

NEW FEMiNISTS

WG

P.O. Box 597, Station "A", Toronto 116, Ontario, Canada.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights in Article 2 proclaims that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration without distinction of any kind, such as: race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

The Province of Ontario in an effort to "never forget that our first obligation is to make certain that the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights are practised here at home" (Leslie Frost) adopted The Ontario Human Rights Code in 1962. One of the aims of this code is "to make secure the inalienable rights of every citizen." This statute prohibits any person, directly or indirectly, from discriminating against any other person or class of persons because of race, creed, colour, nationality, ancestry or place of origin. It specifically mentions public places, apartment buildings, employment practices, membership in trade unions, employment applications, and advertisements.

The glaring and obviously wilful omission of the word "sex" from the Ontario code is, we suggest, an act of intolerable discrimination against one half of the citizens of the Province by a government which professes to be democratic. That women as a class are discriminated against more than any other class is beyond dispute among aware citizens. A compilation of evidence will not be attempted here. Such a compilation would be voluminous and would be filled with atrocities and heartbreak inflicted by the powerful male class against the relatively powerless female class. A full and sufficient reason for not compiling such evidence at this time, however, is that it is irrelevant. There can be no moral or rational defense for not including "sex" in The Ontario Human Rights Code. We are not asking for "special" or "protective" legislation. Our experience with such legislation is that it encourages and supports further discrimination. No male can possibly suffer from the inclusion of this word as it can do nothing but add to his own human rights at law since it will protect him from discrimination based on sex also.

Many brilliant thinkers of past and present have contended that laws tend to protect established power groups and that the most basic and important right of the individual is the right of revolution against oppressive legislation when peaceful attempts at change are thwarted. This was an essential part of the thinking of those involved in writing the Declaration of Independence of the United States and is, in fact, embodied in the opening assertions of this document.

This letter is an attempt to use peaceful means to change oppressive legislation.

Clifford Pilkey has introduced Bill 36 to amend The Ontario Human Rights Code to include the word "sex." We hereby solicit your support of this important Bill and suggest that failure to support it is, in fact, immoral, unjust, irrational, and irresponsible.

Yours sincerely,

NEW FEMINISTS

Janet Lawler
Secretary

JL:nlk