

MAY 04 1973

WOMEN AGAINST THE UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE COMMISSION

If you are one of the many women who have been cut off unemployment insurance or if you have had or expect to have any claims with them there are several facts you should know:

In January the federal government ordered a 10% drop in the number of U.I. recipients. The people cut off were overwhelmingly women, especially those married and including an overabundance of immigrant women. Recipients in sixteen occupational categories lost their benefits. The Pelleville computer calculated that there were jobs currently available in these occupations, based on Manpower classifications and statistics. The sixteen "chosen" occupations break down as follows:

7 exclusively female - ie. secretaries, nurses, office workers
1 exclusively male -
6 predominantly female - ie. cashiers, teachers, waitresses
2 predominantly male

Eighty-five per cent of the people cut off U.I. in Ottawa and Hull were women in 3 exclusively female job categories - stenos, typists and waitresses.

It appears that the U.I. Commission was going after those least likely and able to protest the money-saving cutbacks. OUR GOVERNMENT MUST BE FORCED TO STOP SEEING WOMEN AS PRIME VICTIMS AND FROM THROWING WORKING WOMEN BACK ON THE RESOURCES OF THEIR HUSBANDS.

Immigrant women, many of whom do not speak English - and the Commission has yet to provide adequate translation facilities - are most easily harrassed and intimidated by the Benefit Control Officers. These 120 officers were hired by the government to patrol recipients and try to get them off the rolls wherever possible. They harrass by asking leading questions and cutting recipients off based on their answers. This tactic is particularly effective with women who don't speak English. Another approach is to pressure women into travelling 20 miles from their homes to work in a sweat shop for minimum wages. University graduate women who are unemployed are sent for retraining as typists.

Around the city small community groups are beginning to meet to draw up a list of grievances and demands and to plan a strategy for action, e.g. Parkdale Legal Services, Trigger - an employment agency for youth. However, as everyone recognizes, this issue is most centrally a woman's issue - a strong woman's group should be centrally involved in the struggle. Such a group will be forming on:

WEDNESDAY, MAY 9, 7:30 P.M. at WOMENS PLACE, 31 DUPONT ST.

This is an opportunity for all women to work together to change our government - civil service attitudes towards women and to protect our selves and each other from further economic abuse.

THINGS YOU CAN DO: 1) If you can't make the meeting but would like to participate, phone ~~the Women's Place 929 3185~~ and leave your name & no. (see other side)

2) Contact community groups wherever you live and explain the issues.

3) We are documenting cases of injustices by the U.I.C. We would prefer you to write it out, but coming in in person or even phoning would help.

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:

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or

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