



ALBERTA STATUS OF WOMEN ACTION COMMITTEE

April, 1986

Vol. 7 No. 3



photo by Susan Craigie

Inside this Newsletter:

**Government announces establishment
of Women's Council**

Abortion Tribunal Wrap-Up

Our board meeting minutes

Eighteen hours at a glance...



Present: Frances Adams, Amanda Le Rougetel
Lisa Walter, Aura Rose, Cathy
Bray, Marty WhiteSun, Terri-Ann
Marco, Rosemary Taylor and
visitors; Renate Shearer,
Carmen Clow and Veronica Horn.

Process
Assessment: Renate Shearer, the women doing
the evaluation for us, shared
some of the information she has
gathered from the returned ques-
tionnaires and interviews. Her
written report will be completed
by mid-April.

The Way We
Work: This Discussion focussed on in-
formation sharing, our decision
making process, and the workload
of ASWAC. It resulted in the
identification of the following
needs:
-to prioritize our work (there is
just too much to do!)
-to develop working groups
-to be clear on who's doing
what
-more input of information into
the office
-accountability
Rosemary will look into the cost
of teleconferencing. Board mem-
bers and regional reps not in
attendance who did not submit a
report will be contacted and
requested to do so.

Membership: Our goals in this area are to
increase the number of members,
and involvement of our member-
ship. It was decided that a fact
sheet on who we are and what we
stand for will be prepared. The
role of regional reps is vital to
the grassroots organizing and
communication with local members.

It was decided that the questions
of male membership and group
versus individual membership will
be presented to the Assembly next
November.

Finances: Expenditures were approved for
International Women's Day, the
Abortion Tribunal and an old
bill for letterhead for Lethbridge.

A request for further financial
assistance with the conference
on women and health to be held
in Grande Prairie (a victim of
the government spending freeze)
was turned down.

Jane Wiley's employment will be
extended for a 3 week contract in
order to complete work on the pay
equity campaign.
A letter will be sent to Alberta
M.P.'s focussing on the effects
of the women's community of the
spending freeze, the Wilson bud-
get, and the Nielsen Task Force
recommendations.

The need for financial support
from our membership will be
addressed in the newsletter.

The final report including our
financial statement to Secretary
of State will be completed by
Lisa and Aura.

A report will be sent to the
provincial government with a
budget for our next assembly.

**Canadian Ad-
visory Coun-
cil on the
Status of
Women Con-
ference:**

Frances attended this conference
in Ottawa on March 17-18. The
title of the conference was
Women and the Economy and pay
equity and child care were issues
of major focus. This indicates
that we are on the right track
with our campaigns. An issue
arising from this conference was
the attendance of REAL Women. A
letter will be sent to C.A.C.S.W.
expressing our feelings that it
was inappropriate for REAL Women
to have been invited.

**Advisory
Council in
Alberta:**

Creation of an Advisory
Council on the Status of
Women is expected to be an-
nounced just before the elec-
tion is called. It is rumoured
that it will not have the struc-
ture of the powers recommended.
We will be ready to respond.

Women Centres Conference:

Many thanks go to Frances for a successful conference! 45 women attended a selection of workshops which were very useful and for the most part just what the women were looking for. No formal association was developed but the centres will look into organizing a conference for next spring.

National Action Committee on the Status of Women:

ASWAC will send one delegate to the NAC annual general meeting, and will make a contribution towards sending our regional nominee. A more concrete relationship with NAC is desirable and a Board portfolio was considered.

Single and Divorced Speak Out!

The group want to incorporate in order to get funds to launch a charter case. ASWAC will donate \$50 from our General Account toward incorporation.

Pay Equity Campaign:

Lisa presented a pay equity workshop to the board and visitors. Five workshops have so far been scheduled across the province.

ASWAC's policy statement on Pay Equity was formulated and we will seek endorsement of the policy through letters to provincial organizations.

The pay equity brochures have gone to the printer. The tabloid done by Julie Ann Le Gras will be finished and ready for use by month end

To let Conservative politicians know what we think about the issue, meetings will be requested with Dick Johnston, Les Young, and Stanley Scudder.

Possible news conferences in Edmonton and Calgary may be arranged after the next Board meeting.

Child Care Campaign:

ASWAC will join the Canadian Day Care Advocacy Association for a membership fee of \$20. It was also decided that we will present a brief to the Parliamentary Task Force on Child Care in June. A summary of the brief will be in a future newsletter supplement. We will be contracting someone to pull together the information on child care, prepare the brief and the summary.

Information on child care, prepare the brief and the summary.

Connie Osterman, our new Minister of Social Services' recent comments on childcare will be responded to by letter and letters to the editors of dailies across the province will be sent.

Assembly:

This year's Assembly will be held in Red Deer. Eunice is looking into possible facilities. The plans of the 10th Anniversary Committee are unknown.

Election:

Lisa will send letters to political parties to get their positions on issues.

Newsletter:

There was a review of material to be included in the current newsletter.

A jumble of profit

Some Edmonton ASWAC members organized a very successful GARAGE SALE which was held in the beginning of March. The sale made just over \$400.00 - the proceeds were given to ASWAC and our thanks go to the following women:

Barb Marshall, Michele Barber, Frances Adams, Sheila MacDonald, Shelly MacDonald, Marg Reece and also Deb Carnat and Shelagh Bouttall who came up from Calgary to participate in the event!

Donations

Since the last Newsletter we have received \$242.00 in donations. We extend our heart-felt thanks to the following generous women --

Anne Le Rougetel, Mary L. Ross, N.J. More, Leslie Chevalier, Marilyn Assheton-Smith, Ruth Whaley, Evelyn Stymest, Ceinwin Cumming, Helen Rusich-Brown, Linda Burnett, Mary C. Moore, Cherie Mears, Elaine Filax, Linda Anne Slattery, Trish Wright, Maria Stefanyk and C.A. Nelson.

Board Meetings

The next Board meeting will take place in EDMONTON on Friday and Saturday April 25 and 26, at the Women's Building. Members are invited to attend; please call the office for details (424-3073).

The Board will be meeting on the following dates during the rest of the year:

June 6-8 Calgary
July 25-27 Coronation
Sep 12-14 Grande Prairie
Oct 17-19 Edmonton
Nov 14-16: ANNUAL ASSEMBLY IN RED DEER -- be there!!



