

FOR REFERENCE ONLY



*Mayor's Task Force
on the Status of
Women in Toronto*

**Y. W. C. A.
RESOURCE CENTRE**

newsletter

Vol. 1/No. 5

August 15, 1974

GRACE HARTMAN GUEST SPEAKER AT CONFERENCE

Grace Hartman, CUPE's National Secretary - Treasurer, will be guest speaker at the Task Force Fall Conference, to be held Friday and Saturday, September 20 & 21 in City Hall. Ms. Hartman will introduce the topic of the conference, WORKING WOMEN, during the Saturday morning session in the Council Chamber.

Workshops on Daycare, Labour Unions, and Political Action will be run by the 3 Alderwomen, Dorothy Thomas, Anne Johnston, and Elizabeth Eayrs, in the City Hall Committee Rooms. To afford the conference participants the opportunity of attending 2 workshops, they will be held in both the morning and afternoon.

The conference is being sponsored by the Task Force with the cooperation of the Toronto Public Library, who are providing resource material, and will assist with publicity in the form of production and distribution of posters.

The Friday evening session will consist of an "open house" from 7:30 to 10:00 pm on the second floor mezzanine. Women's organizations are invited to participate with displays of materials and information on their projects. Day-care will be provided during the Saturday session only. Mothers

who wish to bring their children to the Friday open house are welcome to do so.

Registrations for the conference will be in the mail to you shortly, and the Public Relations Committee suggests that you register early as the facilities will accommodate a limited number of people. For further information, contact the Task Force office.

HOPES FOR THE FUTURE

35% of Canada's labour force is made up of women, and the percentage is higher in urban centres such as Toronto. Every working woman has encountered one or more of the problems involved in entering the labour force; problems such as sexual discrimination in hiring and advancement, lack of training programmes, inadequate child care, and obscure and ineffective equal opportunity regulations.

1975 is International Women's Year, and many women involved in feminist issues hope that during the coming year, major improvements may be made in all areas affecting rights and opportunities for women.

Employment is a major issue concerning large numbers of women, and for

this reason the Task Force has chosen WORKING MOTHERS as the topic for the September conference. Most of us involved in the labour force have enough on our hands, coping with our individual problems, and often forget that others are experiencing similar difficulties. Contact with other women about the issues of employment can prove very valuable in terms of support and information, and at the very least, we expect the September Conference to provide a forum for this to happen.

But the Task Force hopes for more than this. We hope that many women will attend, and that by means of workshops, speakers, panels and resource material, we can work together to identify the problems and take steps toward their solutions. We hope that 1975 will be a better year for all working women.

FROM THE B.C. FEDERATION OF LABOUR...

B.C. Federation of Labour Secretary-Treasurer Len Guy on July 4th hailed a decision by the B.C. Human Rights Commission as a milestone in the fight for equal employment opportunities for women workers. Mr. Guy stated:

"On April 16th Linda Arksey of Surrey started working on the green chain at the large CANFOR Plywood Mill in New Westminster. At the end of her shift on April 17th the foreman fired her saying 'this is no place for a woman' and 'I don't want you to get muscles like a man.' Linda was the first woman to work on that green chain in 26 years. Ms. Arksey filed a complaint with the Human Rights Director alleging CANFOR refused to continue to employ her because of her sex."

"IWA Plant Committee Chairwoman, Marj Storm, a member of our Feder-

ation Women's Committee, along with Plant Committee member Bill Johnson gave evidence on behalf of Linda at the Human Rights Commission hearing July 3rd. Presenting the case on behalf of Ms. Arksey and the IWA (International Woodworkers of America) was Carolyn Gibbons, Legislative Director of the B.C. Federation of Labour."

"Today the Commission found CANFOR in violation of the Human Rights Act and ordered full reinstatement with pay."

"We congratulate Ms. Arksey on her successful fight for her rights and Local 1-357 and Marj Storm and her Plant Committee for vigorously pursuing this issue. We are pleased that our Legislative Director Carolyn Gibbons made a significant contribution through her effective handling of the case. We also, of course, appreciate the response of the members of the Human Rights Commission who made the decision. This decision can be considered a milestone in our continuing fight for equal employment opportunities for women. Our Federation will continue this fight until genuine equality of employment opportunity exists throughout industry in B.C."

SELF-DEFENSE TRAINING AVAILABLE

The Toronto Women's Self-Defense Centre offers a basic 6 week course in self-defense. This course has been developed specifically to teach women how to deal with the attacks to which they may be exposed.

The centre is open 4 nights and 2 days a week for classes and a drop-in.

