FIGHTING FOR WOMEN'S EQUALITY. THE FEDERAL WOMEN'S BUREAU, 1945-1967: AN EXAMPLE OF EARLY "STATE FEMINISM" IN CANADA

by

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the ideas and activities of the federal Women's Bureau from 1945, when it was first proposed, to 1967 when the first Director retired. The significant increase in women's labour force participation after the Second World War, particularly amongst married women, precipitated the creation of this small agency within the federal Labour Department to compile information and prepare studies about the female labour force. Under the leadership of the first Director, Marion Royce, the Women's Bureau produced an impressive collection of publications analyzing the experiences and problems of wage earning women and providing vocational information. Utilizing the discourse of human rights and equality of opportunity which characterized the postwar period, Marion Royce represented the problems of women's employment as issues of equality. Around 1960, the Bureau began to develop and advocate for policies to facilitate equal opportunity for women in the labour force, in particular for improved vocational training, revision to the equal pay law, and provisions for maternity protection and child care.

This study assesses the impact of the Bureau on the representation of women's problems as wage earners and on the development of policies to address these issues. The Women's Bureau is conceptualized within this thesis as the first women's policy agency within the federal government. During the time of the study, women's issues were not part of the government's agenda, nor was the Bureau formed to address equality issues. Yet, the creation of the Bureau marked the beginning of the institutional representation of women's interests within the federal government. Consequently, this thesis draws on recent studies exploring the implication of "state feminism," in particular the relationship between feminist bureaucrats within the state and organized women seeking equality outside of the state, the limitations imposed on feminist demands by the structural, political, and discursive limits of the state, and the construction of "meaning" and of "issues" in the policy process. It is argued that the Women's Bureau, in these first years, played a definitive role in the gradual definition by the state of the problem of women's employment as one of inequality, a conceptualization which structured the development of equity legislation directed towards wage earning women.

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As always, any errors that remain are my own.

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INTRODUCTION

"Offering a solid take-off point" for the Second Wave: The Women's Bureau, 1945-1967

On 14 May 1953, the House of Commons was in the midst of its annual debate on supply, a boring process of budget presentation and debate for each department. On this day, the Minister of Labour, Milton Gregg, stood before the House outlining the budgetary requirements of his department. Nothing in particular had changed and the Minister was pleased to announce that he was actually asking for less than in the previous fiscal year. There were two minor changes that required some elaboration, one of which was item Number 188 that provided for the creation of a "women's bureau" within the Department. The bureau, to be headed by a woman, was to be responsible for studying "the problems peculiar to women workers" and for "making the results of such studies available to women's groups" and other interested parties. The appropriation requested, $21 560, for hiring a director and establishing the bureau was a small sum, unlikely to elicit much comment. Opposition to the proposed bureau was non-existent and the budget alterations passed quickly.[1] By this inconspicuous process, then, the federal Women's Bureau came into existence as a small item within the Labour Department budget.

The lack of fanfare surrounding Gregg's announcement of the Bureau's creation was echoed in the public reaction. Official Labour Department publications naturally noted the

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[1] A few members spoke briefly in support of the measure, in particular Ellen Fairclough and Stanley Knowles, both known for advocating the concerns of women and labour. For the announcement and subsequent comments, see, Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 14 May 1953, 5420-5431.

Bureau's creation but only in small clippings.[2] Labour and women's organizations, from which a reaction might have been expected, were either silent or issued brief, congenial statements of support.[3] No major newspapers felt it necessary to cover the story in the next few weeks, nor did it find a page in Canada's major magazines. To some extent the lack of public interest was understandable. Gregg's announcement was followed the next day by the Speech from the Throne outlining the government's "achievements" during its first term and "promises" for a second term. As news, a small agency charged with compiling information about women workers paled beside campaign speeches promising construction of a trans-Canada highway, creation of a St. Lawrence Seaway Authority and extension of national health programs.[4] The creation of a women's bureau quite simply was not viewed as noteworthy, either by a government heading into an election, or by observers seeking to judge the government's record.

Yet, the creation of the Women's Bureau marked the beginning of the institutional

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[2] For example, see, Canada, Department of Labour, *Labour Gazette* (1953), 812. In the more general *Canada Year Book* and *Canada*, both published by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, there is no mention of the Bureau's creation in the years from 1954 to 1958.

[3] The Canadian Labour Congress and the National Council of Women both spoke approvingly following the government's announcement of the Bureau's creation. The Trades and Labour Congress of Canada said nothing while the Canadian Federation of Business and Professionnal Women's Clubs simply noted the Bureau's creation without commentary in a committee report. See *Labour Gazette* (1954); National Archives of Canada (NAC), Canadian Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs (BPW) Papers, MG28I55, Vol. 7, File-CFBPW Correspondence. Subject Files, "Report of Standing Committee on Employment Conditions. Board Meeting, June 1953"; National Council of Women (NCW) Papers, MG28I25, Vol. 97, File 8, Letter to Milton Gregg from Mrs. L.H. Meng, Correspondence Secretary of National Council of Women.

[4] Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 14 May 1953, 5442-5445; for example of news coverage, see, *Toronto Star,* 15 May 1953.

representation of women's interests within the federal government. If the government saw the Bureau as inconsequential, the first Director, Marion Royce, clearly did not. Two months following her appointment, Royce addressed the Canadian public on the CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) radio program "Canada at Work". Referring to "traditional attitudes" which structure society, Royce assured the public that, "Women are, and will continue to be, at the centre and heart of family life." Still, she declared, "a woman is a person in her own right, and there is need...to explore the causes and extent of occupational inequalities and to work for their removal."[5] Given the context surrounding the Bureau's creation, this statement seems overly optimistic. This new branch was small, with meagre resources and a circumscribed mandate. The lack of interest in the Bureau's creation mirrored the lack of recognition and concern for the problems faced by wage earning women, both in the popular discourse and in government policy making. Royce's configuration of women's problems as issues of "equality" and "rights" is striking for 1954. Yet, it is also a concise declaration of the direction in which she would lead the Bureau over the next fourteen years. The Women's Bureau was the first government agency created specifically to address issues of concern to *women*. Regardless of its limitations, Marion Royce recognized in 1954, the potential within this Bureau to address the "occupational inequalities" faced by wage earning women.

This study examines the ideas and activities of this small government bureau from its creation in 1953 to the retirement of Marion Royce in 1967. The Women's Bureau is

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[5] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-2-2 pt.1, Text of talk given by Marion Royce on CBC radio program "Canada at Work", 7 November 1954.

conceptualized within this thesis as the first women's policy agency within the federal government. Thus, the thesis draws on recent studies exploring the implications of "state feminism," in particular those studies examining the potential and limitations of government created and funded status of women agencies for achieving the goals of the women's movement. Strictly defined, the Women's Bureau was not a status of women agency in the same manner as subsequent government bodies like Status of Women Canada; the Bureau was not formed to address equality issues nor did it represent the placement of women's issues on the government agenda. Still, the Bureau, through the strong leadership of Marion Royce, acted as a "voice" for women and women's equality within the Labour Department during this pre-1970 period. Through research, policy development, and advocacy, the Bureau sought to improve the position of wage earning women through goals informed by the concept of equality of opportunity. This study assesses the impact of the Bureau on the conceptualization of women's problems as wage earners and on the development of policies to address these issues, in particular the development of equal pay, vocational training, maternity protection, and child care initiatives.

It is argued that the Women's Bureau, in these first years, played a definitive role in the gradual definition by the state of the problem of women's employment as one of *inequality*, a formulation which structured the development of subsequent legislation directed towards wage earning women. By Royce's retirement in 1968, the Bureau had produced an impressive body of literature detailing the problems and experiences of women working outside the home. Beginning with the subject of married women workers in the 1950s and moving to issues like child care by the 1960s, the Bureau consistently researched issues at the forefront of public

concern and for which little information existed. As well, these studies and the public statements of the Director constructed the problems of wage earning women within the postwar discourse of human rights and equality of treatment for all citizens. This approach facilitated the redefinition of the problems of wage earning women as issues of equality, a reconceptualization seen also in the debates of women's groups and in international forums. By the early 1960s, the Bureau was no longer content to restrict its activities to information gathering and the preparation of studies; the results of studies suggested a need for new programs and legislation to meet the needs of wage earning women. Consequently, the Bureau moved beyond the initial focus on research into the realm of policy development and advocacy within the Department. As a component of the Department of Labour, the Bureau had to operate within the structural, ideological, and economic imperatives of the bureaucracy. In general, the Labour Department during these years was not concerned with the inequalities faced by women wage earners; the efficient use of labour "resources", in the interests of economic prosperity, dominated its agenda. Yet, as the demand for female labour grew in the postwar economy, the Department directed some attention towards the needs of this segment of the labour force. This development allowed the Bureau to point policy debate towards the questions of vocational training, equal pay, maternity protection, and child care. By the late 1960s, several policies had been developed to address perceived inequities, particularly in the areas of pay and maternity. The policy outcome reflected the political, structural, and discursive interplay between the Department, the Bureau, and other participants including women's groups. In this manner, these early years of the Bureau represented the beginning of state feminism in Canada and played a part in constructing the ideology and goals which

formed the basis for the "second wave" of feminist activity after 1970.

Importance of Studying the Bureau during the Postwar Period

The decision by the government to create a bureau concerned with the problems of wage earning women appears, at first, to be surprising given the general mood and popular gender ideals of postwar Canada. Successive studies have noted the predominance in postwar society of an overwhelming glorification of domestic life and motherhood for women. The popular mass media presented motherhood and marriage as the natural outlet for women's aptitude and physiology and as an immensely challenging and gratifying "career."[6] Social scientists, including medical, psychological, and social service professionals, "added credence to the notion that women needed to embrace full-time domesticity and motherhood." Psychological theory and advice, for example, structured the middle-class family with a full-time mother as "normal," a discourse which suggested working outside the home as potentially pathological.[7] This ideal was not simply a continuation of the gendered public/private dichotomy of the past; it was part of a larger idealization of home and family which

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[6] Yvonne Mathews-Klein, "How They Saw Us: Images of Women in National Film Board Films of the 1940s and 1950s," *Atlantis* 4, 2 (Spring 1979), 27; Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (New York: Norton Co., 1963) (In particular, Chapter Two "The Happy Housewife Heroine"). See also, Susannah J. Wilson, "The Changing Image of Women in Canadian Mass Circulating Magazines, 1930-1970," *Atlantis* 2, 2 Part II (Spring 1977), 33-44; M. Susan Bland, "Henrietta the Homemaker and 'Rosie the Riveter': Images of Women in Advertising in Maclean's Magazine, 1939-50," *Atlantis* 8, 2 (Spring 1983): 61-86.

[7] Mona Gleason, *Normalizing the Ideal: Psychology, Schooling, and the Family in Postwar Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999); Katherine Arnup, *Education for Motherhood. Advice for Mothers in Twentieth-Century Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 149-152.

characterized the postwar years. "Familism," as it has come to be called, "extolled home and family centredness, pronatalism, and heterosexuality" within the "security of traditional gender roles for men and women."[8] Public opinion polls and other sources suggest many Canadians did in fact aspire to a traditional family life structured around a full-time wife and mother. Young married women, including those employed outside the home, revealed a strong commitment to home and children; motherhood and homemaking were the desired goal, rather than wage earning.[9] Within this ideological context, there was little demand for more research into the conditions faced by wage earning women. The problem of women's employment was the *existence* of wage earning wives and mothers; occupational inequality elicited little concern within a discourse which exalted women's primacy in the home.

Yet, the postwar period is interesting because the apparent dominance of familism belies important changes in women's lives, changes which demanded greater attention to the problems of wage earning wives and mothers. In the two decades after World War II, women's labour force participation patterns began the transition from the "happy housewife heroine"

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[8] Joan Sangster, "Doing Two Jobs: The Wage-Earning Mother, 1945-70", in *A Diversity of Women. Ontario, 1945-1980*, ed. Joy Parr (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 102; Doug Owram, *Born at the Right Time: A History of the Baby Boom Generation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 3-30.

[9] Gertrude Joch Robinson, "The Media and Social Change: Thirty Years of Magazine Coverage of Women and Work (1950-1977)," *Atlantis* 8, 2 (Spring 1983): 87-111; Veronica Strong-Boag,"'Their Side of the Story': Women's Voices from Ontario Suburbs, 1945-60", in *A Diversity of Women. Ontario, 1945-1980*, ed. Joy Parr (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 55; Joan Sangster, *Earning Respect. The Lives of Working Women in Small-Town Ontario, 1920-1960* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 79-80, 105.

decried by Betty Friedan to the "working mom" of modern parlance.[10] Despite some decrease in the immediate postwar period, women's overall labour force participation rate rose steadily.[11] From 19.1 percent in 1931, the participation rate was 23.6 percent in 1951, 28.8 percent in 1961, and 39.4 percent by 1971. This fact alone would not be noteworthy if it were not for the changing *composition* of the female labour force. The increase in female participation came from married women in the 1950s and eventually included married women with children by the 1960s. From 10 percent of all female workers in 1931, the percentage of women who were

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[10] While significant, it is important to note that this transition from the "working daughter" to the "working mother" belies important ethnic, class, and regional differences in women's experiences of work. Poor married women and those from certain ethnic groups had always worked. In fact, immigrant women from Europe were a significant component of the increase in married women workers in the postwar period. Furthermore, statistics have always failed to adequately measure the work done by married women, whether it was part-time, at-home, or hidden in the informal economy. For this reason, the contribution of farming and fishing wives to the family economy has been omitted from conventional statistics. While the changing composition of the female labour force, thus, marked a significant transition in Canadian society, the ethnic and class biases underlying the public response must be noted. What was new was that white, middle-class women were entering the labour force after marriage. This was the group of women pictured in the postwar ideal of the "stay-at-home mom." Society was notably blind about the experiences of the poor, the immigrant, or the non-white married woman. Franca Iacovetta, "Remaking Their Lives: Women Immigrants, Survivors, and Refugees", in *A Diversity of Women. Ontario, 1945-1980*, ed. Joy Parr (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 152-153.

[11] Ruth Roach Pierson's study has demonstrated a decrease in women's labour force participation in the 1950s. Pointing to the participation rates of the war years, Pierson notes that women's participation did not reach the 1945 rate of 33.2 percent again until 1966. While these figures do suggest that women's wartime labour force participation did not significantly alter concepts of womanhood in the postwar period, they reveal only part of the picture. If census years are used for comparison, thereby eliminating the years 1943 to 1945 which constitute an anamoly in the general trend, an increase in women's labour force participation is demonstrated. Ruth Roach Pierson, *"They're Still Women After All": The Second World War and Canadian Womanhood* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1986), 220; also see, Pat Armstrong & Hugh Armstrong, *The Double Ghetto. Canadian Women and Their Segregated Work*, Rev. Ed. (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1984), 21.

married rose markedly to 30 percent in 1951, 49.8 percent in 1961, and 56.9 percent in 1971.[12] In the 1950s particularly, women in the 45 to 64 year age bracket accounted for a significant proportion of the increase in employment among married women (with significant increases also in the 35 to 45 year age bracket). Women with pre-schoolers remained a small component of the female labour force in these years, but women with school-age or grown children increasingly sought employment. The result was a marked contradiction between the ideal of familism, which prescribed domesticity for women, and the reality of changing gender roles and family structure.[13] For this reason, the 1950s and 1960s must be recognized as an important transitional period. As Joan Sangster notes: "The discrepancy between women's important role in the labour force and the persisting antipathy to married women's wage work foreshadowed a crucial contradiction: changing economic structures were still intertwined with

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[12] The labour force participation rates for all female workers for the rest of the century are: 1901-13.5 percent; 1911-16.1 percent; 1921-17.2 percent; 1981-51.6 percent. The rate for men remained fairly consistent around 80 percent. Canada, Department of Labour (Women's Bureau), *Women at Work in Canada*, 1957; Canada, Department of Labour (Women's Bureau), *Women at Work in Canada*, 1964; Canada, Labour Canada (Women's Bureau), *Women in the Labour Force. Part I. Participation*, 1983.

[13] Numerous social, economic, and demographic factors precipitated the rise in the labour force participation of married women. These included: i) expansion in areas of the economy which drew on women for employees, in particular in the trade and finance, health and social service sectors; ii) economic prosperity leading to high employment and a demand for more workers; iii) increased consumption and a desire for more goods by Canadians, requiring extra income; iv) increased education and training including post-secondary among women; v) earlier age of marriage and of first birth leaving women available for work (or other pursuits) at an earlier age (once children were less dependent). For more discussion, see, Alison Prentice et al., *Canadian Women. A History*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: Harcourt Brace & Co., 1996), Chapter Twelve.

a resilient patriarchal ideology."[14] The Labour Department recognized the changing nature of women's labour force participation in the early 1950s and responded by creating the Women's Bureau to study the issues. To understand some of the issues arising from the changes in women's labour force patterns and the government's response to these issues demands more study than has previously been done. The Women's Bureau provides an excellent site for such a study.

Recent revisionist work on the postwar period has begun to examine the complexity, change, and contradiction of these years, in particular the contrast between prescription and reality. These studies contrast with other work exploring the familism of the period, which according to Mona Gleason, often "misrepresents" the period as "an uncomplicated 'golden era' in the history of the family."[15] Doug Owram's study of the baby boom generation conclusively illustrates the home and family centredness of postwar Canadians, including the commitment to full-time mothering and home care of Canadian women. Yet, as revealed by labour force participation statistics, many Canadians challenged the ideal, either by choice or necessity. Newer studies have suggested "a surprisingly high level of anxiety about basic social values pervaded the supposedly naive and innocent postwar period." News, magazines, and other sources reveal significant concern about the stability of the family; the perceived "threats" included homosexuality, juvenile delinquency, and wage earning wives and mothers. Anxiety

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[14] Sangster, *Earning Respect*,1995, 223; also see, Pat Armstrong & Hugh Armstrong, "Taking Women Into Account. Redefining and Intensifying Employment in Canada", in *Feminization of the Labour Force. Paradoxes and Promises*, eds. Jane Jenson et al. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988), 66.

[15] Gleason 1999, 6.

about the stability of family became conflated with fears of communism; the superiority of the traditional nuclear family was equated with the perceived superiority of western democracy and capitalism.[16] As the traditional nuclear family unit became the basis of morality and political security, familism was established as a predominant ideological current. Yet, familism belied a society clearly in transition, particularly in its social and moral values.

While most of this recent work focuses on the family, a similar revision is occurring in the historiographical treatment of wage earning women, the struggle for women's equality, and state responses to these demands. Early conclusions on the experiences of wage earning women in the postwar period stemmed from studies of the long-term impact of the war on women's roles and gender ideology. Ruth Roach Pierson's influential study set the tone, arguing conclusively that, "The war's slight yet disquieting reconstruction of womanhood in the direction of equality with men was scrapped for a full-skirted and redomesticated post-war model."[17] Combined with the studies of mass media presentations of femininity, the 1950s and

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[16] Mariana Valverde, "Building Anti-Delinquent Communities: Morality, Gender, and Generation in the City", in *A Diversity of Women. Ontario, 1945-1980*, ed. Joy Parr (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 19-20. Recent works include Gleason 1999; Mary Louise Adams, *The Trouble With Normal: Postwar Youth and the Making of Heterosexuality* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997); Gary Kinsman, *The Regulation of Desire: Homo and Hetero Sexuality*, 2nd ed. (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1996); articles in Joy Parr, ed., *A Diversity of Women: Ontario, 1945-1980* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995); Veronica Strong-Boag, "Home Dreams: Women and the Suburban Experiment in Canada, 1945-60", *Canadian Historical Review* LXXII, 4 (1991), 474-475; Franca Iacovetta, "Making 'New Canadians': Social Workers, Women, and the Reshaping of Immigrant Families", in *Gender Conflicts*, ed. Franca Iacovetta & Marianna Valverde (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 263, 273; Iacovetta 1995, 142-143.

