from around the world will provide the topics and the actual conferences.

If this vision excites you, plan to attend the first open meeting to be held Friday, March 16 at 7:30 p.m., room 213, Y.W.C.A.

An unprecedented opportunity is available to us. Let us take up the challenge.

In Sisterhood,
Suzn Morgan



Women's Secretariat First Step

On February 28, Dick Johnston announced the establishment of a Women's Secretariat and two committees in order "to assist the Government to better respond to the wide range of women's issues".

The functions of the Secretariat will be as follows:

to provide enhanced co-ordination between and liaison with other Government Departments to ensure that women's concerns are reflected in policy and program development;

to analyze and review Alberta legislation, policies, and programs having special relevance to women;

to provide advice to the Minister responsible for the Status of Women, and to other Government Departments on matters related to women; and

to provide a link to the community by collecting and disseminating information of interest to women, providing grants for research and educational events, and consulting with women in the Province. Many of these functions have been performed in the past by the Alberta Women's Bureau.

Johnston has appointed Dr. Sheila Wynn who worked for him in his old portfolio, Federal and Intergovernmental Affairs, to the directorship of the Secretariat.

Although the Secretariat may be the stepping stone to a full fledged Women's Advisory Council that the Alberta Coalition for a Council on Women's Affairs has lobbied hard for in the past two years, the Coalition was not consulted before the announcement. While rumours had been circulating for a few weeks that "something" was going to be established and that Sheila Wynn would be the head of it, women's groups had very little final input. As yet, we still don't know how much money Johnston has budgetted for the new structure.

In addition to the Secretariat (which will absorb the Women's Bureau) a Cabinet Committee on women's issues to be chaired by Johnston and a senior management

Interdepartmental Committee chaired by Wynn were also announced.

Looking back to Joint Initiatives, the 1976 ASWAC submission to the provincial government that called for an advisory council, it appears that, eight years later, the majority of ASWAC's recommendations have been accepted. However, a very important part has yet to be implemented and was not even referred to in the announcement. This is ASWAC's recommendation that "a citizen Council on the Status of Women [be appointed] to allow for meaningful citizen input at a time when sensitivity to women's experience and existing inequities is urgently needed". Johnston has referred to the Secretariat as phase one of his plans. We hope the council won't take another eight years.

In putting this newsletter together I couldn't help but notice how the provincial government is giving women something (a Secretariat) at the same time that it is taking away a great deal. The temporary support staff program is being shut down, Planned Parenthood Alberta is denied funding and single parent students are being singled out and threatened with the removal of their maintenance grants. In all three cases the people affected are primarily women. The last example is straight from Dick Johnston's own department, Advanced Education.

Yes, we support and welcome the Women's Secretariat and hope that it may signal some changes in the provincial government that will be pro-woman. But cheers of joy are not yet reverberating across the province.

Frances Adams

ASWAC BOARD MEMBERS

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Marlene Whitesun	Box 418, Hythe T0H 0C0	356-3797

We, the members of the Board, want to communicate with the membership. We don't want to work in isolation. We need your ideas and your support and welcome you to call us at home when you need or want to. Honest we do!

Down but not out

Planned Parenthood Alberta is involved in a struggle to exist. For two years we have faced adversity after adversity but a few determined workers will not throw in the towel and lock the door.

Why? Why do we want to keep our service open? Why do we not just give in and quit?

Here is one good reason! There are still too many persons out there, mostly women, who are the statistics in the stories of unplanned, unwanted pregnancies. There are too many lives that are being disrupted because of lack of education or services which should long since have become commonplace.

Every day that we are open we have requests from many corners of this province. We continue to be the life line for many persons living outside the urban areas - places where needs are still unmet by any other service. The voices of those in need have not been strong enough to be heard by those in a position to better the human condition. We are committed to changing this - that is why we are still around! But we too need help. All the help we can get!

In searching for this help we have turned repeatedly to our provincial government. Our files are full of its dodges and excuses. Conversations with various Ministers have not helped. Recently

the Minister of Hospitals said that he felt that the women of Alberta were quite able to articulate their needs, and he did not hear them indicating there were still unmet needs in the field of family planning services. Consequently the government does not feel the need to assume any initiative in extending these services. His stance is one which is commonly held amongst members of our legislature. Our silence is taken as satisfaction with things as they are.

Few of our elected representatives believe that many women have insufficient knowledge of how to bring about change. But those of us who have tried know just how hard it is to be effective! An effective plea is time-consuming, requires many skills and must be continuous. We have learned from experience that a single voice is usually lost. Knowing this to be the case, surely we who have the privileges of education and service should accept some of the responsibility to lend support to those less fortunate.