There will be an open house and demonstration on Sunday, September 15th from 2:00 to 5:00 pm. A new class starts every night between September 16 and 21. Phone 862-0414.

THE TORONTO RAPE CRISIS CENTRE

Every large North American city has experienced an alarming increase in the reported incidence of rape over the past few years. Metro Toronto is no exception. Over the past six years there has been a rise of 76% in the reported incidence of this offence. Between 1971 and 1972, the rate rose 17.5%, from 154 reported cases in 1971 to 181 cases in 1972. These facts have led to the organization of the Toronto Rape Crisis Centre by a group of concerned women.

The centre has been operating since Feb. 14, 1974. A woman who has been attacked or who wishes to talk about a past incident may call the centre at 487-2345 at any time, 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. The centre is entirely staffed by women volunteers from a large variety of backgrounds. They have gone through education in which they have become familiar with legal and medical aspects of rape and with the reactions which a woman is likely to have following a rape. They also have a referral system available to help them deal with situations which may require professional advice or assistance.

When a woman telephones the centre, two other women will be sent to pick her up. The police will be notified only with the woman's permission, although the centre will pass on information to the police without the woman's name. The centre is primarily concerned with giving the woman support. The volunteers accompany the woman to the hospital and remain with her. They will also remain with her during police procedures if she chooses to report the attack and will continue their support through legal and court proceedings. All services are given only at the express wishes of the woman in-

volved and strictest confidentiality is maintained for a woman using the services of the centre.

Since February, the centre has handled over 2,000 phone calls. Some of these are from women who are relieved to find a sympathetic ear. Calls have been received from women who were raped as long as 10 years ago. Other calls seek information on the centre and on the offense of rape. Volunteers have personally met with over 60 women who have called in to report a rape. About half of these were reported to the police.

The centre is in need of volunteers and of funds. Offers of assistance may be addressed to Toronto Rape Crisis Centre, P.O. Box 6597, Postal Station A, Toronto, Ontario M5W 1X4 or call the centre at 487-2345.

REDLIGHT THEATRE

Redlight Theatre has just closed its first and successful production season with "Triplets" two one-act plays by Megan Terry.

On July 18th the C.B.C. featured Redlight Theatre and its second production "What Glorious Times They Had" on Access, a public affairs programme.

Future projects include a touring production of "What Glorious Times They Had", a comic musical, a radio play and a workshop for women playwrights.

This brings us to a central problem for any women's theatre. We need good scripts by women. If anyone would like to send us ideas of scripts or knows of any writers who would be interested in working with us, please contact:

Redlight Theatre,
736 Bathurst Street,
Toronto, Telephone: 536-2597

ACTION TOWARDS A MOTHER-LED UNION

On June 6-7th, The Women's Action Group held a conference in Toronto. The issues were Food Prices, Daycare, Rent Controls, the Courts and the 75% Recoupment on recipient mothers.

The workshops on these 5 issues all came up with specific action. The action primarily concerned with, has to do with single parents who are struggling to raise their families as workingpoor, or Mother's Allowance or Welfare recipients.

Resolutions achieved at the conference read as follows...

"Because of the blatant discrimination in not only financial levels but in the attitude of the male legislators, that women should remain silent while they thoughtfully deliberate on such important matters as corporate gains and football stadiums, we here and now pledge ourselves to the job of:

Liberating the women in this country who are tied to the poverty line by Government Legislation.

Seeing that the women left to rear their children alone, should receive not only the present assistance available from the Government, but be allowed to earn over and above that amount \$100.00 per month for herself and \$25.00 per child per month with a 50% recoupment figure.

That a MOTHER-LED UNION be formed to develop specific actions to put pressure on Government regarding the aforementioned problems, and in the long run a guaranteed annual income for every individual,

whether working or not, married or not, on family benefits or welfare or not."

For more information on the MOTHER-LED UNION, contact Joan Clark at St. Christopher House, 364-8456.

TASK FORCE EXTENDED

The Mayor's Task Force on the Status of Women, originally scheduled to deliver its final reports by September 30, has been extended until December 31.

The extension was moved in City Council by Alderwoman Dorothy Thomas to better enable the Task Force to fulfill its commitment to the women of Toronto.

In extending the working time of the Task Force, City Council also altered the Task Force internal structure and established an administrative Executive Committee to replace the Steering Committee.

Executive Committee members as appointed by City Council are Janice Callum, Sandy Greenberg, Julie Mathien, Joan McAbee, Sue Muckenfuss and Linda Torney.

TASK FORCE AIDS WOMEN'S GROUPS

On behalf of the Women in Transition and Interval House, the Task Force requested that the City aid these groups in finding low rental space in the city of Toronto.