Letters to and from

Dear Sisters,

Edmonton Working Women needs your support !!

Since we formed in 1982, Edmonton Working Women has proved to be a strong and consistent supporter of women's rights in the workplace. We have held a conference and workshops addressing women's legal rights under Alberta labour legislation and through our Working Women's Hotline have played a major advocacy role for women experiencing difficulties in their place of employment.

Working with two women labour lawyers, our volunteers offer free counselling, referrals and legal advice. The numerous calls we have received indicate a real need and appreciation for our service. Our advocacy role has meant support for women who have taken public action in response to unfair labour practices and we have settled many cases successfully. Our activities have won us sympathetic coverage by the media and increased public awareness of the problems women face in the workforce under the existing labour laws.

In the past much of this work has been funded through grants from the Secretary of State Women's Program or other gov-



ernment agencies. Revenues have not been generated through the Hotline service as many of our clients are poorly paid or unemployed. However, it would appear that we can no longer depend on government sources for funding. Although we have two major grant applications pending we have not received any grants since the summer of 1985 and we do not expect any such assistance in the foreseeable future. We find ourselves in very strained circumstances and have consequently mobilized our membership in a major fund-raising drive.

We feel that we provide a valuable service to working women who often have no where else to turn for assistance. We are asking you to donate what you can to ensure the future of the Working Women's Hotline. Our target for the campaign is \$2400!!!

Hoping to hear from you soon,
In sisterhood and solidarity;

Christine Conley
Edmonton Working Women
Telephone 432-7991
10055-110 St.
Edmonton, T5K 1J5

Funding freeze protested

Tuesday March 25, 1986

I write to you on behalf of the Alberta Status of Women Action Committee, an organization of more than 500 members in 30 Alberta communities. As an organization working towards equality for women, we receive our funding from the Women's Program of the Secretary of State.

In early February of this year, we received news that proposals under consideration by Secretary of State personnel in regional and national offices were caught in the freeze on discretionary funding pronounced by the Treasury Board. This decision was arbitrary and harsh in its effects; women's groups organizing

events have been stopped in our tracks. Plans which could not be reversed have incurred debt and severe hardship on voluntary associations.

While the freeze on "discretionary" funding may have achieved artificially deflated spending figures, it is an irresponsible way of doing business. The Women's Program accomplishes a good deal with very few resources by relying on the voluntary sector; frigid and expedient "frozen" on this kind of program contradict this government's commitment to equality.

On behalf of our membership, and with other groups of women in

Alberta, we ask that you carry our views to Ottawa and make your colleagues in Caucus aware of the strain and burden this decision has caused.

Another issue of concern is the lack of information available about the allocations made to Secretary of State programs and regional offices. The Department funds several organizations on an operational basis - without knowing what allocation is available, it is impossible to budget and plan responsibly.

We urge you to address this issue through the Treasury Board and caucus. We look forward to your response.

continued on page 5

A questionable council

Not what we wanted

It happened Monday April 7th and it took us by surprise! Dick Johnston, Minister Responsible for the Status of Women, announced the establishment of a provincial ADVISORY COUNCIL ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN. And we are neither impressed nor amused by the council's mandate or the appointment of Margaret Leahy to the position of chairman (sic - that's what the Act calls her!)

The council is legislated for in the Women's Secretariat Act, Bill 7, which received first reading on Monday, April 7th. This bill refers to the council only as a citizens' advisory body - no mention is made of a budget attached to it or specific staff positions provided for the council. Section 8, par.5 of the bill refers to the purposes of the citizens' advisory body as follows:

a) to advise and report to the Government, through the Minister, on any matter relating to the status of women in Alberta referred to it by the Minister for consideration, or any other matter

relating to the status of women in Alberta that the citizens' advisory body considers appropriate, and
b) to increase the awareness of the public relating to women's issues, needs and concerns.

Paragraph 6 has been called the 'sun set' clause:

6. The citizens advisory body ceases to exist 10 years after it is established UNLESS (my emphasis!) it is earlier dis-established by the Lieutenant Governor in Council.

So -- we are being told we have a Council on Women's Affairs which is actually called a citizens' advisory body, nothing is said in its statement of purpose about improving the status of women in the province, and a chair has been appointed who has little if any connections to the women's movement! Ms Leahy's main claim to fame appears to be her television reporting in Edmonton and her position of wife and mother.

FEEL LIKE PROTESTING?

Lodge your complaint with Premier Getty (427-2251) and/or Dick Johnston (427-2291) or write to them c/o the Legislature, Edmonton, T5K 2B6.

Protest cont'd

The last issue we wish to raise is the recommendation contained in the Nielsen Task Force regarding the Women's Program of Secretary of State. The Task Force recommendation to cut funding 70% is clearly a denial of any commitment to equality and an abdication of the government's role in improving the status of women. We would like to serve notice that this issue is of vital concern to the many groups working towards equality. We ask that our voices be included in the committee hearings around this segment of the report.

In conclusion, let me stress the important role the Women's Program of Secretary of State plays in Canadian society. Any reduction or restriction to funding of groups working to advance the status of women is unacceptable. We would be pleased to meet with you on this matter. Please contact me at our Edmonton office, 424-3073 at your convenience. I look forward to hearing of your activity on this issue.

Sincerely,
Amanda LeRougetel for the Board of the Alberta Status of Women Action Committee.

Help us out

STAY IN TOUCH

Give ASWAC a call when you have a beef or a bouquet. These can be circulated through the newsletter, acted upon, enhanced, sponsored, or carefully listened to.

Write a letter giving information about your past, present and future responsibilities in the women's movement.

DONATE MONEY

If there is a special project which ASWAC is doing that you would like to support, you could make an earmarked donation. As well, if a sudden need must be met, you could use ASWAC as an intermediary

TAKE PART IN OUR CAMPAIGNS

Pay equity: you could organize a workshop (plan location, help advertise, etc.). You might want to become a workshop leader, educating people about the need for pay equity. Call the office for more information. You might simply distribute our pamphlet and brochure on pay equity, or simply endorse the notion of pay equity as an individual.

Dawn's project ends

Hi!

