

The Advisory Council on the Status of Women met in Ottawa on July 11th and 12th, 1973. Under Chairman Dr. Katharine B. Cooke, 27 of the appointed 28 members met for the first time. The members of the Council come from all over Canada and are diverse in age, culture and national backgrounds. Native Indian people, the Northwest Territories, varied ethnic backgrounds, small towns and large cities are all represented.

Members of the Council were appointed by the Hon. John Munro from suggestions submitted by women's groups across the country. Mr Munro met briefly with the Advisory Council to welcome them, and hosted a reception for them. Also addressing the Council briefly were, Florence Bird, Chairman of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women, and Sylvia Gelber, Director of the Women's Bureau, Department of Labour.

From the broad mandate given in a Statement to the Government by the Hon. John Munro on May 3, 1973 in announcing the establishment of the council, members clarified their terms of reference based on recommendations from the Royal Commission on the Status of Women to be:

- a. to advise and consult on matters pertaining to women and report annually on the progress being made in improving the status of women in Canada;
- b. to undertake research on matters relevant to the status of women and suggest research topics that can be carried out by government, private business, universities, and voluntary associations;
- c. to establish programmes to correct attitudes and prejudices adversely affecting the status of women;
- d. to propose legislation, policies and practices to improve the status of women;
- e. To systematically consult with women's bureaux or similar provincial organizations, and with voluntary associations particularly concerned with the problems of women.
- f. to maintain liaison with the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women and such other national and international organizations as may be relevant.

From their discussions, the members of the Council drew up a list of priorities, expressive of their concerns, for immediate consideration; several of the priorities relate to the Recommendations of the Royal Commission Report:

1. The establishment of a Human Rights Commission in Canada (Rec. 165)
2. The Canada Labour Code Bill, and Superannuation Act amendments.
3. That housewives be included in the Canada Pension Plan.
4. The Divorce Act:
 - (a) that the present waiting period of three years be reduced to one year (Rec. 113).
 - (b) that there be more equitable property rights for women under the Act (Rec. 107).
5. That there be more equitable employment of women by the federal government (Rec. 26, 30, 37-38 and 60) and proportionate representation by women on Boards, Commissions and Crown Corporations (Rec. 43-38).
6. Citizenship Act Amendments (Rec. 145-149).
7. The enablement of class action.
8. Improvement of child care services.
9. Consideration of the establishment of women's Aid Services to be available to all women for counselling, information, referral, etc.

The next meeting of the Council will be held in Montreal in September,