[17] Pierson 1986, 220. The question of the war's impact on women's roles was controversial, particularly the *extent* to which women retreated back to pre-war domesticity. For example, see, Alison Prentice et al., *Canadian Women. A History* (Toronto: Harcourt Brace & Co., 1988), 311; Diane G. Forestell, "The Necessity of Sacrifice for the Nation at War: Women's

early 1960s have been represented as a period of regression following the "liberating" experiences of the Second World War, a time during which women both aspired to and attained domesticity. Conservatism and quiescence seemed to characterize the women's movement as well; a lack of research into the women's groups and other equity seeking movements during these years suggested they were dormant. In contrast, political scientists and other scholars have examined extensively the proliferation of women's organizations and the state response to women's concerns for the period after 1970. These studies indirectly highlight the apparent absence of such activity in the postwar years. Yet, the years preceeding the "second wave" of feminism and the beginning of official state feminism were not quiescent. Recent work exploring wage earning women and the state points to the importance of the postwar years for structuring the goals and activities of the women's movement and the state in the fight for equality after 1970. A review of recent work examining the women's movement, state policy responses to women's demands, and the ideological construction of inequality points to the need to study these issues further and the importance of examining the postwar history of the Women's Bureau.

To begin, the years from 1954 to 1967 demand further study as a precursor to the surge of activity by women and women's groups after 1970. Recently, scholars have argued it is incorrect to speak of two "waves" of activity with the assumption that nothing happened in the intervening years. After the Second World War, organized women were aware of the "contradictions between women's formal (legal) equality and their continued subordination in

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Labour Force Participation, 1939-1946", *Histoire Sociale/Social History* XXII, 44 (November 1989), 333-348.

the home and the labour force," compelling them to continue fighting for equality within existing organizations.[18] The struggle to achieve equal pay for equal work became the primary project of the Business and Professional Women's Clubs (BPW). Their tireless campaign resulted in the Ontario government's decision to enact the first law in 1951 and the subsequent success in other provinces. Other discriminatory provisions similarly came under attack and were altered in response to critique from women's organizations.[19] Smaller local and professional groups continued, as in the pre-war period, to provide services and defend the interests of women. For example, Susan Prentice's study reveals a sustained campaign in postwar Toronto to preserve the government supported child care services developed during the war. The study challenges the supposed complacency of women in the postwar period; not only was feminist activity ongoing but the daycare movement demanded service as a right for working women, a construct which challenged the gender norms of the period.[20] These studies point to the importance of studying feminist activity in the pre-1968 period. As well, Jill

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[18] Sue Findlay, "Feminist Struggles with the Canadian State: 1966-1988", *Resources for Feminist Research* (Special Issue on "Feminist Perspectives on the Canadian State") 17, 3 (September 1988), 5; Jill Vickers, "The Intellectual Origins of the Women's Movements in Canada", in *Challenging Times. The Women's Movement in Canada and the U.S.*, eds. Constance Backhouse & David H. Flaherty (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992), 53; Ann Porter, "Women and Income Security in the Post-War Period: The Case of Unemployment Insurance, 1945-1962", *Labour/Le Travail* 31 (Spring 1993), 112; Susan Prentice, "Workers, Mothers, Reds: Toronto's Postwar Daycare Fight", *Studies in Political Economy* 30 (Autumn 1989), 115.

[19] Shirley Tillotson, "Human Rights Law as Prism: Women's Organizations, Unions, and Ontario's Female Employees Fair Remuneration Act, 1951", *Canadian Historical Review* LXXII, 4 (1991), 532-557; Porter 1993; Prentice et al. 1996, 410-411.

[20] Prentice 1989, 115-141; Mary Kinnear, "'Mostly for the Male Members': Teaching in Winnipeg, 1933-1966", *Historical Studies in Education* 6, 1 (Spring 1994), 1-26.

Vickers argues there was remarkable continuity from 1945 through the "second wave," both in a gradual progression of ideas and methods and in the personnel and groups working for women's equality.[21] This is not to suggest a strict linear progression in the development of the women's movement, but rather that there is a need to understand the contributions of women in the 1950s and 1960s to later activity.

The Women's Bureau was one site of feminist activity in this formative period of 1954 to 1968. While obviously not a women's organization in the traditional sense, the Bureau was committed to promoting women's equality, particularly as it impacted on wage earning women. Since the 1970s, women's policy agencies, although situated and funded by government, have argued they are responsible to the women's movement rather than to the governing party or bureaucracy. Although controversial, particularly within the bureaucracy which prides itself on impartiality, the concept of responsibility suggests the potential for a small, special interest group to utilize the mechanisms of state to achieve their goals.[22] The Women's Bureau did not specifically state it represented the women's organizations, but it was connected to the women's movement by common ideas and personnel. Like many professional women of the time,

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[21] Vickers 1992, 39-40; Jill Vickers, Pauline Rankin & Christine Appelle, *Politics As If Women Mattered. A Political Analysis of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 15-64.

[22] The controversy and criticism has been levelled at both government funding of special interest groups since 1970 as well as the creation of government bodies to represent the interests of under represented or disadvantaged groups. For example, see Leslie Pal, *Interests of State: The Politics of Language, Multiculturalism, and Feminism in Canada* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), 42-58. Regarding the criticism of feminist bureaucrats lacking "impartiality", see Elizabeth van Acker, *Different Voices. Gender and Politics in Australia* (South Yarra: Macmillan Education, 1999), 121; Anne Summers, "Mandarins or Missionaries: Women in the Federal Bureaucracy", in *Australian Women*, eds. Norma Grieve & Alisa Burns (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1986).

Marion Royce was a member of and maintained close contacts with several women's organizations. As Director of the Bureau, Royce interacted with the groups by speaking at annual meetings and accessing the resources of the groups for information and lobbying assistance.[23] As well, the issues around which the women's groups devoted their lobbying efforts coincided with the major policy goals of the Bureau. Although constrained by the mandate, priorities, and structural limitations of the Department, the Bureau did become a site for representation of women's issues within the state in the postwar years. Therefore, studying the Bureau allows some analysis of the debate and lobbying activity that occurred around the question of women's rights in this period previous to the "second wave."

The pre-1968 period must also be examined to understand the evolution of the discourse of women's equality, a discourse which informed the subsequent development of equity measures by feminist and state agencies. Scholars agree that the Royal Commission on the Status of Women (RCSW) marked the recognition of women's inequality as a problem; the liberal feminism of the commission constructed women's inequality as a problem of discrimination, unequal access, and inadequate education. The solution was to promote equality of opportunity through government initiatives (legislation and programs). As Carol Lee Bacchi argues, the late 1960s saw the "historical creation of a 'problem' called 'women's

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[23] Most notable is the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) for which Royce was employed from 1941 to 1952. As Director, Royce regularly attended and/or addressed annual meetings for the National Council of Women, the Business and Professional Women of Canada, the YWCA, and the Soroptimist and Zonta Clubs, as well as a number of less prominent groups.

inequality'"; it was at this time that the "'problem' was named and addressed in policy."[24] The re-definition of the "woman problem" into an issue of "inequality," while fully articulated by the late 1960s, was in the process of development in the 1950s and 1960s. The representation of women's issues as a question of equality stemmed from the discourse of human rights, democratic citizenship, and liberal democracy which coloured the postwar years.[25] Concern for human rights was a trans-national phenomenon propelled by knowledge of the holocaust and other atrocities of the war, and by the suffering and indignity experienced by displaced persons in Europe. With the growing fear of communism after 1948, the fight for democracy conflated with the support for human rights. The preservation of democracy required not only the protection of liberal democratic political systems but the cultivation of "democratic citizenship," through the extension of rights and freedoms to all Canadians and into all levels of social life.[26] The impact was felt in Canada by the early 1950s with the introduction of a range

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[24] Carol Lee Bacchi, *Women, Policy and Politics. The Construction of Policy Problems* (London: Sage Publications, 1999), 66.

[25] Janine Brodie, *Politics on the Margins. Restructuring and the Canadian Women's Movement* (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 1995), 42-43; Monique Bégin, "The Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada: Twenty Years Later", in *Challenging Times. The Women's Movement in Canada and the United States*, eds. Constance Backhouse & David H. Flaherty (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992), 26-27; Freda L. Paltiel, "State Initiatives: Impetus and Effects" in *Women and the Canadian State*, eds. Caroline Andrew & Sonda Rodgers (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1997), 27-29.

[26] Doug Owram discusses how post-war political ideas and fears led to a belief in the need for democracy to be part of daily life, including family life. Owram 1996, 45-46; also see, Annalee Gölz, "Family Matters. The Canadian Family and the State in the Postwar Period", *Left History* 1, 2 (Fall 1993), 11-18.

of rights-based legislation, such as the Canada Fair Employment Practices Act.[27] The discourse of human rights provided the ideological framework for the massive growth of "equality-seeking movements" in the post war period, typified by the civil rights movement in the United States. Women's groups and rights activists concerned about the "status" of women soon seized the language, rationale, and method of these groups to argue for equality for women.[28] The 1951 Ontario equal pay law provides an example of a measure achieved by the women's groups that was based in the postwar human rights discourse.[29] The United Nations (UN) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) provided ideological and political impetus to these women's groups. Both bodies included "sex" as one of the grounds on which charges of inequality and discrimination could be based. The women's groups pointed to the examples provided by the ILO and the UN and demanded national adherence to international agreements and conventions. As Canada was a member of these organizations and in many cases a signator of the declarations, groups in Canada frequently utilized this strategy.[30]

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[27] Passed by the federal government in 1953, the Act reflected the tone of the times with its prohibition of discrimination in employment based on race, colour, religion or national origin. It did not include discrimination based on "sex".

[28] Pal 1993, 22; Vickers, Rankin & Appelle 1993, 53; Dorothy McBride Stetson, "The Oldest Women's Policy Agency. The Women's Bureau in the United States", in *Comparative State Feminism*, eds. Dorothy McBride Stetson & Amy Mazur (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 1995), 261.

[29] Tillotson 1991.

[30] This process was facilitated by involvement in international agencies like the United Nations and the International Labour Organization which placed human rights in the forefront. The United Nations issued a Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. The International Labour Organization followed with a Convention in support of Equal Remuneration for Men and Women in 1951 and a Convention against Discrimination in Employment in 1958.

Over the period under study, this conceptualization of women's issues within a discourse of rights and equality of opportunity was the dominant ideological framework informing the Bureau's work. Marion Royce, with a long history of involvement in women's groups and international forums, came to the Bureau with a firm belief that women had a right to equal treatment and access with men. Imbued with optimism about the potential of the state to address inequality, Royce initially believed women's inequality could be addressed through programs and laws to improve access, such as better education for women, and through public education to change "outdated" attitudes. Over time, it became apparent that an "absolute" equality of opportunity framework of non-discrimination, equal treatment, and assimilation would not address the fundamental problem of the wage earning woman's continuing responsibility for home and children.[31] The "balance" in women's lives that Royce sought to achieve required special treatment for women through preferential services and laws. For the Bureau. it was difficult to justify measures such as child care and maternity leave; the individualism of liberal feminism did not provide an ideological basis for conceptualizing "difference." Measures directed strictly at women suggested the potential discrimination of the "protective" laws of the past. The Bureau found justification by blending "rights" with "protection" and by utilizing the other dominant discourse of the period - the wide social

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[31] Alena Heitlinger makes this distinction between "absolute" and "relative" equality of opportunity as a framework for assessing women's inequality. She argues "relative" equality of opportunity developed in response to some of the shortcomings of a strict application of liberalism to women's inequality. Recognizing the difficulty of women competing on an equal basis with men due to responsibilities for home and family and because of unequal "starting points" from past discrimination, liberal feminism altered to justify "preferential treatment" for women in the form of affirmative action, day care, and other woman-centred policies. Alena Heitlinger, *Women's Equality, Demography and Public Policies. A Comparative Perspective* (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1993), 26-32.

demand for a "better world" through a welfare state. As Annalee Gölz argues, the demand for a more prosperous and secure life in the postwar period "involved redefining the responsibilities of the state as fundamentally necessary for ensuring the economic security and internal stability of the Canadian family."[32] Redefinition of state (and societal) responsibility to include the security of the family provided the justification for measures directed towards the needs of wage earning women with children. By 1968, this awkward blend of protection, rights, and welfare found expression in the recommendations of the RCSW and was the starting point for many activists of the "second wave". The work of the Women's Bureau in the years previous to 1968 provides an opportunity for examining the development of the ideology of women's equality.

The history of the Women's Bureau also reveals the gradual definition of women's inequality as a problem of *lack of access to the labour market.* The 1970 report of the RCSW outlined four basic principles of equal opportunity for women; they included the right to employment if a woman chose, the sharing of responsibility for child care between women, men and society, the need for special provisions for maternity, and the need for special provisions to overcome the inequity of position stemming from past discrimination.[33] Each of these principles was informed by a preoccupation with women's access to the labour market and pointed to the development of measures to facilitate this access. As Carol Lee Bacchi argues, state responses to inequality after 1970 included anti-discrimination laws, equal pay

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[32] Gölz 1993, 11-12; also see, Jane Ursel, *Private Lives, Public Policy. 100 Years of State Intervention in the Family* (Toronto: Women's Press, 1992), 205-206.

[33] Paltiel 1997, 29.

laws, education policy, and child care policy. "The presumption underlying policies in these areas," she argues, "was/is that women become equal to men when and only when they have equal access to the labour market."[34] The placement of the Women's Bureau as a branch of the Labour Department naturally led it to focus on questions related to women's labour force participation. Yet, the double burden faced by most wage earning wives and mothers led to a gradual mixing of employment issues with "private" matters of maternity, child care, and education. The government's preoccupation with maintaining high levels of production in the booming post war economy facilitated this process. The need for the Bureau to define problems and develop policy options within the labour supply priorities of the Department led to the construction of women's issues, such as the need for child care, as questions impacting on women's labour force participation. Understanding the development of this construction is important; it has been beneficial in the short-term, by providing impetus for government action, but has negatively limited society's conceptualization of women's equality and inhibited the impact of feminist analysis of the gendered division of labour and of the oppressive effects of women's position in the family.

The period before 1970 also demands more study to better understand how the state responded to women and their perceived needs. The quiescence and conservatism attributed to postwar society and to women's organizations have also been attributed to government policy. Several studies reveal how labour policy reflected the ideal that women's place was in the home. Labour policies reinforced women's economic dependence on the family and facilitated the reconstitution of a segregated postwar labour market in which women participated in the

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[34] Bacchi 1999, 66-67.

lowest paid occupations.[35] For the most part, however, labour policy and its impact on women has not been extensively studied for the postwar period. Social security and income maintenance programs, developed as part of the burgeoning welfare state, have received the most analysis from feminist scholars. While contentious on several issues, studies of welfare policies have also argued that the state reinforced women's economic dependence.[36]

Nonetheless, some studies point to the contradictory and diverse nature of government policy and its impact on women. Conservatism in policy is usually attributed to the fact that women's issues were not part of the government agenda prior to 1970; nor as Judy LaMarsh noted cryptically in 1969, were politicians "sensitive" to "women of the electorate at large."[37] Consequently, government policy rarely addressed the perceived problems of wage earning women. Policies which did impact significantly on women were often part of other government priorities; in the 1950s, these priorities included improving the productivity and

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[35] Porter 1993; Porter's study is a follow-up to Ruth Roach Pierson, "Gender and the Unemployment Insurance Debates in Canada, 1934-1940", *Labour/Le Travail* 25 (Spring 1990), 77-103; also Armstrong & Armstrong 1988, 65-84; Ruth Roach Pierson, "'Home Aide': A Solution to Women's Unemployment after World War II", *Atlantis* 2, Part II (Spring 1977), 85-97.

[36] Carole Pateman, "The Patriarchal Welfare State", in *Democracy and the Welfare State*, ed. Amy Gutmann (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 231-260; Patricia M. Evans & Gerda R. Wekerle, eds, *Women and the Canadian Welfare State: Challenges and Change* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997); Caroline Andrew, "Women and the Welfare State", *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 17, 4 (December 1984), 667-683; Margaret Jane Little, *No Car, No Radio, No Liquor Permit: The Moral Regulation of Single Mothers in Ontario, 1920-1997* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1998).

[37] Judy LaMarsh, *Memoirs of a Bird in a Gilded Cage* (Richmond Hill, Ontario: Pocket Books, c.1969), 281; Monique Bégin who worked on the RCSW also argued that women were not a "constituency in the political agenda of the Canadian state" in the late 1960s, in Bégin 1992, 26-27. See also, Heitlinger 1993, 2.

effective utilization of the workforce and re-stabilizing the family after the shock of the previous two decades. Government policy, however, sometimes had unintentional or contradictory impacts. In the prosperity of the postwar years, labour shortages resulted in policy which sometimes supported the employment of women at the same time that income support programs were premised on the dependent wife/mother at home. Unintentionally, such policies "drew women into the labour force, making it impossible for them to stay in or return to the home."[38] Also, as Joan Sangster and Shirley Tillotson reveal in separate studies, government could be cajoled into responding to the needs of wage earning women either through the bureaucracy or in reponse to women's groups. Porter's study of unemployment insurance regulations reveals change over a decade in the representation of interests and in the construct surrounding the legislation.[39] Together, these studies suggest the importance of examining not only the contradictory impact of government policy on women but also changes in the priorities and discourse of the state.

These facts point to the need to analyse government as it responded to the equality demands of the Bureau. Expansion of government responsibility, precipitated by the development of the welfare state in the postwar period, led to a restructuring of the boundaries between public and private. Expansion of the public realm opened up, according to Janine Brodie, "new public spaces for women" which allowed women to organize and make political

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[38] Armstrong & Armstrong 1988, 65-84.

[39] Tillotson 1991; Joan Sangster, "Women Workers, Employment Policy and the State: The Establishment of the Ontario Women's Bureau, 1963-1970", *Labour/Le Travail* 36 (Fall 1995), 119-145; Porter 1993.

claims, although these claims had to be structured within the discourse of "family."[40] Over the period from 1945 to 1968, social values and government priorities changed significantly, further opening up space in which women's demands could be articulated within the state. The existence of a Bureau directed towards the concerns of women did provide a base within government for the promotion of women's issues. In fact, Monique Bégin argues that "anything that had to do with 'the status of women' was channelled to the Women's Bureau" in the years previous to 1970.[41] Consequently, despite the lack of concern for women's issues in this period, there was some potential in the government structure and the discourse of state for articulation of women's concerns and equality demands. This study examines how equity issues like equal pay, maternity protection, vocational training, and child care were gradually recognized as concerns and then debated within the Labour Department.

Theoretical Issues - State Feminism

To examine these issues, the Women's Bureau is conceptualized within this thesis as the first women's policy agency within the federal government. Recent theoretical debates about the role of the state in the struggle for women's equality provide important questions for analyzing the history of the Bureau. Since 1970, the placement of women's issues on the agenda of the state, the creation of women's policy agencies, and the resurgence of feminist lobbying known as the "second wave" has directed the women's movement towards the state as the means to achieve change. "State feminism," as this phenomenon has come to be called,

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[40] Brodie 1995, 34-41.

[41] Bégin 1992, 27.

raises a number of questions. As Alena Heitlinger succinctly notes:

> Using the machinery of the state as a means to transform the situation of women raises important questions about the nature of the state and its national, subnational and international dimensions; the role of public policies in effecting social change; the nature of male dominance; the institutionalisation of social movements; and the changing meanings of women's equality.[42]

In countries like Canada and Australia where women have had some success in entering the bureaucracy through women's policy agencies, certain key questions have dominated the debate about the efficacy of state feminism. Principal among these issues are the relationship between feminist bureaucrats and grassroots feminist organizations, the problem of "co-optation" of feminists and their demands by the state, and the construction of "meaning" and of "interests" in the policy process .[43] Each of these issues provides an important theoretical basis for examining the history of the Bureau.