In this time of restraint we at Planned Parenthood Alberta will not let up in our determination to keep our provincial government aware of the obligations which it did not get around to meeting in our days of affluence. All women must continue to make their unmet needs known. Women of childbearing age cannot possibly control

their lives if they do not receive help in learning how to manage their reproductive system.

Each of us must bombard our government and members of our health boards with requests to extend family planning services. Present services often geared to couples and infants do not constitute full service.

In addition we appeal to each member of ASWAC to assist us in our outreach work. This can be done in two ways, donations and documents. In the near future you will be hearing directly from us. Included in our letter will be a "Declaration of Support". Your signature on this declaration is most important! It will add strength to our voice. With enough strength we can continue our pressure at all levels of government. Dollars are needed too. Personal donations are our sole source of support.

If you believe in and are able to practise reliable methods of birth control, help us to extend this opportunity to those who do not have ready access to the same information and service.

Planned Parenthood
Alberta
206 223 12 Ave. SW
Calgary T2R 0G9
265-3360

Reproductive Education

Planned Parenthood of Edmonton provides various educational courses for the public throughout the year. One course in particular that is coming up may be of interest to ASWAC members in the Edmonton area. It is "Women's Reproductive Health Concerns". The course provides an overview of various issues related to reproductive health, as well as an opportunity to discuss concerns with other women. Topics include reproductive functioning, fertility, infertility, birth control, fetal development, menopause, sex roles, sexual assault, sexually transmitted diseases, breast and pelvic examinations. The course runs

on Tuesday evenings from May 1 to 29. The cost is \$30 but arrangements can be made when the fee is unaffordable.

Other upcoming courses include "Shall We Have a Child?", "Parent Taught Sexuality", "Making Decisions About Sex: A Series for Teens" and, of course, the volunteer training program which is held a few times throughout the year.

Planned Parenthood also offers speakers, an excellent library, one to one counselling, adoption referrals and so on. Special needs for mentally and physically handicapped can be met and coun-

selling is offered in languages other than english. Planned Parenthood is a pro-choice organization that provides counselling and referrals on abortion.





N
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NAC Rep.

ASWAC has nominated Trudy Richardson for the National Action Committee's Alberta/NWT regional position on the executive. Trudy works at the Boyle Street Co-op in Edmonton, is a long-time member and former board member of ASWAC, and has worked in numerous other community organizations.

An incredibly energetic and positive woman, Trudy, if elected, will represent and communicate with all Alberta/NWT groups that hold membership in NAC.

ASWAC's delegate to this year's Annual General Meeting, March 16 to 19 in Ottawa, is Marilyn Guille. A full report on the AGM will be carried in the next newsletter.

Doctors Referral List

The Calgary Unemployment Action Centre has compiled a list of family physicians and specialists in Calgary who do not extra bill for their services. The list is based on a telephone survey of most of Calgary's doctors.

Information is broken down by specialty and by the area of the city in which the doctor practices. People wishing to find a doctor who does not extra bill are invited to call the MEDICARE ACTION LINE, Monday to Friday, 9 am to 4 pm at 262-8755.

A Labour Code for Women

On December 8, in the Throne Speech the federal government unveiled proposed changes to the Canada Labour Code. **WOMEN'S NEEDS WERE IGNORED.** Instead of action to end discrimination against part-time workers, the federal Minister of Labour, Mr. André Ouellet is proposing further consultations. Since 1979 the Liberal government in Ottawa has been consulting and promising. We need action NOW to legislate equal pay rates and proportional benefits for part-time workers, 75% of whom are women.

Also conspicuously absent from proposed amendments are provisions to require more frequent rest periods for workers using video display terminals. When questioned about this issue by a journalist from La Press, Mr. Ouellet responded that the existence of health problems has not been verified. If all the studies which have been done have not convinced Mr. Ouellet then perhaps he's listening to employer groups more than to Canadian women.

Since 1976 the National Action Committee on the Status of Women has been passing resolutions about part-time workers. At last year's annual general meeting we called for legislation to deal with the health problems created by VDT's. The time has come to mount a grass-roots campaign. In a pre-election period when the Liberals are looking for issues which will make them

look good at the expense of the opposition concerted pressure can make the difference.