I cannot believe how fast four months flew by. Here it is, the middle of April, and I find myself at the end of my practicum experience. I did not come into contact with you as I thought I would because I found a shortcut to obtaining the information I needed to complete an index and file of the reproductive services available to women in Alberta. I have typed the names, addresses and phone numbers of these services on index cards and placed colored dots on the top left corner of the cards according to subject.

The subjects indexed include; abortion, adoption, birth control, breast feeding, counseling, foster parents, infertility, pregnancy, (birth, prenatal classes), programs for the public, services for parents, and services for unwed mothers. These cards are then divided

according to the area in Alberta in which they are found. The areas are NorthWest, North East, Central West, Central East, SouthWest and SouthEast.

Within the areas the services are listed alphabetically. The Alberta Social Resource Inventory, which gives a more detailed account of the services provided, can be used in conjunction with the file.

I also plotted on a map all of the Health Units, Alberta Social Services and Community Health offices, and Family and Community Social Services and the areas they serve in order to get a good idea of the places that are not served.

I have found my experience working with ASWAC to be a very good one and I thank especially, Amanda, Frances, Jane and Lisa, for making it that way.

Dawn Blaeser

Southern Alberta feminism

The women's movement in Lethbridge is, well, it's here, I'm almost certain of it.

Actually, there is little cause for such cynicism, for while the movement is small, it is vocal, and its growing.

This February, a local chapter of ASWAC was begun by Terri Marco. The group meets every two weeks, and is currently attempting to create a focal point for the women of Lethbridge. Many women are somewhat in a void as far as women's issues go, and the Lethbridge group is trying to create awareness and give women a local lobbying group for local as well as provincial perspectives. Lethbridge ASWAC will lobby with members around the province for pay equity and a more adequate childcare system, in line with ASWAC's present mandate.

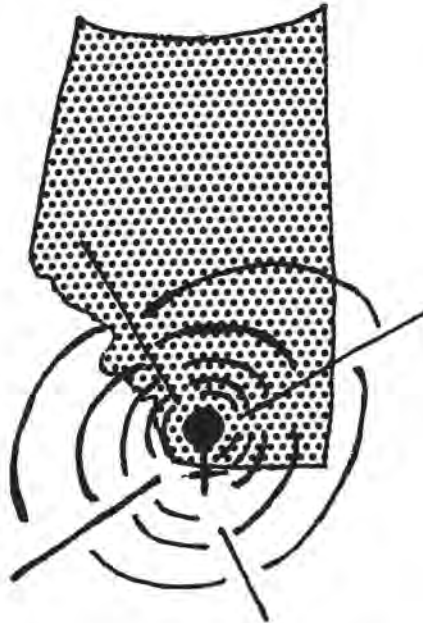
The organization is also looking towards working with rural women. Too often, women in rural communities are isolated and need support to deal with issues that women in urban centres are not familiar with.

According to Marco, a strong focus of activity will be to make contact with Native women in and around Lethbridge.

Another fledgling women's group in Lethbridge grew from Career Explorations for Women Courses, which have been offered through the Lethbridge Community College. Lena Nuefeld, program co-ordinator for the group, Women in New Directions (WIND), said they offer support for women in post-secondary institutions and in the workforce who may be looking for a career change.

"Basically," said Nuefeld, "we provide support for anyone - they may be in school, or they may have careers, or be looking for a new career."

Graduates from the course found they gained much valuable support from them and many felt a need for this to continue after the twelve week lecture series ended.



With the help of a \$5000 grant from Secretary of State, and help from Doreen Onyfrychuk of the Canada Employment Centre, WIND began to meet monthly in October, at the YWCA. The group has sponsored a series of guest lecturers who have dealt with topics including; stress management, resume writing, how to enter university, employment opportunities for women, needs of women in the work force and fashion on a budget. Nuefeld said that anyone interested in further information is welcome to contact her at: 953-14 St. ST Lethbridge T1J 2Y9 phone 328-5925.

Women grill candidates

The Lethbridge ASWAC is doing its bit for the upcoming election and sponsoring an "ALL CANDIDATES FORUM" on women's issues.

Terri-Ann Marco, said that it was quite easy to organize. They got a co-sponsorship from the Lethbridge Public Library, who agreed to provide the coffee and goodies.

They phoned all the candidates, and are doing the publicity for the event cheaply, using public service announcements, word of mouth and local newsletters.

On the rural scene, there seems to be action taking place in the form of several small support groups. Sophia Elton, of Raymond, has acted as a facilitator for a number of these groups which meet regularly at Lethbridge Family Services.

Elton said these meetings offer support and peer counselling for women in crisis. She said rural women have come together seeking help from one another with problems related to health, financial hardship, marital difficulties, and other problems unique to women's experience.

Topics discussed at these meetings include sexuality, aging, and dealing with separation or divorce. Elton further stated that these groups offer confidential communication, and book and literature exchanges. Elton also expressed interest in political action to establish public policy to deal with issues concerning older and rural women.

Such is the state of the women's movement in and around Lethbridge. For the most part, it is in the formative stages; women are still finding each other and talking about common concerns, establishing goals, and deciding on directions. There's not a lot happening, but the movement seems to be growing and with time and energy it will emerge as a positive force for political action. Keep your fingers crossed.

Erin Graham

The event should prove to be very educational for all those women in attendance, because the Lethbridge group is producing a brochure filled with information about the issues and appropriate questions to ask the candidates.

It all sounds fantastic, and not that complicated to organize. If anyone else would be interested in organizing a similar forum in their constituency, feel free to phone Terri-Ann and find out how simple it can be!!! The forum in Lethbridge will be at the Lethbridge Public Library, Monday, May 5 at 7:30 pm.

I.W.D. across country

Calgary



Edmonton women at march

photo by Susan CRAIGIE

Women say NO to racism

In the ten years that Toronto has actively celebrated International Women's Day with demonstrations, marches and fairs, women have taken what could be called the umbrella approach to organizing. Using massive and well-conducted outreach campaigns to women in the movement, in the left, in work places, in unions and in education, women have organized around a cluster of issues: choice, reproductive rights, immigrant women, disabled access, and third world issues. Phrases like Rise Up in 1983 and Still Ain't Satisfied in 1984 have typified an attempt to unify a pot luck of causes. Usually the coalition highlights a local, current struggle as in 1984 when the striking Eaton's workers headed the march through Toronto and right into Eaton's store. It uses the parameters of local struggle as a way of seeing the global shape of feminism. One coalition member described the days, "a time to stress the international issues which concern women around the world, and a struggle against imperialism. It is a way of seeing the revolutionary potential of the women's movement."