Foremost for academics[44] studying women and the state has been the question of how to theorize the "state." Early theorization drew on liberal and radical feminist theory[45], but for

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[42] Heitlinger 1993, 2.

[43] Feminist scholarship in Australia has led the way on these questions, although recent work in Canada has begun to fill the gap here. Important among the Australian work is Sophie Watson, ed., *Playing the State. Australian-Feminist Interventions* (London: Verso, 1990); Suzanne Franzway, Diane Court & R.W. Connell, *Staking a Claim: Feminism, Bureaucracy and the State* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1989). For Canada, see Caroline Andrew & Sonda Rodgers, eds., *Women and the Canadian State* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1997); Janine Brodie, ed. *Women and Canadian Public Policy* (Toronto: Harcourt Brace & Co., 1996).

[44] The debate on "women and the state" has crossed disciplines and occupations involving feminist activists and bureaucrats with academics. In general, activists and "femocrats" have been less concerned with theorizing the "state" in their contributions to this debate.

[45] "Liberal" and "radical" theorists continue to develop increasingly complex analyses of the state within these theoretical frameworks. Principal among the participants are Zillah

scholars, marxist and socialist feminism have provided the dominant theory of the state (the term "materialist feminism" is more common today). Although theorization has undergone extensive revision over the years, the basic premise of marxist/socialist feminism is that the state acts in the interests of capital. Recently, these state theories have come under extensive critique by feminist scholars informed by poststructuralism and postmodernism.[46] The main critique is that marxist/socialist feminist theories of the state are too deterministic and functional. Critics argue that the state often acts in contradictory ways by introducing policies detrimental to the interests of capital and policies with unintended results. The notion that the state acts in the interests of capital (or some dominant group) presents the state as a "unified entity," a notion which clearly belies the complex and disunified history of state action towards women. For this reason, Judith Allen has questioned whether the category "the state" is even necessary or helpful to feminist theory and action:

> 'The state' is a category of abstraction that is too aggregative, too unitary and too unspecific to be of much use in addressing the disaggregated, diverse and specific (or local) sites that must be of most pressing concern to feminists. 'The state' is too blunt an instrument to be of much assistance (beyond generalizations) in explanations, analyses or the design of workable strategies.[47]

Eisenstein, *The Radical Future of Liberal Feminism* (New York: Longman, 1981); Catherine Mackinnon, "Feminism, Marxism, Method and the State: An Agenda for Theory", *Signs* 7, 3 (1982): 515-544.

[46] For example, see Brodie 1995, 23-24; Rosemary Pringle & Sophie Watson, "Fathers, Brothers, Mates: The Fraternal State in Australia", in *Playing the State. Australian Feminist Interventions*, ed. Sophie Watson (London: Verso, 1990), 229-243; "'Women's Interests' and the Post-Structuralist State", in *Destabilizing Theory. Contemporary Feminist Debates*, eds. Michèle Barrett & Anne Phillips (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), 53-73.

[47] Judith Allen, "Does Feminism Need a Theory of the State?", in *Playing the State. Australian Feminist Interventions*, ed. Sophie Watson (London: Verso, 1990), 22.

Implicit in the concept of the unified state "resting on pre-given structures like the capitalist system" is the existence of identifiable, pre-given interests and issues existing either inside or outside the state system. Such a concept clearly fails to address the criticism posed by minority and poor women that the women's movement represents only the experiences and interests of white, middle-class women. Not only does this concept fail to recognize diversity in the interests of women, but it does not recognize that the political demands of women are often constructed and altered in the process of engagement with the state.

The cogency of these poststructuralist critiques has had an impact on recent feminist state theories. Many scholars now argue against viewing the state as a separate institution or "actor"; it must, instead, be viewed as "a set of arenas" reflecting diverse interests and discourses. According to Janine Brodie, many scholars now view "societal institutions including those within the state system, as social constructs which reflect the constraints of particular social structures and historical developments."[48] This view challenges the categorization of the state as a definable entity; the state is viewed as too diverse, disconnected, and contradictory. Consequently, many recent studies focus on specific institutions or practices and include local, historical, and cultural specificities in the analysis. This trend accords with Allen's assertion that perhaps it would be more useful for feminists to conceptualize "policing," "misogyny," or "legal culture" and ignore the "call" to subsume these concepts under the

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[48] Anna Yeatman defines the state as a "plurality of discursive forums." Anna Yeatman, *Bureaucrats, Technocrats, Femocrats: Essays on the Contemporary Australian State* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1990), 170. Janine Brodie, "Canadian Women, Changing State Forms, and Public Policy", in *Women and Canadian Public Policy*, ed. Janine Brodie (Toronto: Harcourt Brace & Co., 1996), 12-14; Brodie 1995, 23-26.

category "the state."[49] Of equal importance to state theory is the poststructuralist challenge to the notion of "women's interests" (or those of men, capital or the working class). Group interests, poststructuralism suggests, do not pre-exist to be articulated or represented in the state; they are continuously constructed through discourse in the process of engagement with the state. As Rosemary Pringle and Sophie Watson argue, "Feminists who engage with the state do so within a set of parameters that are discursively constituted and will formulate their interests accordingly. Interests are constituted and constrained by the discursively available possibilities for representation and action in any particular situation."[50] The creation of "meaning" through engagement with the state by utilizing available discourses has become an important concept in articles tracing the long-term development of equality measures. This concept provides a more effective theorization for understanding the often contradictory and unintended results of government policy than the concept of contradiction introduced by socialist feminism.[51] Poststructuralists view the state as multi-faceted, diverse, and

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[49] Allen 1990, 34; Pringle & Watson 1992, 63-64.

[50] Pringle & Watson 1992, 69; Brodie 1995, 26-27. Jane Jenson argues the same process for the formation of group identity in "Understanding Politics: Contested Concepts of Identity in Political Science", in *Canadian Politics*, 2nd ed., eds. James P. Bickerton & Alain-G Lagnon (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 1994), 58-59.

[51] The notion of contradiction is central to materialist feminist analysis today. As Armstrong and Connelly note, state actions can both "benefit and undermine" women's efforts and can aid some women while "reinforcing the subordination of others." The state cannot be viewed simply as an arm of capital; the divisions and complexity among interests and issues is reflected in the structures of the state. Thus, "the state is understood both as an instrument of class rule and as a contested terrain where struggle can make a difference." Pat Armstrong & M. Patricia Connelly, "Introduction: Feminism, Political Economy and the State: Contested Terrain", in *Feminism, Political Economy and the State. Contested Terrain*, eds. Pat Armstrong & M. Patricia Connelly (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 1999), 2-3.

disconnected. The outcome of state policies, therefore, result from discursive struggles, often numerous and diverse, which continuously construct both the state and the interests. As Pringle and Watson argue, any "intentionality" in policy outcome stems from "the success with which various groupings are able to articulate their interests and hegemonize their claims." It is," they note, "always likely to be partial and temporary."[52]

For state theory, the contribution of poststructuralism is important but it has not entirely eroded the importance of materialist feminism. Concern exists among many feminist scholars about the potential impact of poststructuralism. The rejection of historical agency and causality, the tendency to subsume all into representation, and the denial of a material or political basis underlying the experiences and consciousness of people seems to negate the fundamental method and suppositions underlying history.[53] Taken to a logical conclusion, poststructuralism suggests there is no "reality" because nothing exists outside discourse, a proposition which removes the need for political activism, a fundamental component of feminism. Yet, there is no doubt many feminist historians and social scientists are attracted to poststructuralism because of what Joan Sangster terms a "mutual interest...in challenging androcentric epistemologies, critiquing essentialism, and exploring the power inherent in language and representation."[54] In response, some feminist scholars suggest a distinction exists between "sceptical" and "affirmative" poststructuralism. The latter offers to feminist scholars,

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[52] Pringle & Watson 1992, 63.

[53] For example, Bryan Palmer, *Descent into Discourse. The Reification of Language and the Writing of Social History* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990).

[54] Sangster, *Earning Respect*, 1995, 8.

the potential to blend the important insights of poststructuralism with existing frameworks; it "assumes that the 'how' of representation and discourse must be linked to the 'why' of economic interest, political practices, and state alliances."[55] This study is informed by the insights of both materialist feminism and poststructuralism. The activities and goals of the Bureau were shaped by real systems of economic, gender, and political power; yet the Bureau's understanding and response to these power relations, as well as the power relations themselves, were structured and constituted within the discourses available to it.

State theory affects how scholars assess the impact and utility of engagement with the state. The concept of the state as a "plurality of discursive forums" lacking any definable unity raises the question, as noted previously, of whether effective political strategies can be designed or achieved through state action. For many feminists, however, the existence of policy agencies established to examine women's status requires not only a theory of the state but also analysis of the history of feminist engagement with the state. Many scholars and feminist activists are still optimistic about the potential to achieve political gains through engagement with the state.[56] Still, engagement with the state has often been characterized as a process of dilution, diminution, and frustration for feminists and their goals. Sue Findlay, who

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[55] Sangster, *Earning Respect* 1995, 10; Bacchi 1999, 43; Pauline Rosenau, *Post-Modernism and the Social Sciences: Insights, Inroads, and Intrusions* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 134.

[56] Heitlinger 1993, 4; Linda Geller-Schwartz, "An Array of Agencies. Feminism and State Institutions in Canada", in *Comparative State Feminism*, eds. Dorothy McBride Stetson & Amy Mazur (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 1995), 50. The debate between feminists and femocrats about the potential for achieving goals through the state in the early years of state feminism in Australia is detailed in Hester Eisenstein, *Inside Agitators. Australian Femocrats and the State* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996), 19-23.

headed the Women's Program of the Secretary of State from 1975 to 1980, gave voice to the frustration of many feminists working in state agencies: "While women's issues had found a place on the political agenda between 1975 and 1980, paradoxically feminist struggle within the state had been effectively controlled and blocked."[57]

Underlying optimism about the potential of state feminism is the idea that women's policy agencies can serve as a voice for feminist goals within the state. This view presupposes cooperation between women's groups outside the state system and the feminists hired by government. According to Caroline Andrew and Sonda Rodgers, an "insider/outsider" model suggests potential success for state feminism through a "juxtaposition of political pressure from women's groups with strategic bureaucratic action from a committed group of insiders."[58] Underlying this model is an implicit unity of purpose and ideas among feminists that conflicts with recent recognition of diversity of experience and interests. Consequently, a number of studies have focused on the nature of the relationship between "insiders" and "outsiders," in particular the extent to which the two groups have achieved feminist goals through cooperative action. The optimism of some has been tempered by studies which reveal a lack of unity in goals and ideals and disjointed action on the part of participants inside and outside the state.

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[57] Findlay 1988, 5-7; Lorna Weir speaks of the ability of the state to "manage" feminist organizing in "Women and the State: A Conference for Feminist Activists", *Feminist Review* 26 (Summer 1987), 98-99.

[58] Caroline Andrew & Sonda Rodgers, "Introduction", in *Women and the Canadian State*, eds. Caroline Andrew & Sonda Rodgers (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1997), xii; Christina Bergqvist & Sue Findlay, "Representing Women's Interests in the Policy Process: Women's Organizing and State Initiatives in Sweden and Canada, 1960s-1990s", in *Women's Organizing and Public Policy in Canada and Sweden*, eds. Linda Briskin & Mona Eliasson (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999), 130-133.

Rather than deriving power from alliance, femocrats and feminists outside the state often act in opposition and hinder or undermine the efforts of each other.[59] For feminist bureaucrats committed to promoting the agenda of the women's movement, the problem arises of determining which "interests" to pursue; in Canada, as in Australia, no one group clearly speaks for all women, leaving the question of to which group the "insiders" should be responsible.[60] State funding of women's groups and their projects also presents problems to cooperation between "insiders" and "outsiders." Numerous studies argue that the structure, identity, and goals of women's groups have been altered by the process of receiving state funding.[61] Female bureaucrats in the Women's Program found their efforts to support equality issues through funding constrained by conflicting demands, state priorities, and funding cuts.[62] As a result, feminists both inside and outside the state are torn between the need for group and program funding and the potential funding allows for the state to "manage" feminism.

Still, the existence of feminist bureaucrats in the state since the 1970s has raised important questions about their potential to integrate consciousness of women's issues into the

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[59] For examples, see Naomi Alboim, "Institutional Structure as Change Agent: An Analysis of the Ontario Women's Directorate"; Nancy Sullivan, "Pay Equity in Manitoba"; and Jane Ursel "Considering the Impact of the Battered Women's Movement on the State: The Example of Manitoba", all in *Women and the Canadian State*, eds., Caroline Andrew & Sonda Rodgers (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1997).

[60] van Acker 1999, 122.

[61] Burt 1995, 87-88; Weir 1987, 98-99; also for Australia, see L. McFerren, "Interpretations of a Frontline State: Australian Women's Refuges and the State" in *Playing the State. Australian Feminist Interventions*, ed. Sophie Watson (London: Verso, 1990), 191-205.

[62] Pal 1993, 50-51; Sandra Burt, "Gender and Public Policy. Making Some Difference in Ottawa", in *Gender and Politics in Contemporary Canada*, ed. Francois-Pierre Gingras (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1995), 87-88.

policy making process. The label "femocrat" originated in the early 1970s to denote those women hired as senior officials in the newly formed status of women agencies. Coming from the women's movement or deeply influenced by the critique of women's "oppression," most of these new bureaucrats were openly declared feminists. They argued that government policy, as developed by men, was a crucial factor in promoting women's oppression, through policies which reinforced women's dependence on men and their subjection in the home. In principle at least, the femocrats sought to place women's interests into the policy process. Yet, the term "femocrat" was used perjoratively as well. From the beginning, an angry debate revolved around the motives of these high-paid bureaucrats and their ability to represent "ordinary" women (and particularly women from ethnic or disadvantaged groups). Implicit in this critique was the notion of "co-optation"; these women had "sold out" the movement and its goals for lucrative, high-status jobs, or less negatively, had extended legitimacy to a government system unwilling or unable to alter the position of women. The existence of the femocracy, critics argued, allowed the government to control or minimize the impact of feminism by appearing attentive to women's interests.[63] Undoubtedly, different theories of the state affected the nature of the critique. For those who saw the state as an instrument of capital or patriarchy, femocrats were likely to achieve only partial or short-lived gains. To others, the state system was antithetical to feminism; "real" feminists belonged in alternate structures premised on cooperation.

Scholarly assessments of the femocrat experiment since 1970 have revealed, perhaps

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[63] Eisenstein 1996, xv-xvi, 68-74; Marian Sawer, *Sisters in Suits. Women and Public Policy in Australia* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1990), 9-20; Heitlinger 1993, 70-80; van Acker 1999, 121; Franzway et al. 1989, 140-141.

not surprisingly, a confluence of opportunity and obstacle. The creation of women's policy bodies has, to some extent, legitimated status of women issues as a government priority and allowed feminists to achieve notable policy successes. The likelihood of success increases during periods when the political and economic climate makes it expedient for government to attune to the demands of "equality-seeking movements." International Women's Year in 1975 was one such period during which the Women's Program in the Secretary of State was able to address a number of outstanding equality issues. Yet, the placement of femocrats in separate government bodies has left them and the issues they pursue "marginalized" on the periphery of the bureaucratic structure and policy process. Except for 1975, the Women's Program was largely unable to influence the policy making process; the program staff, Findlay argues, was "largely invisible" and "treated with bemusement by management."[64] This situation accords with the experiences of femocrats in Australia. Bureaucrats ignored or obstructed femocrats; the implicit "political allegiance" of femocrats plus the fact that women's issues transgressed departmental divisions caused animosity.[65] As well, the potential for femocrats to exert pressure on policy development has often been restricted to "women's issues"; the category "status of women" has left feminists organizationally and ideologically outside of the larger debates on social and economic policy. When femocrats have been integrated into the mainstream of policy making, they have faced a policy making process which is beset with contradictory demands and results. As Sophie Watson notes, policy making often involves "facing the constraints of government expenditures, directives and legal structures within a

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[64] Findlay 1988, 6.

[65] van Acker 1999, 121.

prescribed bureaucratic framework."[66] Yet separation is beneficial as well; it allows femocrats to create a bureaucratic and ideological environment conducive to their feminist goals. Nonetheless, these problems have leant credibility to the charge that femocrats have been co-opted by the state to create an illusion of responsiveness to women's concerns.

The charge of "co-optation" has been a central critique of state feminism, applied to feminist goals as well as femocrats. Recourse to the state to achieve the goals of the women's movement has resulted, according to many detractors, in feminist demands being altered and diluted. In 1988, Susan Prentice wrote about the "mainstreaming" of the day care movement. Engagement with the state, she argued, was important because it moved the child care issue on to the state agenda. To achieve legitimation, however, feminists had to "shape" their demands in the "familiar and non-challenging language" of the state and society. The result was that child care came to be analyzed in a liberal democratic discourse of women's "right" to work and the role of the state in "family" support; the radical feminist analysis of gender inequality and the sexual division of care that had guided the arguments of child care advocates since the 1970s was removed.[67] Feminists now speak of the "institutionalization" of feminist politics which results from the need to make strategies and demands fit within the practices and discourses of the state. A number of studies have shown how feminist goals and analysis have

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[66] Watson 1990, 10.

[67] Susan Prentice, "The 'Mainstreaming' of Daycare", *Resources for Feminist Research* (Special Issue on "Feminist Perspectives on the Canadian State") 17, 3 (September 1988), 59-63.

been "shaped," and some argue "diluted," by this process of engagement with the state.[68] Interestingly, the charge of "co-optation" is more strikingly revealed in cases when the government utilizes the concepts and language of feminism to justify policies. Katherine Teghtsoonian examined child care policy debates in the federal House of Commons during the early 1990s. In an interesting twist, Conservative parliamentarians argued that the government's child care policy would provide "choices" for women, when in reality the choices offered were limited by race and class and still assumed women's responsibility for the care of their children.[69] Feminist scholars have expressed concern about the implications of this "institutionalization" of feminist politics. Concrete achievements, such as the enactment of maternity leave provisions and benefits, have overshadowed the need perceived by many feminists for a fundamental restructuring of society.

All of these issues are central to assessing the experiences of the Women's Bureau during this first period. The Bureau was, as argued before, the first government agency directed towards women's concerns, and Marion Royce could be labelled the first femocrat in Canada. As a small agency, lacking resources and administrative or advisory powers, and dependent on other branches to complete research, the Bureau was undoubtedly "marginalized"; the lack of commitment to address women's concerns by the Labour

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[68] Sue Findlay, "Institutionalizing Feminist Politics: Learning from the Struggles for Equal Pay in Ontario" in *Women and the Canadian Welfare State*, eds. Patricia M. Evans & Gerda R. Wekerle (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 315; Katherine Teghtsoonian, "Work and/or Motherhood: The Ideological Construction of Women's Options in Canadian Child Care Policy Debates", *Canadian Journal of Women and the Law* 8, 2 (1995), 411-439.

[69] Katherine Teghtsoonian, "Promises, Promises: 'Choices for Women' in Canadian and American Child Care Policy Debates", *Feminist Studies* 22, 1 (Spring 1996), 119-146.

Department during the postwar period further isolated the Bureau. Similarly, the charge of "co-optation", of being created simply to placate women's groups, could be (and was) applied. Still, the Bureau struggled to integrate consciousness of women workers and their problems into other divisions of the Department and, to a lesser extent, into other Departments. As well, it researched and lobbied actively in support of specific measures, such as maternity leave legislation, which it deemed important to wage earning women. In these efforts, the Bureau must be seen as part of a larger women's movement with which it shared ideas and goals. As a component of the bureaucracy, the Bureau strove to further the goals of "outsiders," while also seeking to expand its own meagre resources by utilizing the resources of the women's groups. The potential for developing or increasing power through unity between "insiders" and "outsiders" was evident both to the Bureau and the women's groups in this early period. Yet, unity of purpose between Royce and the groups was elusive at times. Still, during the 1950s and 1960s, the Bureau participated in the development of several policies considered important to women's access and treatment, including equal pay, maternity leave benefits, and child care policies.