In December, NAC member groups were asked to send telegrams to Mr. Ouellet. We urge those who may have been missed to send their telegrams immediately to:

The Minister of Labour
Centre Building, Room 511
House of Commons, Ottawa
K1A 0A6

The second phase of "A Labour Code For Women" is taking the form of a post card campaign. We are printing 15,000 pre-printed post cards which individual women can sign and mail to Mr. Ouellet at no cost. You can send the copy of it (in the box on this page) and have additional cards sent to you by contacting ASWAC.

TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE SURE THAT
OUR NEEDS ARE MET.



Dear Mr. Ouellet;

I insist that the federal government move to introduce the following changes to the Canada Labour Code:

1. EQUAL WAGE RATES AND PROPORTIONAL BENEFITS FOR PART-TIME WORKERS.
2. MORE FREQUENT REST PERIODS FOR EMPLOYEES WORKING ON VIDEO DISPLAY TERMINALS.

75% of part-time workers are women and the majority of workers using V.D.T.'s are also women. Canadian women want action NOW.

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

Calgary 'Y' on Porn

AIDS FOR LEARNING

The Calgary YWCA's presentation to the Fraser Committee on Prostitution and Pornography was really compelling. The following is an excerpt from their brief:

"Local Deputy Chief Ed Madsen has stated that "a 'clean' rape in the City of Calgary is more the exception than the rule". The succession of rapes during March to September, 1982 were in his words "extremely violent" and "extremely degrading to the victim", to the point of even shocking the police. The victims suffered extensive knife wounds about the face and throat. Deputy Chief Madsen was "appalled" by these rapes and claims that this form of sexual assault with considerable violence involved is becoming more common.

"Prostitutes are becoming more and more the targets for violent sexual assault in Calgary. Some men feel, according to Deputy Chief Madsen, that because these women are prostitutes it gives them (men) the "license to abuse them".

"Sargent McNutt of the Calgary City Police Sex Crimes unit has stated that this year to date (November 16, 1983) the police have investigated 274 sexual assaults, 45 sexual assaults with a weapon, and four aggravated sexual assaults which were extremely violent. Of these latter assaults, four separate charges were laid, all of which resulted in conviction.

"Sargent McNutt said that in most cases of sexual assault police find a profusion of sexually explicit and pornographic magazines in the possession of the accused.

"When asked whether he believed there was a link between media violence toward women and children and real violence against women and children, Deputy Chief Madsen replied, "I can safely say that there is an indication of a link between pornography and violent sex crimes. T.V. even influences our own police officers."

"In a well-known homicide case investigated by the R.C.M.P. detachment in High River, Alberta, the accused, James Edward Peters and Robert Brown, were found to be collectors of sexually explicit

and pornographic material depicting violent acts against women. Both were convicted of the first degree murder of two young women.

"In another case a local man used a child pornography film to show children that it was 'acceptable' to perform sex acts with adults. Pornography was used directly to 'soften' the children up, after which they were sexually abused.

The Calgary Coalition Against Pornography has been meeting at the YWCA. If you are interested in joining this group, their next meeting is on Wednesday, March 14 at 7:30.

For those of you who want to know more about the issue of pornography and for those who are facilitating workshops, we have a few new items that you may be interested in. A transcript of the presentation that Maude Barlow made in Edmonton is available as well as an edited tape recording of the presentation. Jeni Ellman has prepared some visual materials for workshops or displays on pornography with examples of pornography from a variety of magazines. An analysis of the porn is presented alongside of the material. All of these as well as an extensive file of briefs, articles, etc. on the issue of pornography are available through the ASWAC office.

Man Alive

Last night I watched a TV program called Man Alive on Prostitution in the Third World. Apparently, children as young as seven are selling their little bodies to cater to tourist demand and to make money to feed their families.

I saw a fourteen year old girl talking about her future. She is too old to be a call-girl anymore, (white men like us small) and is learning to bounce to Western disco in order to take her place as a nude go-go dancer.

I heard an interview with three Men, faces in shadow yet unashamed to spew filth such as "the mothers don't care - the kids here have sex like we go to the John". I witnessed a crippled mother's tears when she was asked about her feelings: "When she doesn't work, we don't eat".

A small boy, thirteen years old, worked a street advertised in homosexual travel guides. He talked in a flat, dead voice about needing an education in order to make something of this life.

I understand that sex tours are big business.

The Man in Shadow declared that he has gone beyond right and wrong. Where is this beyond, I wonder. And to where is he leading the psyche of our ravished planet.

I wanted to vomit in anger and protest.

Jeni Ellman
January 22, 1984, 4 a.m.

PEACE PLANS

Great news! An International Women's Conference on Peace in Ottawa, fall '84.