An event informed by leftist activism, International Women's Day is as inclusive of companion struggle as it is a global vision of what feminism could be. As such, it is not necessarily a liberal or a cultural feminist's cup of tea. In going beyond the typical expectations

of what a "women's issue" might be, the struggle for equality for women becomes of necessity a social justice cabaret: jobs, hunger, anti-imperialism, access to health care, all have their place in the International Women's day revolution.

This year, the March 8 Coalition, departed from the generic approach to organizing by featuring a single issue on the platform. The issue was racism and the rallying cry was "Women say no to racism, from Toronto to South Africa". This challenged not only the umbrella approach to organizing but also the white dominance of women as organizers of the women's movement. Saying no to racism came at a time when the struggle of the South African peoples against the racist rule of apartheid is a focus of media attention. On the local scene, government reports have been confirming what most of us either know or suspect, that Black people, people of colour and immigrants are actively discriminated against when applying for jobs, when working, when seeking housing. As well, more than one social critic has compared the apartheid method of allocating Black Africans to Bantustan homeland to the Canadian government practices of creating reservations for native Canadians.

(This is an excerpt of an article by Ingrid MacDonald, reprinted from Broadside.)

The theme for Calgary's International Women's Day Celebrations this year was, "Women Together, Unity is our Strength." There was a march through downtown Calgary in the afternoon followed by entertainment and a series of speakers at the Y.W.C.A.

The four speakers covered a broad spectrum of issues to demonstrate how all women's issues tie in, and are important to us all. The speakers were Ravida Din, of the Status of Women Action Committee, Laurie Coates of the United Nurses of Alberta, a representative of the Latin American Women's Community, and a representative from the Committee Against Racism.

The entertainment was by local singer Peggy Ward, and was excellent. Information tables were set up by various groups, and refreshments and snacks were available. Though we would like to see more women out, (and more and more!!) the turn out was good.

Nancy Oloman
Calgary I.W.D. Committee

Vancouver

Vancouver's International Women's Day 1986 celebrations were marked by warm spring sunshine, and the presence of over 1500 marchers, the largest turnout in many years.

At the rally, keynote speaker Jesse Duarte, a representative of the South African Transvaal Women's Federation, spoke about the black people's struggle against apartheid and in particular the situation of women in her country.

Other speakers included Sylva Tenebein on behalf of lesbian rights, Megan Ellis reporting on the successful Vancouver Transition House occupation, Lee Lakeman of Vancouver Rape Relief and Jan Ford of Women Against Violence Against Women.

Music was provided by the a capella group, Aya and the Euphonious Feminists. Many thanks from the Vancouver women's movement are due to the small but determined organizing committee for ensuring I.W.D. was celebrated this year.



Linda Richardson sings at Vigil

photo by Sima Khorrami

Anthem for Choice

All the women of the world
They share the pain,
They hear the crying,
It's a story that's so old,
The story must be told
To save our sisters dying;

For the women of the world
There is no peace,
No easy choices,
We can ease their troubled
hearts,
By making them a part
of universal voices.

They are sisters, they are
friends,
Maybe daughters someday when
They have reasons of their own,
They choose to go alone,
We have no right to judge them;

All the children of the world
Deserve a life
That's full of caring;
If we love them we will fight
To make sure that the right
To choose will always be there.

Linda Richardson Feb., 1986

Abortion law condemned

by Amanda LeRougetel

The Pro-Choice public came out in force to witness the Abortion Tribunal held in Edmonton on Thursday March 27th. Structured like a court trial, the evening saw women testify about their experience in obtaining an abortion. ASWAC member Sheila Greckol acted as prosecutor and Marilyn Assheton-Smith, also an ASWAC member, played a fine and just judge.

The purpose of the event was to provide women with the opportunity to SPEAK OUT FOR CHOICE by putting the Canadian abortion law on trial. As the evening progressed and the eight women witnesses told their pain-filled stories it became increasingly obvious that access to the legal and medically-safe procedure of abortion is at best limited to women and at worst fraught with bureaucratic requirements and delays. The women told of hostile doctors, intimidating psychiatrists, lack of forthcoming information about the procedure, unkind nurses,

supportive nurses and friends, the void of post-abortion counselling . . . While details of each of the women's stories were different the common theme amongst them was the isolation and fear with which

they all had to deal. Even though abortion was legalized in 1969, the procedure continues to have a huge moral stigma attached to it.

The jury and the judge all recognized the inequities of the current system and unanimously condemned the abortion law as being discriminatory against women. Madam Justice Assheton-Smith threw out the law, the audience applauded wildly and the tribunal came to a close.

From comments heard after the event, it seems that for many people the tribunal provided the chance to hear the truth about "the abortion question" from women who had been "through it all" - all too often the pain we experience in our lives remains hidden and silenced. The Abortion Tribunal created the opportunity for women to speak out and the public to listen. Would that we had this opportunity more often!



Election time in Alberta

A longstanding tradition within the women's movement has been involvement in election campaigns. Women in Alberta will soon have the opportunity to be advocates for each other during a provincial election campaign. Here is a checklist of activities:

READ THE CAMPAIGN LITERATURE.

Although free pamphlets may appear to be junk mail, such literature often reveals a great deal about a candidate. Is the candidate straightforward and committed? Does s/he make realistic promises? What are the candidate's priorities? Does the candidate refer to women's issues?

TALK TO CANVASSERS

Have questions at the ready. (See below for suggestions.)

CONTACT THE CANDIDATE

and assess his/her willingness to listen. Find out how s/he reacts to the issues which you raise.

ORGANIZE A FORUM for

all the candidates. Consult campaign managers as soon as possible, to pin down a date; send a formal letter of invitation to each candidate; follow up with a phone call. Book an auditorium that will fill comfortably, with a sound system. Arrange for a competent chairwoman. Advertise widely. Keep records of what is said, and present a report(s) to the media.