Increasingly, the question of *how* issues are constructed in debate has become of fundamental importance in the assessment of state feminism. The recognition that women's issues have been altered by the process of policy development has encouraged scholars to study the production of "meaning," in the process of which poststructuralism's concept of interest formation has been valuable. The implied complicity of state actors and femocrats underlying the charge of "co-optation" has been augmented by recognition that issues and interests are

continually constructed as they move through the "universe of political discourse."[70] As Rosemary Pringle and Sophie Watson argue, the interests articulated by femocrats are not necessarily "pre-given" but are "constructed in the context of the machinery of government." "Meaning" is created and altered within a political process characterized by "conflicting discourses" which structure the ideas of political actors. Political participants, Jane Jenson reminds us, "do not exercise the same power over the meaning systems that organize political debate"; therefore, certain ideas are dominant while others are "silenced."[71] The struggle over "meaning" points to the importance of focusing on the stage of policy formation when issues are formed and shaped by "competing representations." Carol Lee Bacchi argues that scholars need to go further and focus first on the *representation of the problem.* Attention to the role of discourse in constructing issues (and interests) places the emphasis on examining policy proposals, the "solutions." Yet as Bacchi argues, policy solutions are a product of the problem representation, a reflection of how a problem is understood.[72] Ideally, to understand the often incomplete, distorted, or contradictory policy results of state feminism, it is necessary to examine both the problem definition (of all participants) and the role of discourse in shaping these concepts within the universe of political discourse.

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[70] Jane Jenson coined the expression "universe of political discourse" in "Gender and Reproduction, or Babies and the State", in *Feminism in Action. Studies in Political Economy*, eds. M. Patricia Connelly & Pat Armstrong (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 1992), 215-216.

[71] Pringle & Watson 1992, 60, 68-69; Brodie 1995, 27; Jane Jenson, "Competing Representations: The Politics of Abortion in Canada", in *Women and the Canadian State*, eds. Caroline Andrew & Sanda Rodgers (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1997), 294.

[72] Bacchi 1999.

This study focuses on the production of "meaning," both the problem definition and the evolution of problems and solutions, to examine the Bureau's role in the development of equity legislation in these years. Though a marginal agency, the Bureau was an important influence in the development of the equal pay, maternity protection, and child care policies of the 1960s. It introduced into the departmental debate the concept of women's work problems as questions of equality and of shared societal responsibility for balancing home and family. However, the Bureau did not control the definition of these policy problems. Competing discourses, such as the nineteenth-century concept of "protecting" wage earning women and the dominant preoccupation of the Labour Department with the efficient utilization of labour resources, also had an impact on the final outcome of these debates. The "successes" achieved by the late 1960s reflected the confluence of these representations. These struggles to establish "meaning" coincided with struggles within the Bureau (and within women's groups) to define women's equality. The conceptual limitations of the equal opportunity framework presented challenges to the Bureau to justify "preferential" policies like child care. Still, the Bureau was able to shape the definition of the these problems, thereby influencing the final policy outcomes. The result of these efforts and of the Bureau's role in these struggles are important for assessing the potential of state feminism.

Conclusion

In order to examine these various issues, this study is divided into five chapters. The first chapter examines the eight year period prior to 1953 during which the idea of a women's bureau was proposed, debated, and constructed. An unrealistic request in 1945, it became a

viable policy option by 1953 due to changes in government priorities, the demands and lobbying activity of women's groups, and the definition of the idea. The second chapter considers the first formative years of the Bureau during which it revealed its intention to act as a strong voice for women, through insightful research work and efforts to integrate its concerns into the priorities of the Department. These years were formative because the early research established the later policy goals of the Bureau. The third, fourth, and fifth chapters explore the development successively of occupational training goals, equal pay laws, and maternity protection and child care policies. In each case, the evolution of these policies is examined, taking account of the discursive, political, and material limitations which constructed the final policy solution.

In October 1970, *Chatelaine* magazine published an article on Sylva Gelber, the new Director of the Bureau.[73] In line with the magazine's feminist editorial stance[74], the article was a postitive testament both to the competence and character of Gelber and to the future and past contributions of the Bureau. Still, despite *Chatelaine* coverage of the Bureau and its activities over the years, the article's author, Mollie Gillen, felt a need to introduce the Women's Bureau

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[73] Gelber was appointed in October 1968. In the transition period between her appointment and Royce's retirement, the Bureau was headed by Jessica Findley. However, Findley did not remain long in the position and there was little activity during this time.

[74] *Chatelaine* editor, Doris Anderson, was an outspoken feminist. She had, since her appointment in 1957, attempted to include feminist arguments and articles on women's equality issues within the traditional fare of women's magazines (recipes, fashion, child raising advice). By 1970, Anderson was able to give more coverage to women's issues with the rising prominence of "status of women" issues. See Doris Anderson, *Rebel Daughter. An Autobiography* (Toronto: Key Porter Books, Ltd., 1996), especially Chapter 10, "How We Changed a Magazine - and Women"; also, Valerie J. Korinek, "'Mrs. Chatelaine' vs. 'Mrs. Slob': Contestants, Correspondents and the *Chatelaine* Community in Action, 1961-1969", *Journal of the CHA* (1996), 251-275.

to the readership. By late 1970, the "second wave" of the women's movement was gaining momentum with the development of many new women's organizations and the publication of the Report of the RCSW. "New feminists," Gillen believed, were not likely to be aware of the previous history and mandate of the Bureau, an agency presumably connected to the "old" women's movement. Yet, Gillen believed new feminists should be aware of the Bureau. For sixteen years, she argued, it had provided important research "offering a solid take-off point for arguments against the discrimination deplored by all thinking Canadians."[75] Gillen's comments about the Bureau provide an accurate assessment of its first sixteen years. The Women's Bureau did not establish women's equality as a dominant priority within the Labour department. Yet, it did manage to alter the definition of wage earning women and their needs within the Department, which affected the development of policies directed towards wage earning women, particularly married women and mothers. Through studies, policy development, advocacy, and network building, the Women's Bureau played an important role in shaping the conceptualization of women's equality which would structure subsequent approaches to the problem of women's equality.

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[75] Mollie Gillen, "The Woman Who Knows About Women", *Chatelaine* (October 1970), 93.

CHAPTER ONE

"Recognizing that the problems raised by women's groups deserve attention": The Creation of the Federal Women's Bureau, 1945-1953

At first glance, the creation of the Women's Bureau in 1953 was an unusual policy initiative. The social and political context of the early 1950s belied any concern (or even interest) in the wage earning woman. Mass production magazines glorified feminine domesticity and family life while devoting minimal space to the experiences of wage earning women, particularly wives and mothers.[1] The Women's Bureau of the United States existed as a model for this form of government intervention, but no evidence exists of popular demand for a similar agency in Canada. As well, the creation of the Women's Bureau does not appear to have been a pre-election manoeuvre. The government made the announcement during the annual debate on supply which was an unlikely place to announce an initiative if it was intended to attract public attention. In the Speech from the Throne which followed the debate on supply, there was no mention of this new initiative.[2] As a minor addition to the Labour budget, the new Bureau was omitted from the political grandstanding as the Liberals hit the hustings for a second term.

Nonetheless, most commentators attribute the government's decision to create this

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[1] This point is discussed in more detail in the Introduction.

[2] Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 14 May 1953, 5442-5445. An article in the *Toronto Star* the following day mentioned the debate on supply but did not summarize what had occurred. The article did, however, sum up the Speech from the Throne noting the various policies that the government would emphasize in the upcoming election. The creation of the Women's Bureau was not mentioned at all. *Toronto Star*, 15 May 1953.

Bureau to pressure from several women's groups. The Minister of Labour, Milton Gregg, established this explanation with his announcement in May 1953. Speaking before the House, he declared:

> The women's organizations, speaking for large numbers of women, have been urging upon the government for some time that there are special problems facing women workers which should be given special attention...In doing this we are recognizing that the problems raised by women's groups deserve attention.[3]

Subsequent references to the Bureau have repeated Gregg's explanation. Although there are no studies examining the origins of the Bureau, references to its creation always credit the lobbying activities of the women's groups.[4] In the years after 1953, the major women's groups were happy to accept this credit, in particular the National Council of Women (NCW), the Canadian Federation of Business and Professional Women (BPW), and the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA). An official BPW history, for example, states the Women's Bureau resulted from the "urgings" of "national organizations - prominent among them the Canadian Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs."[5] These assertions suggest the government was responsive to the demands of women, as represented by organized groups, and to the concerns specific to women. This is surprising in a period when "women's issues"

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[3] Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 14 May 1953, 5420.

[4] For example, Linda Geller-Schwartz, "An Array of Agencies. Feminism and State Institutions in Canada", in *Comparative State Feminism*, eds. Dorothy McBride Stetson & Amy Mazur (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 1995), 42; Jill Vickers, Pauline Rankin & Christine Appelle, *Politics As If Women Mattered. A Political Analysis of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 46.

[5] Elizabeth Forbes, comp., *With Enthusiasm and Faith. History of the Canadian Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, 1930-1972*, (CFBPW, 1974), 82.

have been viewed as outside of government priorities and policy and when women's groups have been viewed as largely ineffective. Consequently, it raises questions about the extent to which women's groups were able to influence the policy process and the circumstances around which a "women's issue" was placed on the government agenda.

The question of whether to create a women's bureau received serious consideration and debate over an eight year period from 1945 to 1953. On three separate occasions, discussion within the Labour Department coincided with active lobbying by at least one of the three women's groups. Gregg's assertion that the government's decision was a response to these "urgings" was in a sense true. However, this initiative cannot be seen as a *direct* response to the request of the groups. Over the eight year period, the idea of a bureau (its structure and purpose) evolved, both as conceptualized by the government and the groups. The interaction between the groups and the government was a dynamic process through which the final concept of a bureau came into being. Although first considered in 1945, a women's bureau did not become a viable policy option until 1953, after this process of evolution was completed. Thus, the action of the women's groups, which at times seemed to be ignored, was important. However, the government's decision and the development of a women's bureau as a realistic policy was also affected by the changing priorities and concerns of the government. It was the interaction of the government's policy concerns and objectives with the pressure of the women's groups which led to the creation of a women's bureau as a specific response to the concerns of the time.

1945: "Reconstruction" and the Postwar Woman - The Idea of a "Women's Bureau" First Arises

Interest in a women's bureau by women's organizations and the federal Department of Labour first began in the Spring of 1945.[6] At the 1945 Convention of the YWCA, held in early June, a resolution passed requesting the Dominion government to form a "women's bureau" within the Department of Labour[7]. Follow-up action occurred only days later with a letter to Prime Minister Mackenzie King requesting government to give the resolution "most careful attention."[8] Following that symbolic act, the National Council of the YWCA also presented the request directly to the Department of Labour.[9] In June, the resolution was presented to and

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[6] There were sporadic requests for a women's bureau previous to 1945, but they were neither frequent nor consistent. A Labour Department memo dated 14 December 1950 from M.M. Maclean (Director, Industrial Relations Branch) to the Deputy Minister of Labour gives a brief history of requests to the Department over the years. From a brief review of records, the earliest request found by Maclean was dated January 1939. While not necessarily comprehensive, the memo conveys the assertion that requests were sporadic at least until the war years. NAC, Department of Labour Records, RG 27, Vol. 3528, File #3-26-23, Memo from M.M. Maclean to the Deputy Minister of Labour, 14 December 1950.

[7] The resolution stated:
"Resolved that the YWCA recommend to the Dominion Government the formation of a Women's Bureau in the Department of Labour which shall study all matters pertaining to the work of women, formulate standards and policies for the improvement of their working conditions, advance opportunities for profitable employment, and generally concern itself with the protection and furtherance of women's interests."
This was a new issue. There was no mention of a women's bureau in the 1940 YWCA Convention records (YWCA conventions were held every five years).

[8] NAC, Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) Papers, MG 28I198, Vol. 2, File #2-6, Letter from Louise Gates (General Secretary, YWCA) to W.L.M. King (Prime Minister), 11 June 1945.

[9] An account of some of the YWCA's activity on this issue can be found in NAC, YWCA Papers, MG 28I198, Vol. 3, File #3-1, Minutes from 1949 Convention. Contact with the Department of Labour is mentioned in NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 605, File #6-24-1 pt. 4, Memo from Mrs. Rex Eaton (Director of Women's Division, National

passed at the annual meeting of the NCW. NCW records make no further mention of the issue at this time, but from government records, it is evident that the NCW did present the request to the government during their annual submissions in both 1945 and 1946.[10] This lobbying activity would not be noteworthy except that it coincided with interest and discussion about a women's bureau within the Department of Labour at the same time. Independent of the YWCA's initiative, top officials[11] within the Department seriously discussed establishing an "industrial welfare bureau" during April and May of 1945.[12] Support for the idea grew to the point that the Minister of Labour instructed Fraudena Eaton (Director of the Women's Division, National Selective Service) to announce, to three separate women's conventions, that the Department was considering creating a women's bureau. The Minister wanted to "test" the response of organized women to this idea. Eaton and the Deputy Minister of Labour both expressed clear support for creating such a branch.

Selective Service) to Arthur MacNamara (Deputy Minister of Labour), 18 May 1945.

[10] National Council of Women of Canada (NCW), *Yearbook, 1945*, Doris Lewis Rare Book Room, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario, 54.

[11] A series of memos on this issue were exchanged between Fraudena Eaton and Arthur MacNamara from 27 April to 18 May 1945. Fraudena Eaton (referred to as Mrs. Rex Eaton in the correspondence as was the practice of the time) was the Director of the Women's Division of National Selective Service. Arthur MacNamara was the Deputy Minister of Labour.

[12] The term "industrial welfare bureau" was used in the correspondence between Eaton and MacNamara. Eaton makes a distinction between this idea and the demand for a "branch to deal with women's problems" because this bureau would deal with the concerns of both men and women. Still her idea also includes a separate "branch specializing in the particular interests of women" and, thus, effectively would have created a "women's bureau" as conceptualized by people using that term. Also in the correspondence, it is this latter notion (of a branch dealing with the problems of working women) which forms the centre of their discussion. There are five memos between Eaton and MacNamara from 27 April to 18 May 1945. NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 605, File #6-24-1 pt. 4.

This initial interest in a women's bureau by Labour Department officials was related to the postwar demands of reconstruction. Despite popular idealization of the postwar woman as a homemaker, the federal government had to treat women, at least some women, as "workers" in its postwar planning. Wartime policy had actively encouraged women, including married women, to work outside of the home to offset acute labour shortages.[13] By 1944, talk of "reconstruction" of the economy and society included the promise of "full employment" to *all* who were willing and able. As women had contributed to the war as workers (and in the armed services), they were in theory included in the discourse of "full employment."[14] Premised on the ideal that Canadians had an intrinsic right to economic security, "full employment" was a reflection of the idealistic desire among many Canadians to create a "better world" after the trauma of depression and war. The concept of a "better world" included the commitment to economic security (through full employment and income support programs) within the egalitarian discourse of equality of opportunity and human rights so prominent in postwar

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[13] From 24.4 per cent in 1939, women's involvement in the workforce rose to 33.2 per cent by 1945. Ruth Roach Pierson, *"They're Still Women After All": The Second World War and Canadian Womanhood* (Toronto, 1986), 215; Pat Armstrong & Hugh Armstrong, *The Double Ghetto. Canadian Women and Their Segregated Work*, Rev. ed. (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1984), 21.

[14] For example of the academic debate, see, Alexander Brady & F. R. Scott, eds., *Canada After the War. Studies in Political, Social and Economic Policies for Post-War Canada* (Toronto: MacMillan Co., 1944); Violet Anderson, ed., *Canada and the World Tomorrow. Addresses given at the Canadian Institute on Public Affairs August 19 to 26, 1944* (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1944). The government's commitment to full employment is argued in a number of sources, the most notable being, Canada, Department of Reconstruction, *Employment and Income with Special Reference to the Initial Period of Reconstruction*, presented to Parliament by the Minister of Reconstruction, April 1945 (Ottawa, 1945).

reconstruction planning.[15] While the discourse of rights inherent in reconstruction planning suggested women would be included in a manner which recognized their right to employment with equality of opportunity, in reality, women were included in government policy in a very segregated, limited, and discriminatory manner.[16]

In translating "full employment" from an academic and idealistic discourse to an actual policy at the departmental level, distinctions were made between male and female workers and their entitlement to employment. For women, government employment policy involved re-direction and re-training. Early efforts, supervised by Fraudena Eaton and using the resources of the women's division of the Dominion Employment Service, involved surveying the labour market to determine where and in what occupations women were needed. From these surveys, the Department of Labour established vocational programs to train women to fill these demands. In theory, Department policy sought to re-establish female workers by moving them from areas where they were no longer needed (particularly in the armed services and war industries) to those areas in the economy where there was a demand. The process, officials believed, was a practical response to the demands of the economy. In practice, however, stereotypes about what types of work were appropriate for women structured the process.[17]

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[15] Annalee Gölz, "Family Matters. The Canadian Family and the State in the Postwar Period", *Left History* 1, 2 (Fall 1993): 11.

[16] Gölz 1993, 14-17; Gail Cuthbert Brandt, "'Pigeon-Holed and Forgotten': The Work of the Subcommittee on the Post-War Problems of Women, 1943", *Histoire Sociale/Social History* 15, 29 (May 1982), 252-253.

[17] A glaring example of this process can be found in retraining programs for domestic workers. Department of Labour reports and committees repeatedly recommended the creation of programs to train women as domestic servants, while noting the overwhelming lack of interest and antipathy of women to this type of work. Stressing the demand by employers for

For those women who remained in the labour force, government sponsored training programs facilitated the re-establishment of a highly segregated job market. For example, the career "opportunities" uncovered by surveys and offered through training programs were in areas like "household employment," textiles, stenography, retail, and food service.[18] Government reports and activities did not reveal any perception that the employment market being created was discriminatory towards women. Without the ideal that women had a basic right to work in the same manner as men, government policy helped to "re-establish" women into the low-pay, low-status, and segregated job market.[19]

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household workers, these committees devoted great effort to discussing the means for improving the "status" of this occupation. In the end their efforts failed to attract much support amongst working women. For example, see reports on the deliberations of the Vocational Training Advisory Committee, in Canada, Department of Labour, *Labour Gazette* (1946), 193-94, 195-96.
Also see Ruth Pierson, "'Home Aide': A Solution to Women's Unemployment After World War II", *Atlantis* 2,2 (Part II) (Spring 1977): 85-97.

[18] These "opportunities" were uncovered in a survey by the Labour Department Committee on Post-War Training. This Committee, sometimes referred to as the Co-ordinating Committee on Training, was formed to bring together the various functions of the Labour Department in matters related to training. It was headed by Fraudena Eaton and I.E. Westman. *Labour Gazette* (1945), 794; (1945), 1120-21. Also, see Jane Ursel, *Private Lives, Public Policy. 100 Years of State Intervention in the Family* (Toronto: Women's Press, 1992), 203-204; Ruth Roach Pierson & Marjorie Cohen, "Educating Women for Work: Government Training Programs for Women before, during, and after World War II", in *Modern Canada 1930-1980s. Readings in Canadian Social History*, vol. 5, eds. Michael S. Cross & Gregory S. Kealey (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1984), 208-243.

[19] Ann Porter, "Women and Income Security in the Post War Period: The Case of Unemployment Insurance, 1945-1962", *Labour/Le Travail* 31 (Spring 1993), 115. Kimberley Speers notes a contradiction in the post war commitment of government to equality of all citizens. While the "residue of rhetorical equality remained", in reality, the government demonstrated "little commitment to equality of opportunity in the post war economy." Kimberley Marie Speers, "The Royal Commission on the Status of Women. A Study of the Contradictions and the Limitations of Liberalism and Liberal Feminism", M.A. Thesis, Queen's University (1994), 64.