Women the world over are deeply disturbed for the safety of humankind. To this end we want the reduction of all forms of violence including nuclear and conventional war, starvation, violation of human rights and violence in our communities. To this end we want the removal of threat as the means of dealing with conflict.

To date the major, broad and extensive women's contribution to peace and justice have not been formally acknowledged. Therefore, we want to confirm our convictions and our experiences. Together with women of other countries and backgrounds we want to explore new strategies for reducing threat, resolving conflict and learning to live together non-violently.

In the spirit of the United Nations Decade for Women, whose theme is Equality, Development and Peace, The Voice of Women, Canada, invites Canadian Women's Groups to join us in co-sponsoring an International Women's Conference entitled, "The Urgency for True Security: Women's Alternatives for Negotiating Peace".

The organizing meeting is on March 8th, International Women's Day, 7:30 p.m., Knox Metropolitan Church, 8307 108 Street. Refreshments will be served.

- The aim of this first meeting is:
1. To respond with your reactions to this proposal and to share your ideas concerning women and peace negotiating.
 2. To develop conference themes and educational programs.
 3. To consider holding local and regional events such as workshops, speakers, films, mini conferences that will promote discussion of conference themes.

SEXUAL ASSAULT CENTRE

The Annual Meeting of the Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton will be held at 7 p.m., March 20th in the United Way boardroom, 700 Capital Place, 9797 110 Street.

Friends of Jezebel

A discussion and organizing meeting of the Friends of Jezebel is planned. Friends of Jezebel, a new society that favours the decriminalization of prostitution and wants to build alternatives for those prostitutes who want to get out of the trade but are having difficulty doing so. The group has been meeting already but this meeting, planned for Saturday, March 24th, is the first open one that they have organized. The meeting will be from 11 a.m. to

2 p.m. at the Elizabeth Fry Society office, 702 10136 100 Street in Edmonton. The plan is to start by forming small discussion groups and then to come together to share ideas and make plans.

If you intend to come to the meeting, call 429-4291 and leave a message with the answering service for #2883. The society's address is Box 1075, Main P.O., Edmonton, T5J 2M1.

Immigrant Women Program



Illustration by Heather Graham

An innovative program for new immigrant women is being launched by the Edmonton Immigrant Services Association effective March 28, 1984 designed to help these women upgrade their skills in order to open up new job markets and reduce the effects of social isolation that characterizes so many newcomers' lives.

The Need-funded New Canadian Women's Program will focus initially on recruiting a group of multicultural female participants and encouraging them to exchange experiences and skills such as handicrafts, sewing and cooking, through regular, twice weekly workshops. The workshops will be held every Wednesday afternoon (1-3 pm) and Friday morning (9-12 am).

The objectives of the program are two-fold:

1. While we are not an employment agency, we are interested in helping to create employment in the long-run, for interested individuals in areas such as design alternation, catering of international cuisine, etc.
2. To alleviate the social isolation which characterizes the new Canadian woman's life by creating an opportunity for social interaction while simultaneously teaching basic life survival skills.

The first of the workshops gets underway Wednesday, March 28th, at McKay Avenue School, E.I.S.A.'s new home at 10425 99 Avenue. All are invited to drop in on these free sessions, with free baby-sitting being provided for the participants.

Neelam Jolly

WHAT IS THAT ★ DOING ON MY LABEL?

ASWAC's membership year runs from conference to conference, with a grace period starting from September 1 for new memberships.

This means that if you bought or renewed your membership before September 1, 1983, you are on our records as needing to renew your membership, and will see a star on your mailing label.

Our policy is to send newsletters to current members, and to members as far back as two years. Therefore we are still mailing to those women who took out a 1981/82 membership. We do this generous act because we know that many people find it very hard to remember to renew and we don't want to lose contact with old friends. But, it would be a great help to the office staff if you would either renew or let us know if you no longer wish to receive the newsletter. We could use the money as well.

We suggest \$10 per year for a membership but will, of course, accept less from those who cannot afford \$10. Donations are greatly welcomed as well.



SUPPORTIVE MEMBERSHIP/DONATION*

Name.....

Membership

Address.....

Donation

Apt. No.

Street

City

Postal Code

Phone.....

Home

Office

Make cheque payable to Alberta Status of Women Action Committee, P.O. Box 1573, Edmonton, T5J 2N7 Telephone 424-3073

* We suggest \$10.00 membership per year.

ALBERTA STATUS OF WOMEN ACTION COMMITTEE