Here are some succinct questions to ask the candidates.

1) Pay Equity. This is ASWAC's priority issue in 1986 (see pay equity policy elsewhere in the newsletter).

Questions:

- If elected, will you work toward the introduction of equal pay for work of equal value legislation?

- Do you agree that the provisions for equal pay for substantially similar work in the individual rights protection act do not go far enough, and that further legislation necessitating equal pay for work of equal value must be enacted?

Comments on pay equity:

Equal pay for work of equal value is workable. Formulas have been worked out for comparing different types of work on the basis of skill, effort, responsibility and working conditions.

2) Childcare

ASWAC's position is that high quality, affordable childcare should be readily available to all Albertans.

Questions:

- What would you do, if elected, to ensure that childcare is available to all who need it?
- What is your opinion of the provision of subsidies to both profit and nonprofit childcare services?

- How would you work toward improving the quality of childcare available in the province?

Comments on childcare:

There are some centres in Alberta where childcare is completely unavailable. Where it is available, workers are often underpaid and untrained. These problems may arise due to the profit motive.

3) Status of Women Advisory Council

The current government has introduced an act to establish an advisory council on the status of women. Concern has been expressed that this council may not be autonomous from government, nor explicitly in favour of the advancement of women. It is important, too, that the chairwoman and all members of the council have some knowledge of women's issues.

Question:

If elected, would you ensure that the government establish an autonomous advisory council on the status of women, with a mandate to improve the status of women? Would you appoint to this council feminists nominated from voluntary associations who have been active in the area of equality for women and who represent all classes, racial and ethnic groups and regions?

1985/86 Board members

FRANCES ADAMS	c/o ASWAC office	424-3073
CATHY BRAY	#706-10135-Saskatchewan Drive, Edmonton, T6E 4Y9	433-2682
LAVERA CREASY	Box 1740, Hanna, T0J 1P0	854-3216
AMANDA LE ROUGETEL	c/o ASWAC office	424-3073
TERRI-ANN MARCO	834-7 St. South, Lethbridge, T1J 2H6	327-0040
IRENE McRAE	10928-115 St, Edmonton, T5H 3L4	426-1125
SUZAN MORGAN	6423 Laurentian Way SW, Calgary, T3E 5N2	246-8755
EUNICE OLESEN	Box 124, Innisfail, T0M 1A0	227-1970
AURA ROSE	9131-74 Ave, Edmonton, T6E 1C9	432-0900
LISA WALTER	9525-77 Ave, Edmonton, T6C 0M3	431-0296
TERESA WARENYCIA	12908-88 St, Edmonton, T5E 3H3	476-8525
MARTY WHITE SUN	Box 418, Hythe, T0H 0H1	356-3797

1985/86 Regional representatives

JUDY MOYNIHAN	190 Highland Close, Ft. McMurray, T9H 3T5	791-4395	NorthEast
MAIR SMITH	11460-95 St., Edmonton, T5C 1L4	479-0623	North Edmonton and surrounding
GERRY BAILEY	RR 1, Westerose, T0C 2V0	586-2983	WestCentral
JOAN WHITE CALF	5603-50 Ave., Camrose, T4V 0T6	672-2210	East Central
ROSEMARY TAYLOR	#3-806-2nd Ave., Calgary, T2N 0E5	270-2187	Calgary

If they say . . . then we say

Here is a list of common arguments used to oppose equal pay for work of equal value.

Women choose low paying jobs.

Some people suggest that women are reluctant to invest enough time, energy and money into preparing themselves for high paying jobs. They think that women freely select from all jobs.

Response:

Our choices are made within the constraints imposed upon us by our preschool upbringing, education, and encouragement from friends, relatives, peers and role models. While women are not forced into "women's work", subtle pressures to be "feminine" lead young women to select jobs such as waitressing and nursing, rather than nontraditional jobs such as welding and drilling for oil.

Equal Pay = armies of bureaucrats

Response:

Many institutions and firms already have job evaluation systems, and need only adjust them to eliminate biases against women. Companies can use their own staff to evaluate wages. The government can provide consultants.

Equal pay endangers the free market.

Critics say that pay equity legislation violates the law of supply and demand.

Response:

The free market is a myth. Our economic system is governed by many laws which restrain the free operation of supply and demand. These laws include labour laws concerning hours of work and minimum wages, laws against child labour, and health and safety legislation. The government also intervenes to assist employers, through grants and loans to businesses, favourable interest rates, and corporate tax breaks. Pay equity legislation is a government intervention, similar to others which will assist women workers.

Equal Pay will hurt the economy.

Critics say that society can't afford equal pay for men and women, and that this could cause loss of exports and investors.

Response:

In many progressive countries, pay equity is the rule rather than the exception. Their economies have not "gone under". As well, paying women equal wages can increase productivity, because women will feel that they are being treated fairly. This can lead to lower rates of turnover, and thus lower recruitment and training costs for the employer. Finally, women will receive better pensions upon retirement, thus reducing government benefits to the aged.

Equal Pay will hurt women.

Some say that women won't be hired at equal pay rates.

Response:

This can also be refuted by evidence from countries who have instituted equal pay. In Australia, after pay equity legislation was brought in, female employment continued to grow faster than male employment. Women's relative earnings increased by thirty percent.

If equal pay for work of equal value is instituted, wages will be based on jobs, rather than the gender of the worker.

PAY EQUITY TABLOID:

The Equal Pay committee's tabloid on Pay Equity is now available. For copies of this excellent resource please call or write the ASWAC office in Edmonton.



Pay Equity campaign

We are well into our pay equity campaign! As you can see from the informational pamphlet which is included in this mailing of the Newsletter we are hoping to raise the public awareness and understanding of the issue and have it be treated as a major election issue.

So far we have facilitated over half a dozen pay equity workshops - everyone from participants in the Alberta Girls' Parliament to various women's committees in both the federal and provincial governments seems keen to discuss and debate the notion of equal pay for work of equal value.

Workshops are planned in:
Grande Prairie: April 27
Peace River : April 28
Red Deer : May 14
Lethbridge : May 15

Why not sponsor a workshop in your area/community? Contact the office for further details.