Support by Labour Department officials for a women's bureau in the Spring of 1945 was related to this process of re-establishing wage earning women. Discussion about a women's bureau began with the suggestion that a special women's branch be created as a means to coordinate the re-training and re-direction of wage earning women. The practice of having a branch dealing with wage earning women specifically had been established during the war with the creation of National Selective Service (NSS) in 1942. The war created a need to control the availability and conditions of labour. At the time of the adoption of Selective Service regulations in March 1942, the government recognized that the main reserve of labour would be women, and thus, a women's division under Fraudena Eaton was established.[20] With the war's end and the shift to re-establishment, Fraudena Eaton argued in April 1945 that the coordinating role of the women's division "should not be lost because of the assistance which might be given in the transition and post-war years."[21] She believed, like others in the Department including the Deputy Minister, that the emergency conditions which justified government involvement in the training and placement of women in wartime continued to exist in the reconstruction period. Government officials sought to avoid the unemployment, inflation, and large-scale civil unrest that had followed demobilization in 1919, by developing policies to facilitate a smooth return to civilian life for Canadians. The desire for economic

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[20] In March 1942, the Liberal government established the National Selective Service agency to control the recruitment and allocation of labour. *Labour Gazette* (1945), 632.

[21] Eaton was the Associate Director for NSS in charge of the Women's Division. Her duties were expanded by 1945 to include planning for the re-establishment of women in the peacetime economy. She was also Chairman of the Department's Co-ordinating Committee on Training as well as the Committee promoting the Home Aide project. NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 605, File #6-24-1 pt. 4, Memo from Mrs. Rex Eaton to Mr. Arthur MacNamara, 27 April 1945.

stability in the transition to peace justified continuing government involvement, even in areas like labour management which were traditionally outside of government jurisdiction. Thus, as first proposed, a women's bureau was to be a short-term transitional body established to coordinate the re-establishment of wage earning women from wartime occupations to "female" trades in the postwar economy.

Subsidiary to the problem of re-establishment, Labour Department officials entertained the idea of creating a women's bureau also because of jurisdictional wrangling between different departments in the postwar period. The Labour Department, like the federal government as a whole, had witnessed a great expansion of its functions during the war.[22] By the early 1950s, it was evident that federal government size and responsibility would continue to expand. The Labour Department, however, felt its enlarged mandate to be precarious because labour matters, constitutionally, fell under provincial jurisdiction. Eaton was the first to suggest the proposed women's bureau was necessary to avoid losing "a sphere of influence" held during the war years.[23] In subsequent correspondence, the Deputy Minister also suggested a threat from competition by other departments. Although the mandate of the proposed bureau was strictly labour management, MacNamara raised the question of wage earning women's "welfare" in correspondence to the Minister. In support of the proposal for a women's bureau, MacNamara argued, "I believe the Health and Welfare Department is talking about starting

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[22] See history of the federal Labour Department entitled, "A Look Back...And a Look Ahead", in *Labour Gazette* 1967, 435-436.

[23] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 605, File #6-24-1 pt.4, Memo from Mrs. Rex Eaton to Mr. Arthur MacNamara, 27 April 1945.

something of this kind and I think we ought to beat them to the gun."[24] Health and Welfare was a growing department in this period and bound to assume even more responsibility and resources with the development of welfare programs.[25] While labour legislation had included "protective" laws for women in the past, the problems arising from women's employment were traditionally construed as "welfare" rather than "labour" matters. The safety of women's health and morals dominated debate about the problems of wage earning women rather than questions of fairness.[26] The distinction between welfare and labour continued into the postwar period leaving MacNamara to question whether a new women's bureau would end up in Health and Welfare despite Labour's previous jurisdiction in this area. In this uncertainty, he was justified. Correspondence between the Department and the YWCA reveals that the Association also questioned whether their recommendation for a bureau should be placed before Labour or some other department.[27] The uncertainty would continue into the next two decades as both Labour and Health and Welfare jostled periodically over jurisdiction for women's labour issues.

In 1945 then, a women's bureau arose as a policy option in relation to the Department's role in labour management. Labour supply issues would, in fact, be the dominant priority

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[24] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 605, File #6-24-1 pt.4, Memo from Mr. Arthur MacNamara to Mr. Humphrey Mitchell, 30 April 1945.

[25] Ursel 1992, 208.

[26] On "protective" labour laws for wage earning women, see, Jane Ursel, "The State and the Maintenance of Patriarchy: A Case Study of Family, Labour, and Welfare Legislation in Canada", in *Gender and Society*, eds. A.T. McLaren (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman, 1988), 108-145; Marg McCallum, "Keeping Women in Their Place: The Minimum Wage in Canada, 1910-1925", *Labour/Le Travail* (Spring 1986), 29-56.

[27] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 605, File #6-24-1 pt.4, Memo from Mrs. Rex Eaton to Mr. Arthur MacNamara, 18 May 1945.

dictating labour policy for women after 1945. In 1945-46, the problem was potential unemployment and the need for massive relocation of workers. The proposed women's bureau, therefore, was not intended to address long-term changes in the composition and conditions of women's labour in the postwar period. This is not to suggest that officials in the Department were unaware of potential changes in women's labour force participation. In early 1945, Fraudena Eaton noted the likelihood of an expanded female labour force from wartime workers who wanted to continue working and women left widowed or unmarriageable by the war. As well, Eaton pointed to the potential confluence of labour issues with equality concerns when she noted that these women were increasingly concerned about their "rights" in employment.[28] This comment was, however, an anomaly; the Department did not investigate or debate the issue of women's rights as workers in the immediate postwar years. Women's right to equal treatment in employment was simply outside of the government's conceptualization, both of re-training and of the functions of a possible bureau.

For the major women's groups, however, changes in women's labour force participation was a prominent concern in the postwar period. Naturally, the ideas and policy proposals of the women's groups would change over the twenty years following 1945, but in general, they evolved towards a commitment to equality for wage earning women through equal opportunity and access. In the postwar years, the abhorence of discrimination and commitment to human rights which characterized these years provided a "new intellectual and moral framework"

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[28] *Labour Gazette* (1945), 524.

utilized by the women's groups to argue for "women's rights."[29] In 1945, the NCW, BPW, and YWCA were all vocal opponents of overt discrimination against women in *public* life. Yet, many organized women were unsure of how to reconcile the principle of equality with women's responsibility for family and home. With these ideas in the process of forming, the women's groups were often inconsistent or inactive when it came to translating their ideas into action. The gradual evolution of a discourse of women's rights within the groups affected the actions taken by the women's groups in their support for a women's bureau.

The NCW, in particular, was contradictory in its statements and policy proposals in the immediate postwar years. Statements and resolutions declared women's right to work if they chose, as well as demanding equality of treatment in the work force. The NCW's assertion of women's right to work marked an important departure from general social values which did not accept women's right to choose employment outside of the home.[30] Yet, the discourse of rights was often intermixed with an acceptance of gender difference. For example, one speaker during a 1944 discussion on "Women in the Post-War World" declared, "It is not suggested that all women should or would want to work outside the home, but the freedom of choice must be maintained."[31] Belief in the principle of women's right to work simply did not resolve the

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[29] Vickers, Rankin & Appelle 1993, 35; Shirley Tillotson, "Human Rights Law as Prism: Women's Organizations, Unions, and Ontario's Female Employees Fair Remuneration Act, 1951", *Canadian Historical Review* 72, 4 (1991): 536-537.

[30] National Council of Women of Canada, *Abridged Report of the National Council of Women of Canada*, 1944, Doris Lewis Rare Book Room, University of Waterloo, 47; Brandt 1982, 252-253; Alison Prentice et al., *Canadian Women. A History*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: Harcourt Brace & Co., 1996), 348, 352-354.

[31] Ibid, *Abridged Report*, 46.

question of whether women and men should have different roles in society and whether women's responsibility for home was inconsistent with employment. In this sense, the NCW continued, as it had in the 1930s, to approach the problems of wage earning women with a combination of egalitarian thinking and "gender-soaked maternalism."[32] The result was that the NCW, in the immediate postwar years, devoted little effort to the problems and equality issues facing increasing numbers of wage earning wives and mothers.[33] When employment issues were addressed by committees or in recommendations to government, the female worker represented by the NCW was the young single girl passing the years between school and marriage. Not surprisingly then, a discussion on "women in industry" at the 1945 annual meeting quickly shifted from questions of job availability, to the need for a resolution "stressing the importance of home and family as a vocation" for women.[34] When the Council did address the employment needs of married women and women with children, the proposals reflected the conflict between women's right to work (regardless of marital status) and their primary role in the family. Thus, as a participant on the Vocational Training Advisory Council, the NCW focused on raising the status of domestic service as an employment alternative for

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[32] Margaret Hobbs, "Equality and Difference: Feminism and the Defence of Women Workers During the Great Depression", *Labour/Le Travail,* 32 (Fall 1993), 209. The NCW was well-represented on the government's Sub-Committee on the Post-War Problems of Women which similarly showed this confluence of "equal rights" feminism with "maternal" feminism. See Brandt 1982.

[33] Ann Porter argues that married women workers were not "well represented" by women's organizations, particularly the NCW, in the early 1950s, a factor which contributed to the government's implementation of discriminatory provisions in the U.I. Act. Porter 1993, 126-136.

[34] NCW, *Yearbook*, 1945, 47-49.

women.[35] Reports from NCW local committees declared women's right to work while outlining efforts to establish "Home Aide" training programs in their areas.[36] As Pierson notes, the efforts of women to raise the status of domestic service through "Home Aide" training programs, while frought with "good intentions," indicates that "the notion of certain occupations as suitable for women had survived the war."[37]

Within this context, the YWCA's campaign for a women's bureau received only minimal aid from the Council. The NCW did include the YWCA resolution, which requested the creation of a bureau, in its annual submissions to government in 1945 and 1946.[38] There was no reason for Council members to oppose such a measure; in principle, the Council supported women's right to work and there was some concern about the fate of wage earning women in the postwar labour market. The NCW, however, did not pursue the matter beyond inclusion in the annual submission. Records reveal no activity or discussion of this matter, even within the Trades and Professions Committee.[39] Following any annual meeting,

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[35] The Vocational Training Advisory Council was provided under the Vocational Training Co-ordination Act of 1942 to act as an advisor on the development of training programs to aid the re-establishment of men and women from the military services.

[36] See summary of fifth meeting of the Vocational Training Advisory Council, March 6-8, 1945, in *Labour Gazette* (1945), 523; also, see reports of Trades and Professions committees, NCW, *Yearbook*, 1946, 111-116; Pierson 1977, 85-97.

[37] Pierson 1977, 91, 95.

[38] The resolution submitted to government was identical in wording to the YWCA resolution. See footnote #7.

[39] Examination included the NCW *Yearbook* which summarizes the annual meeting and activities of committees and local and affiliated members, as well as NCW Papers for 1945 to 1949. In these sources, there was no mention of the women's bureau issue. The only mention of NCW activity on this issue is in a government memo outlining external lobbying for a

innumerable resolutions were left on the Council's agenda. As a national umbrella for a huge and diverse spectrum of interests, the NCW devoted its limited resources to those issues it believed to be of concern to the average Canadian woman. The majority of married women in 1945 and 1946 were homemakers. Council, therefore, devoted its attention to the issues it believed were relevant to the women at home, issues like housing shortages, health insurance, "salacious" literature, and the citizenship of married women.[40] The cause of women's equality found expression in a continuing preoccupation with the *political* equality of women. Perhaps reflecting the class interest of the members, the NCW devoted considerable effort towards securing female representation on government bodies and U.N. agencies, as well as to increasing the number of women in elected positions. Within this context, the women's bureau issue, while supported in principle, was not a priority deserving of direct action.

For the YWCA, however, the problems of wage earning women were a central priority, arising naturally from its ideology and activities. The YWCA was a service organization with a much narrower focus than the NCW. Historically, it had always been concerned with the problems and conditions of work faced by women in employment, and provided services like

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bureau. The memo lists the NCW as one group which had petitioned for a bureau in 1945 and 1946. NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 3528, File #3-26-23, Memo from G.M. Ingersoll (Acting Chief, Legislative Branch) to M.M. Maclean, 9 December 1950.

[40] While 30 per cent of all women in the labour force were married in 1951, they constituted only 11.2 per cent of all married women. Marie Anne Boutilier makes this point regarding the lack of coverage of changes in women's labour force participation in popular magazines during this period in, "Ideology Surrounding Women's Work in Canada, 1931-1956," M.A. Thesis, McMaster University, 1977, 101.

shelter and training.[41] In the postwar period, the Association, like the NCW, showed some concern for the right of women to work and over the increasing trend to bann married women from employment. In general, though, the discourse of women's rights did not shape the YWCA's focus on the problems of wage earning women. By 1945, the YWCA was expanding its mandate to include an involvement in national affairs. The Association created a Public Affairs Committee to "initiate a program of education in public affairs and social action" so that women might take a role in public affairs and government.[42] The Public Affairs Committee was more embued with the postwar preoccupation with preserving "democracy" than with the feminist concerns of the NCW. The concept of "democratic citizenship" was prominent in the political discourse of the YWCA. Applied to women, "democratic citizenship" demanded for women, including immigrant women, the same rights and responsibilities granted to male "citizens." While this concept could serve to legitimate women's participation in the labour force, it also provided justification for involvement by

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[41] Diana Pedersen, "Providing a Women's Conscience: The YWCA, Female Evangelicalism, and the Girl in the City, 1870-1930", in *Canadian Women: A Reader*, eds. Wendy Mitchinson et al. (Toronto: Harcourt Brace & Co., 1996), 194-210; "'Keeping Our Good Girls Good': The YWCA and the 'Girl Problem' 1870-1930", *Canadian Woman Studies/Les cahiers de la femme* 7, 4 (Winter 1986), 20-24; Josephine P. Harshaw, *When Women Work Together: A History of the Young Women's Christian Association in Canada, 1870-1966* (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1966).

[42] Local associations were encouraged to create their own "public affairs" committees (and did so). However, in this paper, reference to the Public Affairs committee refers to the national committee, not to the work of those that existed at the local level. Statement of purpose of the Public Affairs Committee (YWCA) is printed in the annual report of the NCW. NCW, *Yearbook. 1946*, 160.

experts in the gender and family relations of certain groups such as immigrants.[43] For the YWCA, the promotion of democratic citizenship provided ideological justification for two of its central projects - providing aid to the steady stream of "newcomers" to Canadian society and promoting the development of employment standards for domestic workers.[44] These issues were interconnected since most female immigrants in the postwar period were recruited to work as domestics. As the YWCA had always focused on providing guidance and aid to young wage earning women[45] and as domestic service had always been an occupation dominated by this group, it was natural that the YWCA seized upon the domestic service "problem" as a major issue in the postwar period.[46] With a new concern for "public affairs," the domestic

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[43] Mariana Valverde, "Building Anti-Delinquent Communities: Morality, Gender, and Generation in the City", in *A Diversity of Women. Ontario, 1945-1980*, ed. Joy Parr (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 21-22; Franca Iacovetta, "Remaking Their Lives: Women Immigrants, Survivors, and Refugees", in *A Diversity of Women*, 142-143.

[44] The emphasis placed on this type of work is shown in the statement of principles of the Public Affairs program. The first two "responsibilities" listed for the YWCA were "to secure": "The rights, benefits and obligations of democratic citizenship for all people, regardless of race, creed, color, sex or national origin."; and, "The integration of cultural, religious and economic minorities into all phases of community and national life." NCW, *Yearbook. 1946*, 160.

[45] The connection between the YWCA's traditional service role and its concern for "new Canadians" in the immediate postwar period was shown in a 1951 article in the YWCA newsletter in which the author argued:
"The YWCA has concerned itself in the past that women in business or industrial fields should not exchange their labour for too little return, that they should not be exploited or treated unfairly, or subjected to improper working conditions. Recently in Canada, there has been concern for girls and women among the displaced persons..."
Ellen Buzek, "The Needs of Young Women Today", *YWCA Quarterly* (March 1951), 19. NAC, Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) Papers, MG 28I198, Vol. 47, File #47-31.

[46] The domestic service "problem" was twofold: 1) The demand for servants far outweighed the supply; and 2) Reconstruction efforts necessitated finding "suitable" employment for women displaced from the army, from war industry and from men's jobs. The

service "problem" was an issue which fell comfortably within its existing mandate and ideology.

This concern led the YWCA to campaign actively in support of a women's bureau. At the 1949 conference, delegates were told that the organization felt handicapped in its efforts to aid wage earning women, such as domestic servants, by a lack of information. More information about women's employment was necessary if the YWCA was to understand the problems faced by these women, to develop solutions to these problems, and to argue in support of the solutions before government. Yet, the speaker argued, the Department of Labour was not collecting neither sufficient nor relevant information about wage earning women, the kind of information "that would be of value to women."[47] As an example, the speaker noted that although the YWCA had figures outlining the number of women in Canada employed as domestic servants, it had no knowledge of what these women were earning. As one delegate argued, this constituted an obstacle to the organization in achieving its goals: "We have got to have the facts, we can't go to any government group with ideas, we have to prove it with facts, and that is why we do need a Women's Bureau."[48] The solution was evident to the YWCA members. The United States had created its Women's Bureau in 1920 which produced

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problem, though, was that most women refused to work in domestic service. Consequently, there was a lot of discussion about how to make this occupation more attractive, particularly through improving the conditions of work, by training the workers, and by extending govenment labour legislation and social security to this occupation. For more discussion of this issue, see, Pierson 1977, and Brandt 1982.

[47] NAC, YWCA Papers, MG 28I198, Vol. 3, File #3-1, Minutes of the 1949 Convention in Ottawa, 192.

[48] *Ibid.*, 192-193.

excellent and widely quoted studies of wage earning women in that country. With the conviction that Canada needed a women's bureau, the YWCA continued to work, actively and consistently, in pursuit of this goal from 1945 to 1952.

The Association's requests for a bureau were met with apparent disinterest by the Department of Labour. In April and May 1945, the YWCA contacted the Labour Department and expressed its interest in the formation of an agency to address women's work issues. The Department replied politely to the letter but gave no indication of the government's interest in a women's bureau, even though the Department had already decided to announce its interest to a national conference of women's groups planned for early May.[49] Later, following the YWCA's conference in June, the Association presented another resolution for a women's bureau to the Department of Labour. According to one member of that delegation, "You could almost hear the thud with which that request fell on the floor." She concluded that "Ottawa was not even slightly interested."[50] Yet, records reveal that substantial support did exist among top officials for a women's bureau, at least during April and May 945. The fact that senior members of the Labour Department were interested in this issue and were aware of the YWCA's interest suggests the government was unwilling to include the YWCA as a participant in this policy debate.

The Department's reaction to the lobbying efforts of the YWCA points to an important factor influencing the development and eventual creation of a women's bureau over the eight

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[49] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 605, File # 6-24-1 pt.4, Two Memos between Mrs. Rex Eaton and Mr. Arthur MacNamara, Dated 18 May 1945.

[50] NAC, YWCA Papers, MG 28I198, Vol. 3, File #3-1, Minutes of the 1949 Conference - Ottawa, 191.

year period. The women's groups were accorded differing degrees of status and influence by the Department of Labour. The NCW, in particular, was recognized by government, women's groups, and Canadian society as the preeminent voice for women within government circles.[51] This position led *Chatelaine* to exclaim in 1957 that "When the National Council of Women goes to battle even cabinet ministers pay attention..."[52] While undoubtedly overstated, the impact of NCW leadership was important. In those cases when the NCW failed to go to "battle," government officials were given an excuse for rejecting a measure. This was the scenario in March 1954 when the Minister of Labour rejected an equal pay bill, suggesting the lack of NCW support meant the measure did not have widespread female support.[53] The scenario was similar in the case of the Women's Bureau. As noted previously, the YWCA conference was one of the three to which Eaton was to announce the Department's interest in a women's bureau in 1945. It is clear, however, from Eaton's comments that the YWCA conference was included in the plans as an afterthought because it was occuring at the same time. The Department was relatively unconcerned with the response of the YWCA because, as

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[51] N.E.S. Griffiths, *The Splendid Vision. Centennial History of the National Council of Women of Canada. 1893-1993.* (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1993), 228. Women's groups, such as the BPW, often argued the importance of securing NCW support for proposals directed to government. For example, see, NAC, NCW Papers, MG 28I25, Vol. 94, File "Nationally Organized Societies in Federation: Correspondence", Letter from the BPW to the NCW.