The request was passed by the Executive Committee of City Council and referred to H. Wooding, Commissioner of Property and M. Dennis, Commissioner of Housing. The City Executive Committee also referred the request to the Metro Executive Committee.

TASK FORCE NEEDS HELP !

The Task Force is in need of people to help with small projects. This includes the monthly chore of preparing the Newsletter for mailing. If you enjoy collating, stapling, folding and stuffing envelopes -- or even if you don't but would like to help -- please phone the Task Force office. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

We are also trying to locate volunteers for our Daycare facilities for Friday evening and Saturday (Sept. 20 & 21) of our conference. Experience is not required; just a willingness to assist us. Please call the Task Force office if you would like to donate your services.

A NEW CENTRE FOR WOMEN

The "Centro Femminile" has recently been established by COSTI at the Stanley Road Public School, near Jane and Sheppard, to help meet the needs of immigrant women who would like to become involved in activities outside the home.

Recognizing the problems many immigrant women have in a lack of English, the centre hopes to be a link with the English community, lessening the feeling of isolation and encouraging self-sufficiency in a strange country.

They plan to offer an information centre and counselling, daycare, English and Arts & Crafts classes. Sessions dealing with typical problems of the immigrant such as, the prospects of purchasing a house, problems on buying insurance, understanding the Canadian Laws, and problems of health will be held as soon as the centre is in full operation. Other programs on interior decorating, sewing, office skills, courses for assistant kindergarten teachers and the para-social worker

are being planned on. The centre will be flexible, adopting new programs as the need arises.

They are in need of volunteers to help in many different positions. Please phone 745-6363 if you are interested in helping or would like further information.

BOOK REVIEW

Margaret Randall's book Cuban Women Now (Women's Press) is probably the most exciting book to come out about women this year. It's a book of interviews with women, who exemplify every aspect of life after the Revolution in Cuba.

As she points out, liberation there and liberation here are very different things. For instance, most Cuban women, once they have a job and are capable of taking care of themselves, want to get married. Before the Revolution only "rich" girls got married; so there's a little bit of prestige in "having made it now" for a woman who once was a peasant or a prostitute and is now able to legally marry.

However, the reaction, Randall feels, is dissolving slowly (After all the Revolution was only 12 years ago!). Their attitudes towards having children are much different. They work until almost "due", so being pregnant isn't being put out of commission. Also, Cuba is underpopulated so there is not the same stress on birth control, although birth control education is given, birth control itself is free and abortion is legal.

Randall shows the process which has evolved into an overwhelming sense of solidarity; a healthy community of men and women. But perhaps the Revolution changed the role of women most of all, their liberation grew out of a simple pressing need to survive.

Judy Keeler

WHAT CAN ONE PERSON DO ?

Do you have a complaint or criticism on a public or political issue?

There are many actions you can take on your own; even more that you can take with others.

Here are some ideas:

Letter-writing to politicians and officials

Letters influence politicians a great deal. They give them an idea of how the voters feel. Make sure they are well reasoned and to the point. Always keep a copy for your files. Remember:

1. Don't be longwinded.
2. Be logical, accurate and have your facts straight.
3. Be specific in the action you urge.
4. If you get a reply, acknowledge it. It pays to be polite and to praise action you approve.

If the Federal Parliament is in session, no stamp is needed when writing to an M.P.

Mr. John Doe, M.P.

The House of Commons, Ottawa,
or

The Rt.Hon. Pierre Elliott Trudeau,
Prime Minister, House of Commons,
or

Rt.Hon. John Diefenbaker;
all the other Cabinet members are plain Honourable.

Mr. John Doe, M.P.P. (or M.L.A.),
Provincial Government Buildings.
Stamp required.

Municipal officials and politicians can be written to or reached by telephone.

Telephone Calls

Make notes -- before, during and immediately after, so you have an accurate record. LISTEN to what is said to you. Don't just keep your own points in mind.

Telegrams

These often get a better and quicker response. Night letters are not very expensive for urgent and immediate matters.

Letters to editors of newspapers

Keep the above points in mind. If your letter can be tied to a specific article (refer to date and title) or another letter (ditto) you may have a better chance of getting it printed. Keep a copy for your files in order to check any rewriting done by the newspaper.

Hot-line programmes (radio and TV)

If you listen to radio this is a good opportunity to get subjects of interest discussed, and reaches a wide audience. By phoning in you can get practice in discussing effectively and organizing your arguments. You can also suggest topics for discussion.

Interviews with M.P.'s and officials

These can be arranged for one or more women to obtain information on a specific subject or policy to present your views.