The following short statement arises out of a lengthy discussion at the last Board meeting. It is to be considered ASWAC's policy statement on PAY EQUITY:

EQUAL PAY FOR WORK OF EQUAL VALUE, also known as pay equity, is a priority issue for ASWAC. We call on the Alberta government to implement mandatory pay equity legislation for both private and public sectors.

This legislation must provide for both complaint based redress and employer initiated change and must not permit wage reductions. Strong enforcement procedures with accompanying penalties must be included.

Lots of women; different issues

by Leslie Stewart

"Working with those women and connecting with them was for many of us the most powerful experience of the Forum." These were the words of Lisa Avedon as she spoke of her involvement in Forum '85, the non-governmental organizations meeting which accompanied the Nairobi conference ending the International Decade for Women. Ms. Avedon attended the Forum as President of the Canadian Congress for Learning Opportunities for Women (CLOW), a national, non-profit organization which attempts to identify and help overcome the barriers to education that women face. As Avedon discovered at the Forum, CLOW is the only feminist adult education organization in the world.

The International Decade for Women had its beginnings in 1975, the International Women's Year. This year was highlighted by the World Conference on Women which was held in Mexico City and which offered parallel conferences for government and non-governmental organizations. Out of this conference came the recommendation that 1976-1985 be declared the International Decade for Women. This recommendation was adopted, along with the decade themes of equality, development and peace.

Copenhagen was the site of a similar conference in 1980, the mid-point of the decade. This conference in 1980, the mid-point of the decade, resulted in the adoption of a Program of Action to be implemented during the second half of the decade. This Program of Action focussed on the decade's sub-themes of health, education and employment.



Rachel Burger/CPF



Lisa Avedon

photo by Sheryl Ackerman

These two World Conferences, set the stage for the final conference in Nairobi. The two primary goals of the Nairobi conference were to review and assess the achievements of the Decade for Women, and secondly, to develop strategies to continue the advancement of women for the remainder of this century.

Two conferences actually took place at Nairobi; the Forum, which involved all of the non-governmental organizations, and the United Nations conference. Thirteen thousand people, mostly women, attended the Forum, while an additional 4,000 attended the UN meetings. Avedon felt that there was a good deal of overlap between the two meetings, and thought that the Forum had a tremendous influence on the activities of the UN group.

Avedon described the open, grassy quadrangle at the site of the Forum as a hub of activity. Book displays, workshops, informal discussion groups of women all combined to create a market atmosphere. Women from all over the world attended. Women walked or came by bus from all over Kenya. Avedon spoke of the Japanese women whom she found very moving. Many of them wore vibrant yellow jackets with "No more Hiroshima Nagasaki" written in bold letters across their backs. Everywhere they went, their message

was peace. She also told of the Iranian women who dressed in black and were always accompanied by men. They espoused views which were in line with the Ayatollah's and at times were physically violent. After a while, the Iranian women were ignored and in the end didn't create much of a disruption.

Avedon criticized the mass media for their coverage of the Forum, which focussed on and magnified the slightest disturbance. She found that, upon returning home, the people in her community had a distorted view of the Forum because of the media accounts they had read.

The Peace Tent was a venue that received much media attention. Avedon described it as a place to deal with issues that had been divisive at the Copenhagen Conference. Here, women from countries that were politically opposed to one another - Central America, the U.S. the U.S.S.R. - worked hard to find some answers of their own. She told of the women hugging one another at the end of these intense debates.

Avedon spoke excitedly about the day she spent with a woman from a village in western Kenya. This woman had been sent by the women of her village to discover what they could do to improve the lives of women. The

continued

Voluntary guidelines inadequate

April 21 to 28 has been proclaimed by MediaWatch to be Fair Comment Week.

The Canadian Radio-television Commission (CRTC) is holding public hearings in April on the subject of sex-role stereotyping in the broadcast media. MediaWatch and other women's groups will be presenting briefs at the hearings, but it is also very important that the views of individual women are heard by the CRTC.

The broadcasting and advertising industries are claiming that they have already eliminated sex-role stereotyping, that during the two year period of self-regulation which ended in 1984, the industry persuaded its members to comply with voluntary guidelines.

This is simply, not true. The CRTC Report on Self-Regulation is not working and

This is simply not true. The CRTC Report on Self-regulation, published in January 1986, shows very clearly that self-regulation is not working and that sex-role stereotyping is still rampant in the broadcast media.

You can participate in Fair Comment Week by writing individual letters to the CRTC with comments or complaints about particular programs or commercials. Please note:

- the program or commercial must have been seen on a Canadian channel;
- state the name of the program, the date and time it was aired, and the call letters of the station;
- state why you found the program or commercial offensive.



Nairobi cont'd

woman told of the four hours a day the women in her village spend fetching water. Since diarrhea due to unclean water is the greatest cause of infant death in Africa, fetching clean water is a vital task. Furthermore, because it is women who are responsible for childcare and the health of their families as well as for fetching the water, clean water is a women's issue. One of the things that Avedon admired about the African women was that they defined for themselves what issues were important to them. Thus, for the women of this village, the pursuit of literacy, which is often espoused by developed countries as the necessary "first step", was not seen by them to be as important or as relevant as a supply of clean water in their village.

Avedon feels that some of the positive things to come out of the International Decade for Women were the international networks formed by women, an increase in feminism in Third World countries, the raised consciousness of governments with respect to women's issues, and the fact that women are defining and dealing with issues as they see best.

Ms. Avedon also praised the document titled Forward Looking Stra-

tegies which was adopted by the UN at Nairobi and to which Canada is a signatory. The document, which was adopted by consensus, provides strategies designed to improve the status of women and integrate women into all aspects of development. She urged women across Canada to use the document as a lobbying tool and to hold the Canadian government to its commitments. She also felt that the document could be used effectively in conjunction with some of the other media material that has been produced. A slide/tape entitled The Nairobi Legacy is available from Status of Women Canada* and next month an N.F.B. film will also be available.

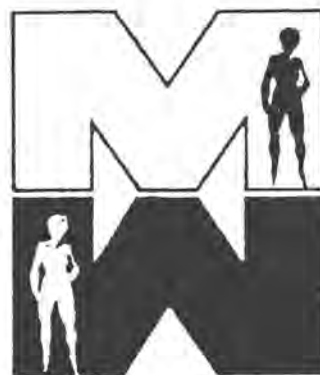
In all Avedon emphasized the many positive things to come out of the Forum. She stressed the gains that women have made, and the importance of keeping the decade - and a forward-moving momentum alive.