[52] David MacDonald, "The Most Powerful Woman's Lobby in Canada", *Chatelaine* (June 1957), 14.

[53] NCW, *Yearbook. 1945*, 38-39.

Fraudena Eaton stated simply, there would not be much "press publicity."[54] As the only women's group actively lobbying in support of a women's bureau during 1945 and 1946, the YWCA lacked sufficient influence to impact on the Department's debate.

The Department's rejection of the YWCA resolution resulted also from conceptual differences about what a women's bureau should entail. The YWCA (and the NCW) envisioned a bureau much wider in scope than that discussed within the Department of Labour. Both women's groups, like the government, saw job placement as a primary problem demanding immediate attention in the postwar years. Consequently, the 1945 NCW conference responded to a speech by Fraudena Eaton on "Women in Industry" with a call for "improved employment services."[55] However, an employment service concerned strictly with re-training and re-direction was not sufficient. The 1945 YWCA resolution envisioned a bureau which would not only study issues related to wage earning women, but would also "formulate standards and policies" to improve conditions, "advance opportunities for profitable employment," and work towards the "protection and furtherance of women's interests."[56] Their idea was to create an agency which would be concerned not just with job placement issues, but with *all* questions related to wage earning women. Conceptually, then, the women's organizations envisioned a bureau with wider jurisdiction, policy-making, and administrative functions than that under consideration by the Labour Department.

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[54] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 605, File #6-24-1 pt.4, Memo from Fraudena Eaton to Arthur MacNamara, 18 May 1945.

[55] NCW, *Yearbook. 1945*, 48.

[56] *Ibid.*, 54.

This conceptual gulf separated the participants, precluding any cooperation in policy development. Department of Labour officials were fully aware of outside proposals for a women's bureau but viewed them as separate from the questions they sought to address. In an internal memo, Fraudena Eaton purposely distinguished between her "own idea" and other requests for a "branch to deal with women's problems."[57] When the Department did consider both ideas together, the differences led them to quickly shun a women's bureau idea as understood by the women's groups. Fraudena Eaton reacted to news of the YWCA's impending resolution by stating to the Deputy Minister, "The hard part to get across to them is that this Bureau could not have administrative authority re conditions of work, et. cetera."[58] Thus, even when both parties were debating the issue and the Department was willing to initiate dialogue through the women's conferences, it is clear that the government wished only to consider its own conception. The bureau considered by the Department of Labour in the Spring of 1945 was an idea developed internally and in reponse to one perceived problem, the need to adjust the labour force to the demands of the postwar economy and to the return of overseas veterans. It was not tied to vague notions of women's rights nor to concerns for the larger problems facing women in employment. That the Department was aware of demands being formulated by the women's groups, there is no doubt, but the exploration of this idea by the Department was not a response to these concerns and pressures.

These differing ideas about purpose and structure perhaps explain the decision not to

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[57] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 605, File #6-24-1 pt.4, Memo from Mrs. Rex Eaton to Mr. Arthur MacNamara, 27 April 1945.

[58] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 605, File #6-24-1 pt.4, Memo from Mrs. Rex Eaton to Mr. Arthur MacNamara, 18 May 1945.

create a women's bureau at this time. The correspondence between Eaton and her superiors in the spring of 1945 suggests the possibility that some form of women's bureau may have been created depending on the outcome of the announcement to the three separate conferences held by women's groups in May and June. As Leslie Pal argues, government agencies do seek out "positional" support from outside groups to justify new programs.[59] In his memo to the Labour Minister, MacNamara argued the three conferences provided a "good way to test out the result of such an announcement," a comment which suggests he wanted to gauge the response of "women" and garner the support of organized groups. However, following the first conference, an NCW-sponsored meeting of women's groups held on May 3rd and 4th, Eaton reported she did not make the announcement. There was, in her opinion, no "suitable opportunity" to raise the issue because it did not fit into the tone and subject matter of the discussions.[60] Similarly, at the NCW annual meeting a month later, Eaton did not mention the proposal for a bureau. Her justification for not making the announcement is problematic. Although the issue of women's labour force participation did not dominate the agenda of either meeting, support for a women's bureau was evident at both. During the NCW-sponsored conference on May 3rd and 4th, a vague resolution passed requesting more government study of the "status [and] conditions of work and wages" in women's occupations.[61] During the subsequent NCW annual

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[59] Leslie Pal, *Interests of State: The Politics of Language, Multiculturalism, and Feminism in Canada* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), 42-43.

[60] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 605, File #6-24-1 pt.4, Memo dated 30 April 1945, 18 May 1945, 15 May 1945.

[61] The conference of Canadian Women's National Organizations held on May 3rd and 4th did discuss employment issues under the heading of "employment and social security for women." Equal pay for equal work was supported in one resolution. The conference reflected

meeting, the YWCA presented and received endorsement for its resolution requesting a women's bureau. At this meeting, Eaton spoke on "Women in Industry" which obviously gave her the opportunity to propose a women's bureau.[62] In fact, it seems likely Eaton would have received a favourable response from the women's groups. Her decision not to make the announcement may have resulted from the difference between "her own" proposal for a women's bureau and the idea being endorsed by the YWCA. To "test out the result" at this time may have committed the Department to consideration of the YWCA's proposal which the Department had already rejected.

By early 1946, interest in a women's bureau had subsided. The Labour Department had settled on the already-existing Dominion Employment Service (Women's Division) to assist with studies of the labour force and with placement and training programs.[63] The need for a separate women's bureau to implement these policies diminished even more as time passed. Many predicted postwar problems did not emerge. Economic prosperity and increasing rates of marriage and birth suggested that most Canadian women were happy to be homemakers. For

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the NCW stance in its support and discussion of a "movement" to improve the "status" of household workers. Proposals regarding working women were vague. The resolutions did not specifically mention a "women's bureau" but one recommendation urged: "the status, conditions of work and wages in those occupations...providing employment for women should be investigated by the government concerned, with the object of effecting improvemnts to the point where such occupations afford adequate earnings, safe surroundings and reasonable leisure time." Summarized in *Toronto Star* (4 May 1945), 18.

[62] NCW, *Yearbook. 1945*, 47-49.

[63] The reasons for rejecting the bureau is not clear. What is evident is that the Department did use the Dominion Employment Service for many of its programs for women workers. Since the Labour Department was concerned only with training and placement issues, placing these additional functions on an already existing employment service was reasonable.

those remaining in the workforce (a number that was in fact increasing!), there were lots of job "opportunities" in the growing trade and service sectors of the economy. And, as Gail Cuthbert Brandt argues, there was no fundamental change in public attitudes to support changes in women's roles and to demand government intervention.[64] With the changes that were occurring in women's roles hidden in economic prosperity, the government simply added a few responsibilities to the employment service and forgot about wage earning women for the next few years.

1950: "Womanpower", the need for information, and the YWCA

By late 1950, though, changing governmental priorities and concerns led to a resurgence of a women's bureau as a viable policy option. Foremost among these concerns was "manpower." In the boom economy of the postwar period, fear of widespread unemployment quickly gave way to the equally challenging problem of labour shortage. The growth in employment and consumption in the postwar years is well-documented.[65] By 1948, the problem of manpower shortages, rather than the threat of unemployment, dominated discussion in the *Labour Gazette*. In February 1951, Labour Minister Milton Gregg announced the formation of a National Advisory Council on Manpower. Its purpose was to advise on plans for "the most effective utilization in the national interest of the present and potential man and

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[64] Brandt 1982, 257.

[65] For general account, see Chapter Two, "Economic Growth and Change" in Robert Bothwell et al., *Canada since 1945: Power, Politics, and Provincialism* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981).

woman working force of Canada."[66] Within Departmental discourse, labour supply issues were analysed and expressed strictly in economic terms; the human dimension of these issues was notably absent. In the language of the Department, people were "human resources" or "manpower" which needed to be "utilized" effectively and efficiently for Canada to prosper. The goal of economic growth predominated. Reflecting the bureaucratic division between Labour and Welfare, Labour Department officials omitted social issues from labour policy and employment programs.

Wage earning women were not absent from the concern about "manpower" shortages. By 1950, the war-time expression "womanpower" was in use again. As before, women were referred to as a "reserve," which could be drawn upon in case of an emergency.[67] This approach was particularly evident during the Korean crisis from 1950 to 1953.[68] Yet, the "womanpower" shortage extended beyond the need for replacement workers in case of warfare and was a concern for the Department throughout the 1950s and 1960s. In the highly segregated labour market of the postwar period, women's jobs were expanding as much as men's. Overall, growth in the Canadian economy was most pronounced in the service, administrative, retail, and finance areas. All of these areas required female workers, both in

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[66] Quoted in *Labour Gazette* (1951), 311.

[67] For example, see *Labour Gazette* (1951), 342, 654, 1068.

[68] For example, Victor Koby, "The Ladies, Bless 'em, Can Ease the Squeeze. Here's How Situation Shapes Up for Getting 'Rosie the Riveter' Back to Factory Bench", *Financial Post* (24 February 1951), 15, 22.

clerical and service positions.[69] Most businessses faced a shortage of female employees, a factor which caused many of them to raise wages and eventually to break from tradition and hire married and older women. In a December 1949 article entitled "Business has Women Trouble," the *Financial Post* lamented that there were "Not Enough Girls to go Around."[70] The Labour Department, recognizing the need for more female workers, eventually developed measures to improve the participation of women in the labour force. Although "weak," as Sandra Burt notes, these measures basically included the removal of outwardly discriminatory provisions such as banns to the employment of married women.[71] As in the case of the business community, government measures revealed a willingness to encourage the employment of *married* women despite ongoing social discomfiture. As early as 1947, one article in the *Labour Gazette* declared the attempts "to drive married women out of the labour market" unreasonable in light of a general shortage of female workers.[72]

With these real and potential demands for female workers, the Labour Department began again, in late 1950, to examine the idea of a women's bureau. In December 1950, a series of memos between senior officials discussed the expediency of establishing a branch to

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[69] Bothwell et al. 1981, 16-19; Canada, Department of Labour (Women's Bureau), *Women at Work in Canada. A fact book on the female labour force* (Ottawa, 1964), 14.

[70] Ronald Williams, "Business Has Women Trouble", *Financial Post* (3 December 1949), 1.

[71] Sandra Burt, "The Women's Movement: Working to Transform Public Life", in *Canadian Politics*, 2nd ed., eds. James P. Bickerton & Alain-G. Gagnon (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 1994), 212; Ursel 1992, 231-233.

[72] *Labour Gazette* (1947), 297.

examine questions related to wage earning women.[73] As in the case of male labour shortages, economic priorities structured the conceptualization of the "womanpower" question by government and business. Articles in the *Financial Post* ignored the social implications of wives and mothers working outside of the home. Unlike the controversy or opposition found in other magazines, articles argued the necessity of female employment as a matter of maximizing production and efficient use of resources. In fact, wage earning wives were an economic benefit; increased family income allowed greater consumer spending on "extras" and time-saving appliances.[74] When the Bureau was created, the government justified the decision within this context of labour demand and economic prosperity. In his announcement to the House of Commons, Milton Gregg asserted: "I am confident that the new women's bureau will play a very valuable part in the improvement of the status of women in Canada's great production program."[75] Similarly, Joan Sangster argues that the Ontario Women's Bureau, formed in 1963, was "an economic initiative devised to monitor the changing labour needs of

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[73] Three memos were exchanged between M.M. Maclean (Director, Industrial Relations Branch) , G. M. Ingersoll (Acting Chief, Legislative Branch), A.H. Brown (Assistant to Deputy Minister), and A. MacNamara (Deputy Minister of Labour) discussing the question of a women's bureau in December 1950. NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 3528, File #3-26-23.

[74] Williams, "Business Has Women Trouble", 1; Wallace Gillespie, "Women Earn More of Money They Spend", *Financial Post* (4 March 1950), 16. Joan Sangster reaches the same conclusion in an assessment of the business press. See, "Doing Two Jobs: The Wage Earning Mother, 1945-70", in *A Diversity of Women. Ontario, 1945-1980*, eds. Joy Parr (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 106-107.

[75] Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 14 May 1953, 5420.

business and government and to facilitate the integration of women into the labour force."[76] Thus, government attention to women wage earners resulted initially from the changing labour force needs of the postwar economy. Constructed as a "resource", wage earning women entered the agenda of government but only within the limited scope of labour management. This construct limited government attention to only those issues which affected women's labour force participation rate. Gregg's statement, which conflated women's "status" to the country's economic production, foreshadowed the Labour Department's understanding of women's equality over the next two decades.

A year earlier, the YWCA also renewed its campaign for a women's bureau. The YWCA, like other participants in this debate, had been quiet on the issue of a women's bureau from 1946 to 1949. However, in 1949, the issue reopened, initiated once again by the YWCA convention held in that year. Noting their previous failure to interest Ottawa, the convention reaffirmed its intention to "continue to stimulate interest in the formation of a Women's Bureau." Delegates were reminded that the Association felt handicapped in its efforts to aid wage earning women due to a lack of information. This time, however, the YWCA, through its national Public Affairs Committee, decided to employ a different strategy. Developed, or rather "tumbled" into "by accident," following the 1945 Convention, the new strategy involved requesting from the Department of Labour comprehensive information about women in the

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[76] Joan Sangster, "Doing Two Jobs" 1995, 107; Joan Sangster, "Women Workers, Employment Policy and the State: The Establishment of the Ontario Women's Bureau, 1963-1970", *Labour/Le Travail*, 36 (Fall 1995), 125.

labour force.[77] From previous experience, the Association was certain the Department would not be able to supply all the requested material. Through this means, their intention was to prove that such information was not only needed and would be used, but that the Labour Department, with its present structure, could not supply that information.[78] Since the Department of Labour always responded to requests for information on Canada's labour force, an inability to find the requested material (as the YWCA was certain would happen) would draw the Department's attention to the need for a women's bureau.[79] The YWCA knew formal requests in the form of letters or petitions were easily, if always politely, brushed aside. Using this new strategy, along with more traditional lobbying methods, the YWCA put forth a persistent effort in support of a women's bureau over the next three years.[80]

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[77] How the YWCA came to develop this strategy "by accident" is explained in the Minutes of the 1949 Convention. According to the speaker, the YWCA was pursuing traditional approaches (writing letters, forwarding resolutions to government officials, etc) until they received a request from Marion Royce (who was on the staff of the World's YWCA in Geneva and acting as a consultant at the United Nations) for information on women in Canada. Unable to find all the requested material, the Y turned to the Department of Labour which offered to prepare a study of all existing information on women in the labour force. Convinced the study would not contain everything they wanted, the YWCA concluded that such requests would be a better way to prove to the Labour Department the need for a women's bureau. NAC, YWCA Papers, MG 28I198, Vol. 3, File #3-1, Minutes of the 1949 Convention - Ottawa, 191.

[78] Ibid., 191-192.

[79] It was the responsibility of the Department of Labour to collect and disseminate information on Canada's labour force. Requests for information by organized groups like the YWCA were thoroughly and promptly met. Thus, for example, at the 1949 YWCA conference, it was reported that the Department of Labour was preparing a study for the Y which was to include "all the information available in Canada about women in the labor force" back to 1911.
Ibid., 191-192.

[80] Ibid., 191-192; NAC, YWCA Papers, MG 28I198, Vol. 18, File #18-3, Minutes of the Public Affairs Committee, Meetings from 27 September 1950 to 31 October 1951.

The YWCA's strategy was valid, not only as a means to garner the government's attention, but because there *was* a lack of information on women in the labour force. A cursory survey of sources, particularly if compared to available information and analysis after the Bureau was created, reveals a notable lack of information on wage earning women and their problems. The *Labour Gazette*, using information provided by the Department of Labour or the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, frequently included articles outlining the increase in women's labour force participation and examining some of the demographic and economic reasons for this trend. These articles, however, failed to note or analyze the subsidiary issues, such as the aspirations of wage earning women, their training and education levels, the types of occupations held, and their wage rates relative to men. Statistics detailed the rise in married women's employment, yet articles failed to examine the effects on household income, the ages of children, or the provisions for child care.[81] Canadian women's groups or magazines often cited material produced by the Women's Bureau in the United States, arguing the comparability of the two countries and the lack of equivalent information in Canada.[82] The demand for an agency to gather information about wage earning women was not peculiar to Canada or to the YWCA. As Lani Russell and Marian Sawer note, women's groups in several countries were demanding an agency similar to the US Women's Bureau around this time. Information about

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[81] Based on a review of the *Labour Gazette* from 1945 to 1953 inclusive. Other non-government sources also include little discussion of these aspects of women's work but this may have resulted from lack of sources of information.

[82] For example, *Public Affairs* reprinted an article written by the US Women's Bureau on reconversion and the employment of women. In a foreword, the author claimed the general principles and conclusions would apply to Canada. Mary Elizabeth Pidgeon, "Reconversion and the Employment of Women", *Public Affairs* 9, 2 (1946): 103-107.

wage earning women was insufficient in many countries and women's groups believed more information was necessary "to reinforce women's equality claims."[83]

Evidence suggests the YWCA's campaign was successful in drawing the government's attention to the problem. Gregg's statement in May 1953 focused on the need for information as the central reason for creating a Bureau:

> They [the women's organizations] say that adequate information is not always available in Canada pertaining to women workers, and that there is a need for more study and analysis of the basic facts about the employment of women and the opportunities for their employment. Also there appears to be need for intimate study of the particular problems of women in special situations, such as those who are both workers and homemakers or older women who might become self-supporting.[84]

The collection and dissemination of information was the primary stated function of the Women's Bureau once it was created.[85] No government records were found detailing the types of questions asked by the YWCA or the government's response to these questions. However, other evidence suggests that the Department of Labour had difficulty in meeting requests for information about wage earning women. In early 1954, before the Women's Bureau was operational, the NCW decided to prepare a report on the status of women in Canada. Government officials expressed frustration that the new Bureau was not available to handle the matter. The Acting Chief of the Legislative Branch, Edith Lorentsen, examined existing

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[83] Lani Russell & Marian Sawer, "The Rise and Fall of the Australian Women's Bureau", *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, 45, 3 (1999), 364.

[84] Canada, House of Commons, *Debates,* 14 May 1953, 5420.

[85] Information collection and dissemination was always listed as the first function of the Bureau. This was true of publications from the Department of Labour and from the Women's Bureau, as well as those for public view and those circulated internally.

publications but was unable to find the information requested. She concluded by surmising that the situation "simply bears out the contention of the National Council that considerable confusion exists."[86] Insufficient information was a problem for the Department also because it had an impact on labour management. To assess and direct the efficient use of the nation's labour "resources," the Department needed information about the placement, skills, and conditions of all workers, including women.[87] Thus, while the women's groups sought more information to support their "equality" demands, government officials sought information to further delineate the labour supply needs of the economy.

The YWCA's information strategy was important also because it allowed for a refinement of the *idea* of a bureau, a process which made a bureau a realistic policy option. In 1945, the "industrial welfare branch" discussed by the Labour Department was an undefined concept in terms of function and structure.[88] Despite the primacy of re-establishment concerns, officials spoke vaguely of the "welfare" of women, of the "interests of both men and women," and of "training" when referring to the proposed bureau.[89] The only definitive statement in that early correspondence was the assertion that it could not have "administrative authority." By 1950, Labour Department officials had a very clear idea of the functions to be exercised by the

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[86] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 3489, File #1-10N-58 pt.2, Letter from Edith Lorentsen (Acting Chief, Legislative Branch) to A.H. Brown (Assistant Deputy Minister of Labour), 29 March 1954.