Don't be afraid to voice your opinions or criticisms on any public issue. Your government officials are there to serve you. Make good use of them.

NEWSLETTER IN DEMAND!

There have been a few requests from groups and individuals for back copies of newsletters, and we wish to advise that these can be easily supplied if you just call the office at 367-7203.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE LAW

Toronto Community Law School is offering a course in CONSUMER PROTECTION on August 26, 27, 28, 29 at the Willowdale Public Library, 5126 Yonge Street, (near Sheppard subway). Time is 7:30 to 9:30 pm and one of the instructors will be Michael Trebilcock, law professor, University of Toronto Law School.

The course outline covers protections available to the consumer in the common law, and in provincial and federal legislation, with a critical analysis of the limitations of each remedy, and the possibilities for joint action; and the significance of the standard form contract, including the real cost of what you buy.

The course and materials are free. For more information, call 928-6494.

MORE ON FAMILY PROPERTY RIGHTS

There will be a Family Property Law Public Meeting at the St. Lawrence Centre on Wednesday, August 28, 1974 at 8:00 pm to outline the major recommendations of the Ontario Law Reform Commission for change in those laws.

The Honourable Robert Welch, Provincial Secretary for Justice and Attorney General of Ontario, and Senior Officials of his Ministry will be present to discuss these proposals. Also in attendance will be representatives from the Metropolitan Toronto Central Library to offer assistance in gaining access to resources which are available to anyone interested in further study of this subject.

Coffee will be served and an opportunity will be provided to meet informally at the conclusion of the evening.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR

You undoubtedly noticed recent press releases about International Women's Year and the leading role given to Canada by the UN, particularly in hosting an international seminar to be held in Ottawa in September.

Mary Gusella, the Director of IWY, feels very strongly that input from all Canadian women is essential to make this most important year work. The IWY Secretariat wants to hear from individuals, groups, -- anyone with something to say about what it is to be a woman in Canada.

The Secretariat will act as a clearing house for channeling information about funding projects related to women's year, and a newsletter is now being published.

Send queries and comments to:

Mary Gusella, Director
International Women's Year
Secretariat
Privy Council Office
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 03A

WE NEED YOUR HELP !

The Task Force would like to hear your comments or suggestions about its newsletter.

Also, if you or your group have any articles you would like us to include in the Newsletter, please mail them to:

The Newsletter
Mayor's Task Force on the
Status of Women in Toronto,
8th Floor, East Tower,
City Hall, Toronto

We look forward to hearing from you.

EDITORIAL

Readers will remember the letter that we printed in our May 15th issue, to Doris Anderson, Editor of Chatelaine from the Co-Ordinator of the Task Force, Judith Adam, commenting on an ad Chatelaine was using to attract advertisers (How To Buy Young Married Women), and Ms. Anderson's reply.

The following is a letter we received from a reader, and our answer, which we thought might be of interest to you.

July 8, 1974

Judith Adam, Co-Ordinator
Mayor's Task Force on the
Status of Women in Toronto

Dear Ms. Adam:

Re NEWSLETTER (May 15, 1974) -
page 5. I agree with most of what
you've written to Ms. Anderson of
Chatelaine. I saw the ad in ques-
tion, and found it as offensive as
you did.

However...

I am not only a women's liberation-
ist, but also an advertising copy-
writer. Your phrase "...distorted
and debasing attitudes of adver-
tising copywriters." is downright
discriminatory--sweeping, unquali-
fied and completely unfair.

In this office, a full 77% of the
writers is female, and--to a woman
--we do our damndest to write non-
sexist advertising. Advertising
people as a group are much malign-
ed. Come on, give us a break.
There's no use fighting discrimin-
ation on one front if not on others.
is there?

I love all of the rest of what
you're doing; keep up the good
work.

Sincerely,
(Ms.) Kathryn Dain

July 30, 1974

Ms. Kathryn Dain
Toronto, Ontario

Dear Ms. Dain:

Thank you very much for your letter
re my comments on advertising copy-
writers -- you are quite right,
they were sweeping and perhaps un-
qualified. You can be assured the
efforts of female copywriters in
your office are greatly appreciated
and have substantial effect on the
advertising industry.

What I'd like to see now is Chatelaine
make an all out effort to recruit
copywriters who won't downgrade the
magazine with sexist material. If
you come across any unemployed female
copywriters who want to write non-
sexist copy, you know where to send
them.

Again, thanks very much for your
thoughts.

Yours sincerely,
Judith Adam,
Co-Ordinator

The Task Force Newsletter is prepared by the Public Relations Committee,
and is issued monthly. Deadline for submissions is the 1st of every
month. The Task Force reserves editorial control on all submissions.