*Communications Unit, Status of Women Canada, 151 Sparks St. 10th Fl. Ottawa K1A 1C3

Lisa Avedon is an adult educator currently employed in Waterloo, ON. Her visit to Edmonton was made possible through CLOW and the Women's Program, Faculty of Extension, University of Alberta.

Send your letter (with a copy to MediaWatch) to
CRTC
Central Building
Les Terrasses de la Chaudiere
Room 561, 1 Promenade du Portage
Hull, Quebec, K1A 0N2

MediaWatch
209-636 W. Broadway,
Vancouver, V5Z 1G2
604-873-8511



MEDIAWATCH
ÉVALUATION
-MÉDIAS

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"Still Sane" video comes to Edmonton

"In a society where we are kept in line by the threat (subtle or blatant) of being locked up, it's important to know that we can resist, survive and win."

- Persimmon Blackbridge and Sheila Gilhooly

"Still Sane" is a video tape produced by Brenda Ingratta and Lidia Patriasz in Association with Women in Focus, Vancouver. It documents the ceramic sculpture exhibit "Still Sane" by Vancouver artists Persimmon Blackbridge and Sheila Gilhooly.

"Still Sane" is the true story of the three years Sheila spent in and out of mental hospitals after she "came out" as a lesbian to her psychiatrist. Sheila resists all attempts to mold her into the institution's idea of a 'proper woman' and emerges whole and integrated to share her first-hand knowledge of what that time inside was like.

"Still Sane" includes interviews with Persimmon and Sheila concerning the process of creating the art exhibit and their reactions to public response about the show.

A screening of the video is being sponsored by Latitude 53 Gallery and Womospace, Friday May 30, at 8 p.m. A discussion will follow. Admission is \$3. It will be at Latitude 53 Gallery 10920 88 Ave. Edmonton

Depo: we've already decided

No decision will be made on permitting the drug Depo-Provera to be used in Canada as a contraceptive "until public interest groups have had the opportunity to provide input in the regulatory process," says federal Health Minister Jake Epp.

In a letter dated Jan. 22 to Dr. Andre Blanchet, President of the Canadian Association for Community Living, Epp said his Department "will contact groups or associations that may wish to meet with, or send written submissions to my officials."

After the drug was banned in the U.S. as unsafe by the Food & Drug Administration following public hearings, the manufacturers, Upjohn Co. of Canada, sought approval for its use in Canada, where no public hearings are required. The Depo-Provera Coalition are seeking to obtain a copy of Upjohn's submission to the federal government through the Freedom of Information Act.

The Canadian Association for Community Living has been trying for years to stop the use of Depo-Provera in institutions in Canada labelled mentally handicapped for convenience by halting menstruation - a practice which violates Section 15 of the Charter and the equal protection of the law it guarantees.

Contact CANADIAN COALITION ON DEPO PROVERA, c/o Healthsharing 101 Niagara St. TORONTO, Ont. tel: (416) 862-1791

Depo: we've already decided

DR. IAN HENDERSON, Director of the human prescription branch, Health & Welfare Canada, justifies his role in approving Depo-Provera thus: "I think that it will be a relief to many women that they will be able to take a drug that eliminates menstruation. Our job at Health & Welfare after Depo is approved will be to educate women that the fact they have stopped menstruating is a natural side effect of this drug, and that it is not unhealthy for their genitals to be in a dormant state."



we recommend

Sima Khorrami

freelance photographer
468-4822

the Newsmagazine

for alberta women

The magazine collective
needs volunteers!
For fun and fulfillment,
phone 429-3570

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Persons Awards

The federal government Persons Awards were instituted in 1979 to recognize individuals who have made outstanding contributions to the status of women in Canada. Individuals, community groups and voluntary organizations are invited to nominate members of their community or organizations who deserve such recognition. At an Ottawa ceremony that takes place every fall, the award recipients are presented with an engraved medal depicting the five Alberta women who were instrumental in obtaining the constitutional status of "persons" for Canadian women in 1929.

If you would like to nominate an individual, ASWAC has the selection criteria + nomination packages at the office. The deadline for nominations is May 15.

Correction

In the March issue of the newsletter we printed an announcement for Outreach Doctoral Fellowships for women in Management and Business Administration. We implied that these were offered by the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women but this is not the case. They are sponsored by a private foundation not explicitly named.

The Leisure Friend Project

Edmonton Parks and Recreation is looking for people to work on an innovative program. The Leisure Friend Project, just underway in the city, needs volunteers who will offer support to clients who are being discharged from a hospital or treatment facility.

For people re-entering the community, the outside world is often new and unfamiliar. The project's volunteers will assist these individuals in becoming involved in a recreational activity in the community. At a time when people are adapting to a new life, participating in a carpentry or pottery class or going for a walk in the river valley could encourage an interest in a leisure activity and help someone feel more connected with the community by providing contact with others.

After a brief training program, volunteers will attend outings with clients once weekly for a twelve week period between the months of April and August.

If you're interested in working on the project or would like more information phone Jeff Winkelaar at 428-8559.

B&B in Manitoba

We have at the ASWAC office a list of Manitoban women who are offering a Bed And Breakfast arrangement for travelling feminists. They are participating to raise money for the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women.

The cost is \$20 per night and comes with a feminist breakfast. The locations of these homes are in Winnipeg, Brandon, Thompson, Garland, Winnipegosis, and Dauphin. This is an excellent opportunity to meet the fascinating and active women in Manitoba.

Art to Art

An art show is being planned for GALA (Gay and Lesbian Awareness) Week in late June of 1986 in Edmonton. The show has been held for several years running and has provided an opportunity for us in the gay and lesbian communities to express ourselves artistically.

The enthusiastic response to past shows has sparked the idea this year for organizing a workshop to be held in conjunction with a display of works. For both the show and the workshop, no one should be dissuaded from participating by a lack of experience - everyone is invited. Also, works in any visual medium will be accepted.

Details such as time, extent and format of the workshop are to be decided at an April 10 get-together. If interested, notify John Doyle at 439-1208 or Tanya Russell at 488-6979. A decision to go ahead will largely depend on a measure of response.

