

**CONGRESS OF BLACK WOMEN**

**(Toronto Chapter)**

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**April 28, 1990**

**CHILDREN'S AID SOCIETY OFF METRO TORONTO  
2360 Dundas Street West**

**(Across from Dundas West Subway)**



**Theme: AFRICAN WOMEN FROM THE MAINLAND**

## PROGRAM OF ACTIVITIES

Chairperson Angela King

- 10:30 - 11:00 a.m. Registration
- 11:00 - 11:15 a.m. Presentation by Connie Whittaker (CCAS)
- 11:15 - 12:30 p.m. Films: Naked Spaces: Living is Round, 1985 (3 parts)  
Selbe et Tant'd Autre, 1982
- 12:30 - 1:00 p.m. Lunch<sup>\*</sup> and film discussion

\*Lunch will cost \$5.00

## BUSINESS MEETING

Chairperson: Camille Orrige

- 1:30 - 2:00 p.m. Congress Committee Reports
- 2:00 - 3:00 p.m. Election of Officers

Welcome to the Annual Genreal Meeting of the  
Congress of Black Women (Toronto Chapter).  
Our focus this time is on African Women from  
the Motherland. We look at ourselves through  
the work of our sisters.

**Congress of Black Women Toronto Chapter**

**394 A Euclid Ave.**

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CONGRESS OF BLACK WOMEN OF CANADA  
LE CONGRES DES FEMMES NOIRES DU CANADA  
TORONTO CHAPTER



**Annual General Meeting  
April 28, 1990**

**PROGRAM**

<b>10:30 - 11:00am</b>	<b>Registration</b>
<b>11:00 - 11:15am</b>	<b>Presentation by Connie Whittaker</b>
<b>11:15 - 12:30am</b>	<b>African Women in Antiquity</b>
<b>12:30 - 1:30pm</b>	<b>Lunch*</b>
<b>1:30 - 2:00pm</b>	<b>Reporting</b>
<b>2:00 - 3:00pm</b>	<b>Elections</b>

**\* Lunch will cost approximately \$7.00**

**CHILDCARE AVAILABLE.**

**The venue this year will be:**  
The Metro Toronto Children's Aid Society Office  
2360 Dundas St. West  
3rd Floor  
Suite 333  
Crossways Mall  
(Across from Dundas West Subway)  
**FREE PARKING!**

**ENTRANCE AT LAST LOBBY NEAR FOOD CITY AT THE NORTH EASTERN  
END OF THE BUILDING.**

**For more information please call (416) 924-6628**

**394A Euclid Ave., Toronto, Ontario M6G 2S9 Tel.: (416) 924-6628**

April 28, 1990  
Social Action Committee  
Report on Foreign Domestic Issue

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The Social Action Committee spent a great deal of time this year dealing with the issue of immigration.

Our concern around the foreign domestic issue was galvanized when it was drawn to our attention that the black worker at Intercede was experiencing employment difficulties. We attempted to advocate on her behalf. But, the discussions were not fruitful and communication broke down. This led to our dissatisfaction with Intercede in two areas; one in their treatment of their black social service workers and two their provision of service to black domestic workers.

In September we held a forum on West Indian immigration issues.

Along with other groups we advocated on behalf of Mrs. Sylvestry and were successful in obtaining her stay here.

In November we met with the Hon. Barbara MacDougall to put forward our concerns on all classes of immigrants; refugee determination, family sponsorship and foreign domestics.

In February of 1990 the committee invited women from various organizations to meet and discuss the provision of settlement services to black domestics. Women were called from various communities, African as well as Caribbean and from different points of interest labour, social services as well as domestics.

It was agreed that both an organizing committee and a domestic support group should be developed. Subsequently the women met in March, April and the next meeting is set for May 24 at 5:30 p.m. at the Immigrant Women's Health Centre.

The goals and objectives of the organizing group can be described as follows.

Goal- To improve the situation of Caribbean and black domestics so they can participate in the working life of Ontario.

Objectives- To act as a support to black women.  
To facilitate networking amongst domestics.  
To coordinate available services.  
To make referrals as necessary.  
To liaise with immigration officers.  
To identify cases of special concern.  
To identify common issues.

The organizing group have further plans to develop 2 sub-committees. The programme committee will help to develop outreach and service strategies. It will work with the temporary outreach worker to develop the domestic's support group and to provide information and referral.

The research committee will investigate on-going, stable funding and meet with possible funders.

A small grant of \$ 2000 was received from Ontario Women's Directorate to supply funds for a temporary outreach worker. She will develop the domestics support group. The grant was applied for under the province's sexual assault initiative, in effect to give information about every woman's rights around sexual assault laws.



### Education Committee Report

The purpose of the educational activities of this Chapter over the last year was two-fold: (1) educating our own members and (2) educating our community.

Over the summer months (1989) we held a series of four study sessions at which four novels by African-American and Caribbean writers were discussed. The study sessions presented an opportunity to discuss issues, as well as to socialize and develop personal relationships among members of the group.

A forum on immigration was also held in the summer. The forum was open to the community and a guest speaker was invited to address the issue of immigration in relation to Caribbean female domestic workers and immigrants.

An educational activity was part of the program of all of our general meetings over the Fall and Winter. In September, Lloyd McKell of the Toronto Board of Education and Bernard Moitt of the Organization of Parents of Black Children were invited to discuss the report published by the Toronto Board of Education. The report examines the impact of racism on the education of black students in Toronto schools.

In October, a video entitled "Are you a racist?" stimulated much discussion on our perception of racism in Canada.

In January, a video entitled "Hairpiece" stimulated discussion on black women's self-image. We also held a reception in January for Father Augustin Sambola, a priest involved in the Nicaraguan revolution. He gave us a very good background and update of the Nicaraguan struggle and we, in turn, shared our experiences in Canada. The reception was open to the community.

In February, we held a reception for Billy Avery, an African-American woman in the health care field who pioneered self-help groups in black communities across the United States. In addition to sharing her experiences with us, we also viewed two videos produced by Billy dealing with the same topic. Both activities were open to the community.

When Bell Hooks, an African-American feminist lecturer and writer, visited Toronto early this year we also held a reception for her which members of the community attended. In addition to sharing our common experiences as black women and our relationships with black men, stimulating discussions centred around many issues of racism, sexism, sexual orientation, sexuality, etc.

In March, the educational activity consisted of two films, "Older, Stronger, Wiser" and "Black Mother, Black Daughter." These films explored the lives and experiences of black women in Canada from the 1920s up to today. Members of the community were invited to participate.

One of the strategies that the Chapter considered for achieving its goal of educating our community was organizing educational activities in conjunction with other community groups. Given our dwindling membership, this practice would broaden our links with other groups and the community, hopefully increase our membership, and provide the necessary womanpower for effectively organizing big events. This strategy was considered for organizing a series of public forums in several communities in Metro with a large black population on such issues as AIDS, drug abuse, police violence, immigration. As these activities would be initiated by the Chapter and coordinated by the Education Committee, lack of a membership paralyzed the execution of this idea.

Given the lack of resources (financial and numbers) of this Chapter, a recommendation is that the Executive Committee should decide on a few educational activities that are reasonable and achievable over a one-year period.

Akilah Meade  
Education Coordinator

April 28, 1990