[87] This point is discussed in more detail in Chapter Two.

[88] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 605, File #6-24-1 pt.4, Memo from Mrs. Rex Eaton to Mr. Arthur MacNamara, 27 April 1945.

[89] Ibid.

proposed bureau. Whenever a bureau was discussed, officials spoke of a research body, similar to the Women's Bureau in the US. The change is evident also in the resolutions of the women's groups.[90] The bureau requested by the YWCA in 1950 was to be strictly a research agency rather than the wide-ranging advisory and administrative organ envisioned in 1945.[91] Like the Labour Department, the YWCA's concept was more specific and defined in 1950. This process reveals the continual reconstruction of issues as they move through the policy process.[92] Competing representations about the needs of wage earning women and of the role of the state, the structural imperatives imposed by the operations of the Labour Department, and the power imbalance amongst participants shaped the proposal for a women's bureau.

Perhaps more significantly, the problem as understood by the participants changed and converged on a perceived need for more information. This process of problem definition removed many of the stated objections of the Labour Department to creating a bureau. Before 1953, the Department denied requests for a bureau based on two objections. First, officials

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[90] For example, see NCW resolution in NCW, *Yearbook. 1953*, 53.

[91] The request for a women's bureau made in a 1950 letter was very different from the tone and content of the 1945 resolution. After outlining the difficulties faced by the YWCA in securing "adequate factual information," the President stated:

> We are convinced that we need to have groups of well informed women working in the Department of Labour, skilled in using the resources of the Department and of other government departments...in securing and distributing information which will ensure the most effective use of women in the labour force.

NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 3489, File #1-10n-58 pt.2, Memo from Edith Lorentsen to A.H. Brown, 29 March 1954.

[92] Rosemary Pringle & Sophie Watson, "Fathers, Brothers, Mates: The Fraternal State in Australia", in *Playing the State. Australian Feminist Interventions*, ed. Sophie Watson (London: Verso, 1990), 60, 68-69.

argued that the federal Labour Department held little power constitutionally to alter the conditions of women's employment. Second, they noted the existence of the Dominion Employment Service to deal with employment problems and the Economics and Research Branch to conduct research.[93] The narrowing of the concept of a bureau to include only research functions diminished the potency of these arguments, particularly the first, because the proposed bureau was no longer to have any direct role affecting the conditions of work. The only question remaining was whether Economics and Research *was* adequately compiling information about wage earning women. This question was not resolved in 1950, a factor which will be discussed subsequently. But the question of whether a women's bureau fit within the jurisdiction of the federal Labour Department had been resolved. In 1950, M.M. Maclean (the Director of the Industrial Relations Branch) surveyed all the correspondence in the government's file on the women's bureau issue. In his assessment, he questioned whether there had ever been "reasonable grounds on which to deny the requests" in the past. Unfamiliar with the redefinition of the bureau since 1945, Maclean concluded that these arguments "were not too soundly substantiated" because there were no constitutional limitations to the Department's role in research. Consequently, Maclean ended by offering his tentative support for the Department to conduct more studies about wage earning women.[94] As the Department and the women's groups came closer to agreement on the need for more research, they also came closer

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[93] The general trend of government replies was summarized in NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 3528, File #3-26-23, Memo from M.M. Maclean to A. MacNamara, 14 December 1950. This is, for example, the response given to a YWCA request for a bureau. See, NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 3528, File #3-26-23, Letter from J.L. Savage (President, YWCA) to M.F. Gregg, 4 December 1950; Reply, 6 December 1950.

[94] Ibid., Memo from M.M. Maclean to A. MacNamara, 14 December 1950.

to agreement on the solution.

Thus, the impact of the YWCA strategy was significant. It facilitated a redefinition of function to which the YWCA and the Labour Department both agreed. Although this meant that a women's bureau was no longer understood as an operational unit, this change was important. The conceptual gulf that had once separated the policy participants narrowed significantly so they spoke of the same idea. Once the Labour Department perceived the problem as inadequate information, it was willing to act given its primary role in studying the labour force. As well, a research bureau was a viable policy response to existing governmental concerns about labour supplies. It is highly unlikely the government would have created a bureau with the legislative and administrative functions envisioned in the 1945 resolutions. However, the refinement of the idea to fit with existing government concerns allowed it to become a viable policy option. Indirectly, then, the YWCA played an important role in influencing the Labour Department to create a women's bureau.

Still, the YWCA did not wield sufficient influence within the Department of Labour to translate agreement in principle into an actual policy. From 1949 until 1952, neither the BPW nor the NCW acted in support of a women's bureau, leaving the YWCA to pursue the measure in isolation. The perception of the Association as a minor organization and the blatant indifference to its proposals which characterized Departmental response in 1945 continued in 1950. In December 1950, correspondence between senior Labour Department officials revealed that the Minister of Labour was "interested in discussing the proposal of a Women's

Bureau" and "prepared to try and sell" the idea to the government.[95] Yet, in response to a letter from the YWCA president, the Minister of Labour gave no indication of the government's interest. Rather than inviting the YWCA's comments or even stating that the government was studying the question, Gregg reasserted the traditional response to requests of this nature.[96] He argued a bureau was not necessary at the federal level because labour was a provincial responsibility and because the Economics and Research Branch was already collecting labour statistics.[97] The Department always responded to the YWCA's letters and requests promptly and politely, but the YWCA was kept outside of the debate on this issue, receiving attribution only after the Bureau was created.

As well, the YWCA did not succeed in its campaign for a bureau in 1950 because the policy development process was not complete. Consensus on the need for more information did not resolve all the outstanding issues. In particular, Labour Department officials questioned whether information gathering should be done by a newly created structure. Having agreed on function, form remained contentious until the final decision in 1953. Consequently, M.M. Maclean, despite his support for greater federal involvement in labour research, did not

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[95] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 3528, File #3-26-23, Memo from A.H. Brown to A. MacNamara, 15 December 1950.

[96] In a memo to the Deputy Minister, M.M. McLean outlines the history of requests for a bureau to the Labour Department. In the memo, he notes that replies have generally been the same and have stressed these two points. He also indicates his belief that these replies "were not too soundly substantiated," constituting a type of form letter rather than an articulation of the government's position. NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 3528, File #3-26-23, Memo from M.M. McLean to A. MacNamara, 14 December 1950.

[97] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 3528, File #3-26-23, Letter from J.L. Savage (President, National Board YWCA) to M.F. Gregg (Minister of Labour), 4 December 1950; Reply to J.L. Savage from M.F. Gregg, 6 December 1950.

recommend the creation of a *separate* branch. Rather, Maclean suggested the creation of a "women's section" within the already existing Economics and Research Branch.[98] Once the function of a women's bureau had been narrowed down to research, this was an understandable problem since Economics and Research already existed with resources directed towards studying labour issues. Even the YWCA, despite its outspoken support for a women's bureau throughout 1950-51, questioned the need for a separate agency. Minutes from the Public Affairs Committee reveal that while there was certainty of the need for "a central source of information," the group could not decide if existing staff and or "machinery" was sufficient.[99] It is interesting to note that by 1953 the Labour Department and the YWCA had reversed positions. Just previous to Gregg's announcement in May, the YWCA decided "to stress the importance of having able women dealing with questions of concern to women in the Department of Labour rather than putting the emphasis on having a separate bureau."[100] Despite concurrence on the need for information, the Labour Department and the YWCA remained on separate courses right to the end.

The question of whether to create a *separate* research bureau is significant because it

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[98] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 3528, File #3-26-23, Memo from M.M. Maclean to A. MacNamara, 14 December 1950. This is also the recommendation of A.H. Brown (the assistant Deputy Minister) in Ibid., Memo from A.H. Brown to A. MacNamara, 15 December 1950.

[99] See particularly the entries for January and May 1951. NAC, YWCA Papers, MG 28I198, Vol. 18, File #18-3, Minutes of the Public Affairs Committee.

[100] NAC, YWCA Papers, MG 28I198, Vol. 3, File #3-2, Report on 1949 Convention Resolutions. Convention Workbook, 8, 18.

reveals the "different political worlds" inhabited by the government and the women's groups.[101] Although both groups appear to have debated the question in the same terms, in fact, their understanding of the problem was different, thereby leading them to view the need for a separate bureau differently. Both parties, having recognized a need for more information on wage earning women, sought out the best means of achieving this end. Within the Labour Department, it was a matter of assessing the existing structure and facilities to determine where the role was best situated. Consequently, Maclean suggested a "women's section." There was no recognition that previous omissions may have resulted from biases or priorities which undervalued the contributions made by women or subsumed women's experiences within the rubric of those of men. Consequently, past replies to requests for a women's bureau argued the services of the Department of Labour were "equally available to men and women."[102] For many of the women arguing for a bureau, however, there was a sense that research had to be carried out by *women*, preferably in a separate branch, if "adequate" information was to be collected and analyzed. Within the concept of a separate bureau was the unspoken assumption that only fellow women had the necessary consciousness to determine the relevancy of material. This was the substance of an argument made during discussion of the women's bureau question at

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[101] Sandra Burt argues that women and men often inhabit "different political worlds." In other words, she asserts that the "similar behaviours of women and men...at the polls or during political campaigns could mask significant attitudinal differences." Thus, while they may support the same policy, their understanding of it can be quite different. Sandra Burt, "The Several Worlds of Policy Analysis: Traditional Approaches and Feminist Critiques", in *Changing Methods. Feminists Transforming Practice*, Sandra Burt & Lorraine Code, eds. (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 1995), 361.

[102] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 3528, File #3-26-23, Memo from G.M. Ingersoll to M.M. Maclean, 9 December 1950.

the 1949 YWCA conference. "There is," argued the speaker, "a gap [in] the information that is collected about women...*from the point of view that would be of value to women.*"{emphasis mine}[103] Consequently, even after the YWCA decided not to push for a separate bureau, it still stressed the need for the Department of Labour to hire competent *women* to coordinate the compilation of information about women in the labour force.[104] The problem as understood by the women's groups was not strictly insufficient data collection but also the lack of consciousness and concern for the situation of wage earning women. This problem definition led the women's groups to argue for a separate agency while the Department perceived only a need to instruct existing mechanisms to collect more information about women.

Throughout this period, the model of the Women's Bureau in the United States stood in the foreground of debate. Created in 1918 with permanent status as of 1920, the US Women's Bureau had produced important and well-respected studies of American wage earning women. During the eight years of debate in Canada, the discussion frequently turned to the example of the US. By 1950, with debate centered around research, the Labour Department turned to the US Bureau as a possible model solution. In December 1950, Labour Minister Milton Gregg planned to have someone visit the US Bureau "to look at the work in the women's field being done there, so as to assist in reaching a conclusion as to what could or should be done here."[105]

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[103] For example, the speaker referred to statistics on married women in employment. While statistics could tell how many married women worked, figures were not available detailing their occupations, hours of work, levels of pay, or responsibility for dependents. NAC, YWCA Papers, MG 28I198, Vol. 3, File #3-1, Minutes of the 1949 Convention, 192.

[104] The demands of the NCW and the BPW also stress the hiring of a woman for this role.

[105] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 3528, File #3-26-23, Memo from M.M. Maclean to A. MacNamara, 14 December 1950; Memo from A.H. Brown to A.

As well, evidence suggests Alice K. Leopold (the Director of the US Women's Bureau) may have encouraged the Canadians to act. In a letter written in September 1954, Marion Royce thanked Leopold for her interest in and advocacy on behalf of a Canadian Bureau.[106] The women's groups also pointed to the US example as an obvious solution to the problem of insufficient information. As Lani Russell and Marian Sawer note, it was a common strategy of women's groups in this period to point to policies in other countries as models to support their own demands. Interestingly, the Australian women's groups in their campaign for a women's bureau in the 1960s pointed to the Canadian Bureau as a model.[107] Nonetheless, while the US Bureau provided an excellent model and may even have advocated for a similar Canadian branch, Labour Department officials were simply not ready to make a decision in 1950. The result was inactivity; even Maclean's suggestion for a "women's section" in Economics and Research did not materialize. It would take two more years before the government felt compelled to act.

1953: Married Women, Women's Rights, and the BPW

Government concern about labour shortages and insufficient information did not diminish in the two years from 1951 to 1953. During this time, however, important changes in the composition of the female labour force further focused government attention towards the

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MacNamara, 15 December 1950.

[106] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1907, File #38-8-5-2, Letter from Marion Royce to Alice K. Leopold, 8 September 1954.

[107] Russell & Sawer 1999, 372.

issue of wage earning women. The 1951 census first revealed the startling news that *married* women were entering the labour force in increasing numbers. The Labour Department took notice; women working outside of the home became more prominent as a subject in the pages of the *Labour Gazette*. Feature length articles highlighted the statistical changes while explaining some of the economic and demographic causes.[108] Analysts in these articles recognized that the economic factors which had concerned government for several years - economic growth, labour supply, and increased consumption - were responsible for attracting married women to the labour force. But while the employment of married women might alleviate labour shortages and contribute to economic production, Labour Department officials were aware of the controversy surrounding this issue. Society accepted married women as a "reserve" in war time, but their addition to the labour force permanently raised complicated questions and potential problems, both socially and economically. The relief expressed in the *Financial Post* at the potential for married women to offset labour shortages and maintain high consumption was not evident in government sources. Nor was it expressed in popular magazines which were more likely to predict "many heartaches--and many triumphs" from the

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[108] Before the 1951 census, there were no articles which focused primarily on married women workers in the *Labour Gazette*. By 1953, with the publication of results from the 1951 census, several feature length articles were published presenting statistics and analyses of the rise in married women's employment, as well as numerous smaller clips which presented statistics.
For example, there was a three part series entitled "Women in the Labour Force" which presented analysis from the Economics and Research Branch of the Labour Department, the views of prominent women and from Trade Unions. *Labour Gazette* 1954, 372-390. Also there was a detailed study by the Unemployment Insurance Commission entitled "Womanpower" which provided detailed statistics and analysis of trends. *Labour Gazette* 1954, 530-536, 658-663, 805-808, 980-983.

transition in family and gender roles.[109] Labour Department officials continued to speak of women, including married women, as components in Canada's "great production program," but they were concerned about the possible social and economic dislocation.

Subsequent statements by Labour Department officials all noted the changing composition of the female labour force as a primary reason for the Bureau's creation. In the House of Commons on 14 May 1953, Milton Gregg affirmed the need for "adequate information." He stressed, in particular, that the "problems of women in special situations, such as those who are both workers and homemakers or older women who might become self-supporting" were in need of "intimate study."[110] Women's Bureau Director Marion Royce concurred. Speaking on CBC radio two months after her appointment, Royce argued that the change in labour force patterns, "with all its implications for Canadian life," was the "chief reason" for establishing the Bureau.[111] The government in the early 1950s recognized the benefits and the inevitability of an expanded female labour force. Uncertainty, however, about

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[109] Byrne Hope Sanders, "Working Wives Outside the Home" *Chatelaine* (July 1950), 3. Articles in Canada's major mass production magazines, such as *Chatelaine*, did not examine this change extensively in the early 1950s. Prolonged and bitter debate on the social and economic ramifications of this change was much more pronounced by the early 1960s. Still the outlines of the later controversy are evident in articles such as S.M. Katz, "Why Wives are Going Out to Work" *Maclean's* (15 May 1951), 7-9, 61-64.

[110] Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 14 May 1953, 5420. The commentary following Gregg's announcement reveals that observers were also aware of the changes occurring in women's employment and believed those changes demanded study. Opposition Member Ellen Fairclough spoke approvingly of the government's decision, stating her opinion that "the time had arrived when it was necessary...to investigate various conditions of employment of women." [5423]

[111] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-2-2 pt.1, Text for "Canada at Work" broadcast on the Women's Bureau, Dated 7 November 1954.

the appropriateness of married women working outside of the home and about the possible social reaction demanded caution.[112] A Women's Bureau, designed to study these new changes, was a realistic and cautious response.

Among the major women's groups, awareness and concern about the increase in married women's employment also brought the issue of wage earning women back to the forefront. As noted previously, the problems of wage earning women were not a priority for the NCW in the immediate postwar years. This situation changed around 1951, partly because of the census, and partly because of the "older worker" problem.[113] In the 1950s, the Labour Department, women's groups, and others identified "older workers" as a disadvantaged group deserving of government assistance to re-integrate into the labour force. The NCW represented women on the Vocational Training Advisory Committee. As a result, it became increasingly concerned about the problems facing older *women* workers. At the 1951 annual meeting, the Trades and Professions Committees of the NCW proclaimed the older woman worker "problem" to be their major issue. The need for work among older women, many of them widows or breadwinners because of the devastation of war, did not challenge rigid sex roles. Few people denied their need for work and wages. Attention to this question, however, gradually expanded to include married women working outside of the home. In 1952, the reports of the Trades and Professions Committees began to mention the increasing numbers of married women in the labour force. One of the three major projects listed for the following

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[112] Burt 1994, 212.

[113] N.E.S. Griffiths argues the philosophy of NCW changed gradually in the early 1950s from an emphasis on community service to the "political needs" of women. By the 1954 annual meeting, the emphasis was on the issue of working mothers. Griffiths 1993, 257, 260.

year was "to examine the affect of an employed mother on the children and home life."[114] By the mid 1950s, the NCW reversed its position on several issues and began to direct significant effort towards the campaigns for equal pay and for the revocation of discriminatory regulations in unemployment insurance. According to recent studies, these efforts were important for the eventual success of these campaigns.[115] Like other women's groups at this time, the NCW utilized the postwar abhorrence of discrimination to argue that women were entitled to the same human rights as other disadvantaged groups.[116] The concept of equality of opportunity provided an ideological justification for demands like equal pay. Married women working outside of the home were not, at this point, included within this discourse of women's rights or equality. Women's primacy in the home and as caregivers was the primary concern. Consequently, family welfare rather than women's rights dominated the discussion. Still, the changing composition of the female labour force was a "women's issue" with potentially significant social and economic repercussions. Thus, Council perceived it as a question demanding its attention. In the early 1950s, Council was in the early stages of addressing the question; having just become aware of a significant trend, it sought to study and analyze it.

The need to study the question brought the women's bureau issue back to the forefront.

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[114] NCW, *Yearbook. 1951*, 106; *Yearbook. 1952*, 41, 78-80; *Yearbook. 1954*, 29.

[115] Tillotson 1991; Porter 1993. The NCW is cited as one of the forces responsible for the 1956 equal pay act in, Canada, Department of Labour, *Equal Pay for Equal Work. The Growth of the Idea in Canada* (1959). Government records also suggest pressure from the NCW was a factor in the decision to act. See Chapter Four.

[116] Dorothy McBride Stetson, "The Oldest Women's Policy Agency. The Women's Bureau in the United States," in *Comparative State Feminism*, eds. Dorothy McBride Stetson & Amy Mazur (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 1995), 261.

In April 1953, a resolution submitted to the NCW annual meeting requested a branch be established in the Labour Department for "the study and analysis" of questions related to wage earning women. This was the first resolution in support of a women's bureau since 1946 and its handling reveals greater support for the issue among the NCW membership in 1953. The 1953 resolution came from the Trades and Professions Committee of the Toronto Local Council. Thus, it was generated internally unlike the 1946 resolution from the YWCA. The Toronto Local Council submitted the resolution after the deadline, a serious infraction to those at head office.[117] Nonetheless, head office accepted the resolution for consideration at the annual meeting as a result of the importance of this issue. The new resolution pointed specifically to the need to understand the problems of "special groups" such as older women and married women. The inclusion of *married* women into the problem of wage earning women gave the issue urgency, thereby leading to its placement on the NCW agenda. By 1953, the NCW faced the same problem as the YWCA. The Council wanted to study and develop policy responses to various problems, such as those affecting older women, but a lack of information handicapped its efforts. Consequently, the NCW reoriented its priorities towards active support for the creation of a women's bureau. The new resolution did not go before the membership because the June annual meeting occurred after Gregg's announcement in May 1953. But, important members of Council had decided a bureau was necessary. According to Sandra Burt, Milton Gregg's decision to set up the Bureau was influenced by his wife, Dorothy

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[117] NCW, *Yearbook. 1953*, 53; NAC, NCW Papers, MG 28I25, Vol. 95, File #5, "Resolutions 1952-53".