Raffle winner

The winning number in the Common Woman Books raffle drawn in Oct. 1985 is ...

4 5 5 5 2 2 ...

If YOU are the lucky winner, please contact Common Woman Books in Edmonton at tel: 432-9344.

Employment Opportunity

A SAFE PLACE, the battered women's shelter located in Sherwood Park, Alberta is now recruiting women to fill vacancies in the Counselling programme. Both full and part-time positions are available for May. Duties include:

1. counsel to women and children on one to one, and small group basis
2. refer women to agencies in the community and act as her advocate
3. telephone and walk in counselling to women in crisis
4. effective communication and recording and
5. evaluation and input programming.

The successful candidates will demonstrate effective team work and mutually supportive work habits. She will have either experience working with battered women (or other victims of sexual violence) and/or woman positive attitudes and analysis of domestic violence.

Starting salary for full-time positions is \$16,800 per annum with good holiday and good medical/dental benefit packages.

FOR MORE INFORMATION please call Lisa Walter, Executive Director at telephone 464-7233. Send a resume and covering letter to her attention to: Strathcona Shelter Society, PO Box 3204, SHERWOOD PARK Alta T8A2A6

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Popular theatre

Edmonton's Catalyst Theatre is sponsoring 'Creating Theatre for Change', a training programme in popular theatre techniques, June 16 to 25. 'Creating Theatre for Change' will bring together popular theatre specialists, practitioners and would-be practitioners for ten days of discovery.

You will have an opportunity to gain experience and expertise in the areas of: research, collective creation, script development, participational theatre, clowning, street theatre, community animation, community development and more!! The fee is \$100 and the workshop is endorsed by the Canadian Popular Theatre Alliance.

An old subject

"Sexuality and Health: A new look at an old subject", is the title of a conference sponsored by the Community Health Division, Alberta Social Services and Community Health. The conference is geared towards those offering services relating to reproductive health and sexuality. The conference will be held in November in Edmonton. For information contact:
Chairman Conference Planning Committee, Health Education and Promotion
5th Floor, Seventh St. Plaza
10030 - 107 St.
Edmonton, AB T5J 3E4

Videos for women

"Finding a Job is Hard Work" is a five part video series that helps women in their search for employment. These videos were written and produced with low income women in mind. They deal with current issues affecting women entering or re-entering the work force. They feature visible minorities, women with English as a second language, women of white and Native origin.

These videos were made by women, for women, but they are helpful to both men and women. The profits made from these tapes will go to our Women's Society.

These programs are available for rent or purchase through Contact Women's Group Society or through Starting Over in Williams Lake, B.C.

197- #204 Second Avenue
Williams Lake, B.C.
V2G 1Z5 or phone 398-6011 or 392-2446
Attention: Debbie Prentice

First vote in March

Women voted for THE FIRST TIME in the Alpine principality of Liechtenstein and helped return a conservative coalition to power. Crown Prince Hans Adam granted women the right to vote after he took over executive power from his father. Liechtenstein has a population of 27,000 and a 15-member, all-male parliament.

"Shelter Enrichment"

Camrose Women's Shelter is hosting the 1986 Conference on Family Violence, May 28-30. The theme of the event is "Shelter Enrichment".

For more information or to register contact Betty Leonhardt
ACWS 1986 Conference
Box 1405
Camrose, Alberta
T4V 1X3

Popular theatre

Moving Stage Theatre, an alternative Theatre Troupe from Calgary will be presenting, "A Late Snow" May 7-10 at 103-17 Ave. Calgary. For more information, call Rosemary at 270-2187.

Wanted

Researcher/Writer with knowledge of childcare issues.

Duties:

- 1) Collecting and analyzing information on childcare to form a substantial resource file for ASWAC.
- 2) Preparation of a written brief for submission to federal government commission on childcare, June 5-7.
- 3) Preparation of educational information for ASWAC members and the general public on childcare. This will be an insert into a summer newsletter, and must also be able to stand alone, as a resource.

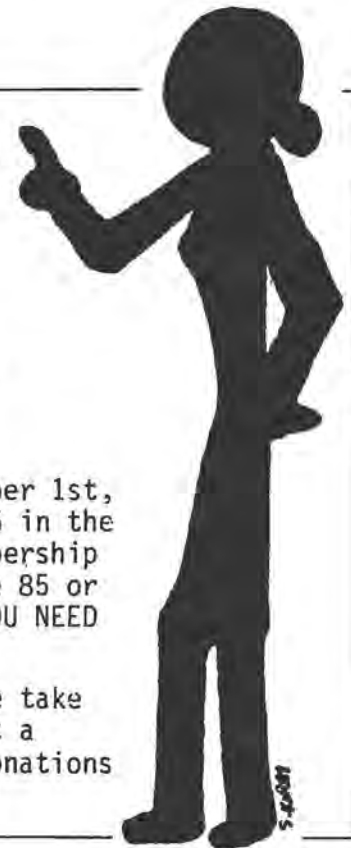
The skills required for this positions include; writing ability, knowledge of childcare issues affecting Alberta women, awareness of current resource on the subject, organizational ability and the ability to work independently with little or no supervision.

The starting date for this contract position is April, 25, and the brief must be completed by June, 1986.

The salary is \$1000.00 for completion of the duties.



Are you out of date? Read on!



ASWAC's membership runs from conference to conference, November to November (with a "generosity" period beginning in September).

This means the following:

if you bought or renewed your membership on or after September 1st, 1985 you are up to date and ok and you will have a little 86 in the top right corner of your address label. HOWEVER if your membership dates from BEFORE September 1st, 1985 you will have a little 85 or even 84 in the top right corner of your address label AND YOU NEED DESPERATELY TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!!

SO . . . if you and your membership are out of date, please take a minute and send in your renewal to the office. We suggest a membership fee of \$10.00 but will of course accept less. Donations of any variety are always received with squeals of delight!

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE - home _____

work _____

Membership: NEW / RENEWAL

Donation

In your opinion, what are the three most important women's issues of day?

**suggested membership fee is \$10.00
please make cheque out to:
ASWAC, Box 1573, Edmonton, Alta T5J 2N7

Where did you come accross the Newsletter?