



Above: Vice-President Ruth Baumann and General Secretary Morris Richardson

OSSTF URGES ...

AMEND THIS PAY EQUITY LEGISLATION

Bill 105, the Liberal Government's pay equity bill, is a severe disappointment to those who have waited a long time for it, a provincial OSSTF delegation told a Queen's Park committee Oct. 7.

Vice-President Ruth Baumann and General Secretary Morris Richardson spent more than one hour with the Justice Committee, first presenting a brief and then answering a lengthy series of detailed questions.

"The OSSTF is profoundly disappointed that several key recommendations were not incorporated, in spite of the fact that these recommendations continue to be supported not only by secondary school teachers but also by the other members of the Equal Pay Coalition," said the brief.

"Women have waited a very long time to have the value of their work recognized. As a government solution to the problem of unequal pay, Bill 105 may benefit our children and grandchildren. If it is to be the present female workforce that benefits from this initiative, substantial amendments are required."

Ruth Baumann said the Federation particularly urges amendments in five key areas:

- (1) the identification of gender predominance groups;
- (2) scope and exceptions;
- (3) pay adjustment;
- (4) rights of unions to negotiate all aspects of pay equity and equal value adjustments, and where no union exists, the right of workers to initiate complaints;
- (5) and enforcement and appeal procedures.

The OSSTF presentation stressed that those five areas represent the most serious flaws in Bill 105. "Action on the part of the Government now to alter the legislation in these areas will go a long way towards realizing equal pay for work of equal value for Ontario's women," said the brief.

Ruth Baumann urged in particular that the bill be amended to include the private as well as the public sector. "It appears that the public sector was chosen because it is easier to legislate," she said. "It is also a fact, however, that the public sector is closer to pay equity than the private."

Other highlights of the OSSTF brief:

. "The Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation recommends that the legislation clearly state the right of all workers in occupations stereotyped or otherwise defined as 'women's work' to initiate the comparison process. OSSTF also recommends that the legislation make provisions for non-compliance with the Act."

. "The Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation recommends that the equal pay legislation contain provisions which would forbid employers from freezing or reducing the wages of any employee in order to achieve pay equity."

. "OSSTF recommends that the legislation require the establishing of a separate pay equity fund to be set at three percent of the total salary and benefit package of any given establishment."

. "Bill 105 should include a clause requiring employers to provide all relevant information to employees and their bargaining agents, including job descriptions, rates of pay, job evaluation systems and their application, compensation systems, etc."

. "OSSTF recommends:
(a) that an independent appeals tribunal be established to adjudicate complaints;
(b) that the Statutory Powers and Procedures Act apply to all proceedings before tripartite Arbitration Boards, the Commission and the Tribunal under this Act."

NOTE: Copies of the brief are available through the Provincial Communications Office, c/o OSSTF, 60 Mobile Drive, Toronto M4A 2P3.

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