Gregg, an important leader within the NCW.[118] Thus, Gregg was probably aware of growing support for the measure among organized women.

At this point, the BPW also played an important role in pressuring the government. The BPW's involvement in the women's bureau issue was late. Government records reveal little effort in support of this measure prior to 1952, despite later contentions by the Association that it had been "consistent and persistent" in its support. The first indication of BPW interest was a 1952 resolution requesting the formation of a branch in the Department of Labour to study the problems and conditions facing wage earning women.[119] Like the NCW, there is no evidence the BPW opposed the measure previous to 1952. However, the women's bureau issue was not a priority for the BPW because other "key" projects dominated the time and resources of the organization throughout this period. These projects included finding solutions to the discrimination faced by "older" women workers in employment, ensuring the inclusion of "sex" within government anti-discrimination legislation, and most frequently, fighting for "equal pay." Eventually, "equal pay" became the focal point of BPW activities and concern at this time, leading President Ruth S. MacGill to argue in 1949 that "equal pay for equal work" had become the slogan of the Federation. Equal pay was a potent symbol because it encapsulated the concerns of wage earning women and the fight for equality of opportunity. The BPW,

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[118] Burt 1994, 213-214.

[119] Forbes 1974, 82; The Canadian Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, *Index of Resolutions Adopted at Conventions 1930-1962*, comp. Louise Milliken (Ottawa, April 1964); NAC, Canadian Federation of Business and Professional Women's Club Papers (BPW Papers), MG28I55, Vol. 32, File "CFBPW Correspondence, Conventions 1950-52", Minutes of 13th Biennial Convention July 1952".

unlike the NCW and the YWCA, acted to promote the principle of equal rights for women.[120] Its statements argued against the dominant belief that biological differences required differential treatment and roles in society. Men and women must be treated as individuals and given equal opportunities because "to limit the horizon of one-half the world is to limit the horizon of the whole world."[121] As an organization formed to advance the interests of wage earning women (albeit professional women), the BPW directed its fight for women's equality towards work place issues. "Equal pay for equal work" became the rallying cry because it combined both the fight for equality of opportunity with the fundamental assertion of women's right to work. As a result of this dedicated pursuit of equal pay during the postwar years, the BPW had little time to devote towards securing a women's bureau, despite their support for this initiative.

Nonetheless, by 1953, the aggressive campaign of the BPW in support of equal pay became an important factor in the creation of a women's bureau. In 1951, the group achieved a major victory with the introduction of the Female Employees Fair Remuneration Act in Ontario, the province with the largest number of women in the labour force.[122] The campaign continued with pressure directed towards the other nine provinces and the federal government.

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[120] As Sandra Burt argues, the BPW was from its inception an organization based in the "equal rights" feminism of the first wave. Throughout these years, it remained focused on questions of women's status in the public sphere, unlike organizations such as the NCW in which equal rights concerns co-existed with maternal feminist goals. Burt 1994, 209-210.

[121] Elsie Gregory MacGill, "A Blueprint for Madame Prime Minister", Address at the Banquet on July 27, 1954, at the 14th Biennial Convention of the Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, held at the Royal York Hotel, Toronto, 9. (Doris Lewis Rare Book Room, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario)

[122] Tillotson 1991, 541-542.

The symbolic strength of equal pay was clear to the government. By the early 1950s, inequality was increasingly difficult to justify with weak economic appeals to the negative consequences for employers or male workers. The human rights discourse of the period framed the equal pay issue, thereby turning it into a question of fairness. Magazine articles paralled the arguments of the BPW by invoking the concepts of justice and fair play in the assertion that all workers, regardless of sex, should be paid the going rate for the job.[123] Joining the BPW in support for the measure were Trade Unions and Ellen Fairclough, an Opposition Member in the House of Commons. Fairclough's annual submission of a private member's bill requesting equal pay legislation was a growing source of embarrassment for a government unable to find a reasonable justification for inaction.[124] In combination, these actions forced a number of women's issues onto the government agenda, briefly, but long enough to compel the Labour Department to act. Existing concerns about married women working outside of the home and "womanpower" shortages, combined with the campaign for equal pay and the equal rights discourse, motivated the government to develop a response which suggested sensitivity to

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[123] In this focus on equal pay as the symbol of the fight against discrimination and for equality for working women, the BPW was not alone. In magazine articles, equal pay was the most frequent demand for those who spoke of the discrimination faced by working women. Employing the language of the human rights discourse, many supporters appealed to the concepts of fairness and justice. As one author argued in her opening comments, "What the opponents of Equal Pay for Equal Work are actually advocating is Less Pay for Women for Equal Work." Lucy Van Gogh, "Equal Pay for Equal Work is Practical", *Saturday Night* 24 February 1945, 10.

[124] Labour Department memos in 1954 reveal that the government did not want to begin the next session without an answer to the equal pay question since they expected renewed pressure from Ellen Fairclough and believed the measure had "considerable support." NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-6-2-5, Memo from A.H. Brown to Marion Royce, 15 October 1954; Memo from M. Royce to Committee Members, 19 October 1954. These events are detailed in Chapter Four.

women's concerns. With the need for more information recognized, the Labour Department finally decided to create a *separate* branch within the Department, headed by a woman. This decision allowed Gregg to declare in his announcement: "In doing this we are recognizing that the problems raised by women's groups deserve attention."[125] Thus, the BPW, like the YWCA, indirectly influenced the creation of the Bureau. The YWCA campaign answered the question of function, the aggressive action of the BPW provided the decision regarding form.

The decision to create a women's bureau was not simply a cynical ploy to disarm the women's groups. The measure alone would not stop the unrelenting pressure of the BPW and Ellen Fairclough in their campaign for equal pay. It did, however, provide a temporary reprieve, announced perhaps strategically as the Liberal government of Louis St. Laurent issued an election call in the Spring of 1953. The decision to create a research body was also a decidedly Canadian response to a problem. In the Spring of 1953, the government still had not resolved what to do in the "women's field." Evidence suggests the Labour Department fully intended the new Women's Bureau to provide analysis and advice regarding a number of women's issues plaguing the government. When the Bureau became operational in September 1954, the Director Marion Royce was immediately handed the equal pay issue. The Assistant Deputy Minister, A.H. Brown, instructed Royce to form a committee to examine the issue, particularly the "necessity or advisability or practicability of a legislative measure."[126] The creation of a *women's* bureau did grant the government the appearance of sensitivity to

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[125] Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 5420.

[126] This point is discussed more in Chapter Four. NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-6-2-5, Memos from A.H. Brown to M. Royce, 8 October 1954 and 15 October 1954.

women's issues while providing a reprieve from the demands for equal pay. By choosing to create a separate branch within the Department to study wage earning women, the government addressed the long-recognized need for more information. Thus, the Women's Bureau was created out of political expediency but it was intended to fulfill a very specific function within the mandate of the Department of Labour.

Conclusion

In the years following 1953, commentators echoed Gregg's announcement and attributed responsibility for the creation of the Women's Bureau to the women's groups. There was truth in this claim, for clearly, the three groups were crucial participants in the policy development over the eight years from 1945 to 1953. The pressure of the YWCA for an information gathering agency and of the BPW for equal pay played a definitive role in evolving the concept of a women's bureau into a realistic policy response to economic and social concerns. Repeated demands for a bureau over the eight years helped to keep the idea in the foreground of debate. Clearly though, it is simplistic to expect a direct cause and effect relationship between the demand for a policy and the implementation of that policy by the government. While the government felt compelled intermittently to address the demands of the women's groups, the concerns and priorities of the government were most important in shaping the direction of labour policy. Foremost for the Labour Department over this eight year period was the problem of labour supply presented by a prosperous and changing economy. The Women's Bureau became a policy option after all the participants redefined it as an information gathering agency. This development allowed the Department to address some concerns about

the female labour force while appearing responsive to the demands of women. In this process, the government's preoccupation with productivity, efficiency, and "manpower" merged briefly with the ideology of equality and human rights. The concept of a women's bureau held by the participants was continually reconstructed in this process over the eight year period, both in terms of the problem to be addressed and the form for the solution. Understanding this process of redefinition explains, in part, the long period of debate, and the form and mandate of the agency that was finally established. As well, the struggle for a women's bureau reveals the importance of the ideas and work of women and organizations in the immediate postwar period to the later second wave. During this time, the women's organizations were in the process of developing the concepts of equality that would form the basis for later demands. As well, they worked actively to achieve a number of important legislative demands based in the ideal of equality of opportunity. As a goal, a women's bureau did not have the symbolic power of equal pay as a statement of commitment to equality and rights. But once formed, the Bureau would play an important role in the development of the ideas and goals of the second wave and of the major equality measures of the late 1960s.

CHAPTER TWO

"A feminist voice": "Integrating" Women Into the Labour Department

The Liberal government's announcement in May 1953 of its intention to create a women's bureau in the federal Department of Labour was followed promptly by the prorogation of parliament and an election. The business of campaigning halted any movement towards establishing the new branch over the summer months. Even with the Liberals firmly back in power following the election, a full year passed before a Director was hired in September 1954 to head the new Bureau. Supporters of the Women's Bureau noted the delay, particularly Opposition member Ellen Fairclough, the Member of Parliament for Hamilton West. During the debate on supply in 1954, Fairclough chided the government for its Women's Bureau estimates which varied from the previous year, questioning how there could be budget alterations for matters like salaries when there wasn't anyone there! Returning to a serious tone, Fairclough reminded the government of the important reason for the Bureau's creation:

> We should realize that women in employment are not going to decrease in number but are going to increase, and consequently the problems which they will encounter in employment will increase...and the federal Department of Labour should get a move on and get this women's bureau operating, and not finally jump in when the problems have become so numerous that they will not be able to cope with them.[1]

The Bureau that began operating in the Fall of 1954 seemed an unlikely agency to achieve the important goals outlined by Fairclough. It was a branch equivalent to the other major divisions within the Department of Labour and headed by a Director of equal status who

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[1] Canada, House of Commons, *Debates,* 24 June 1954, 6633.

answered directly to the Deputy Minister. However, the new Bureau was small, with limited resources in both staffing and budget. The lack of magazine coverage following the Bureau's creation reflected a lack of expectation for change to result from its operations. As *Chatelaine* editor Doris Anderson noted, most observers in 1954 believed the new Bureau was simply "a sop to the women's groups," created to diminish criticism of the government's record on issues like equal pay.[2] Clearly, the new Bureau did not represent the placement of women's issues on the agenda of government. The Department of Labour expected the Women's Bureau to assemble and disseminate information about wage earning women. Lacking the modern imperative of gender based analysis, there was no concept that a woman-centered perspective was necessary to analyse the conditions of wage earning women. Consequently, Department officials expected the Bureau to utilize existing research facilities; the Bureau was not given the means to conduct its own research. Given this limited mandate and meagre resources, the problems of wage earning women were unlikely to be fully uncovered, let alone addressed, as Fairclough hoped. Anderson's assessment of the Bureau's potential was more accurate; it "could easily have become an inexpensive and useless cipher--a sop to the women's groups who had demanded it be established."[3]

Despite these limitations, however, the Bureau succeeded in establishing, as Monique Bégin argues, "a pragmatic feminist viewpoint in the business of the state."[4] The Bureau's

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[2] Doris Anderson, "Will Twelve Good Years Go Down the Drain", *Chatelaine* (November 1966), 1.

[3] Anderson, "Will Twelve Good Years Go Down the Drain", 1.

[4] Monique Bégin, "The Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada: Twenty Years Later", in *Challenging Times. The Women's Movement in Canada and the United States*,

success undoubtedly stemmed from the choice of Marion Royce as Director. In her editorial, Doris Anderson attributed the Bureau's success in surmounting its limitations to Marion Royce's "personal dedication to her job" and diligent work. Following a long career in education and social services, Royce brought to the position a strong commitment to the principle of equality of opportunity and the right of women to work in the field of their choice. Still, Royce was faced with an innocuous mandate and a Department in which wage earning women and their problems were placed at a low priority. Dependent on other branches for data collection and analysis, the Women's Bureau seemed destined for obscurity. Within three years, however, the Bureau signalled its intention to control both the collection and interpretation of information about women with the publication of *Married Women Working for Pay in Eight Canadian Cities*. This study, which required the collection of new data, clearly reflected the ideas of Marion Royce about women and their work and introduced many of the policy goals which would be the focus of the Bureau's activities in the 1960s. Over the course of the next twelve years, under Royce's leadership, the Women's Bureau did produce, as Anderson noted, an "impressive mass of information." Through publications and other activities, the Bureau worked to instill in the Department of Labour both an awareness of the problems facing wage earning women and, more importantly, an acceptance of the need to address these issues through state-directed programs and legislation geared towards furthering women's equality of opportunity. The determination of the Bureau to introduce feminist

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eds. Constance Backhouse & David H. Flaherty (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992), 27; Linda Geller-Schwartz concurs with this assessment in "An Array of Agencies. Feminism and State Institutions in Canada", in *Comparative State Feminism*, eds. Dorothy McBride Stetson & Amy Mazur (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 1995), 42.

concepts and goals into the Department were often met with resistance. Ultimately, through conferences, publications, and other intra-departmental activities, the Bureau was able to overcome the limitations of its mandate and resources and to act as a strong feminist voice within the departmental bureaucracy. The ability to define an issue (or to redefine it) is a crucial first step in the policy process.[5] Not content to simply gather information, the Bureau extended its mandate to include education and played an important role in defining the government's understanding of the issues facing wage earning women.

Marion Royce

In the announcement of May 1953, the government clearly stated the new Bureau would be headed by a woman. Several women's groups were ecstatic at the prospect of an additional woman in a senior position within government. In fact, in their initial reactions to the announcement, these groups appeared more excited at the placement of another *woman* in government than at the potential of the Bureau to address the problems of wage earning women.[6] Their excitement was understandable. Both the National Council of Women (NCW) and the Business and Professional Women's Clubs (BPW) believed the attainment of greater equality for women required the entrance and success of more women in government and

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[5] Heather MacIvor, *Woman and Politics in Canada* (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 1996), 340.

[6] The announcements in NCW and BPW publications of the Bureau's creation all emphasized that this meant the appointment of a woman to a senior position in government. For example, see National Council of Women of Canada (NCW), *Yearbook*, 1953, Doris Lewis Rare Book Room, University of Waterloo, 111-112.

business.[7] The position of Women's Bureau Director was "senior"; the Director would be equivalent to other division heads within the Department and would be directly accountable to the Deputy Minister.

Still, the new Bureau to be headed by the Director was undoubtedly marginal in function and resources. From the beginning, Department officials declared their intention to avoid any duplication of services.[8] The collection and analysis of material was one of the primary functions of the Economics and Research Branch of the Department. The Women's Bureau, created for the purpose of assembling and disseminating information related to wage earning women, would not conduct its own research. Consequently, the appropriation for the Bureau in 1953 and 1954 was $21,000. The budget allowed for the hiring of a Director along with one or two assistants. Over the next 15 years, the size and budget of the Bureau did not change appreciably. Bureau staff included the Director, one Secretary/Stenographer, and a Clerk. Eventually, the staff was expanded to include an assistant to the Director who could take on many of the writing, communication, and administrative tasks. The Bureau's budget in 1965 was only $45,000. Overall, the Bureau was a tiny branch within the Department, a "pale

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[7] The publications of both the NCW and the BPW strongly reflect this commitment to achieving equality through entrance into public life, particularly through success as measured by the achievement of high positions in government and business. For example, see Canadian Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs (BPW), *The Business and Professional Woman*, XXII, 4 (Jan-Feb 1952), Doris Lewis Rare Book Room, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario; National Council of Women of Canada, *Yearbook*, 1950, Doris Lewis Rare Book Room, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario, 12. This belief was not misplaced. Few women (even during the war years) made it into the higher ranks of the civil service. Heidi Jane Henkenhof, "Women in the Canadian Federal Civil Service During World War II", M.A. Thesis, Memorial University, 1994, 76.

[8] Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 14 May 1953, 5420.

replica" of its American counterpart.[9] Its mandate was limited; compiling existing statistics was the primary project. As well, the woman hired as Director faced the additional problem of being a woman in a position generally held by men. The sense that government remained a preserve of men in 1954 was implicit in a letter of congratulations to the new Director from Ellen Fairclough. Following congratulations and an offer of assistance, Fairclough pointed to their commonality of situation as *women* with the assertion that they would have "many problems in common."[10] As the first Director, Marion Royce entered a position similar to the one faced by the first femocrats in the early 1970s. Success appeared in the form of a high status, high pay, and senior bureaucratic position but real power was questionable with a marginal agency situated in an atmosphere insensitive to women's concerns.[11]

Marion Victoria Royce was born on 19 January 1901 in St. Thomas Ontario. She received a Bachelor of Arts in History and English, then trained as a teacher, the career choice of many educated women at this time. After a short teaching career, Marion Royce went on to study Social History at the University of Chicago. The Depression interrupted her studies, sending her back to Toronto, where she taught at Moulton College, a private girls' school.

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[9] By comparison, the Women's Bureau in the US had a staff of 76 people and a budget of over $800,000 a year in 1965. Doris Anderson, "From the Editor's Desk", 1; Geller-Schwartz 1995, 42.

[10] National Archives of Canada (NAC), Department of Labour Papers RG 27, Vol. 1908, File #38-9-9, Letter from Ellen Fairclough (M.P. Hamilton West) to Marion Royce (Director, Women's Bureau), 27 July 1954.

[11] Hester Eisenstein, *Inside Agitators. Australian Femocrats and the State* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996), 74; Suzanne Franzway, Dianne Court & R.W. Connell, *Staking a Claim: Feminism, Bureaucracy and the State* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1989), 139-141.

During this time, Royce obtained a Master's degree from the University of Toronto. In 1940, she moved to Montreal to work as the information secretary for education and membership of the National Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA). Two years later, she joined the World's YWCA, stationed first in Washington for three years (because of the war) and then in Geneva for the next seven. As consultant for Social and International Questions, Royce worked with YWCAs in over fifty countries. Her work included reporting on the activities of the United Nations (UN), as well as participation in the UN Commission on the Status of Women and in forums of the International Labour Organization (ILO).[12] She received word about the new Director's position in 1954 when the Assistant Deputy Minister of Labour, G.V. Haythorne, wrote inviting her to apply.[13]

Through these experiences, Royce had the educational and administrative background necessary for the position of Director. At the time though, some questioned whether she was strong-willed and assertive enough to be successful within the federal bureaucracy. One critic, according to *Chatelaine*, argued:

> Marion Royce isn't used to the sort of political infighting that goes on in the civil service. If she'd bucked a bit in the first year she could probably have got more staff.[14]

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[12] While markedly different from the life of an average Canadian woman at this time, Marion Royce's life was similar to the experiences of other university educated, "career" women of the time. See patterns outlined in Judith Fingard, "College, Career, and Community: Dalhousie Coeds, 1881-1921", in *Youth, University and Canadian Society*, eds. Paul Axelrod & John G. Reid (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989).

[13] Mollie Gillen, "Marion Royce: Expert on Canadian Women", *Chatelaine* (September 1964), 90.

[14] Quoted in Gillen, "Marion Royce", 89.

Pictures and descriptions of Royce reveal a slender and small woman, soft-spoken and quiet. For those critics who believed the Women's Bureau was strictly window-dressing for a government pretending responsiveness to the women's groups, the implication existed that Royce was chosen because she was docile. Marion Royce, however, brought to the Director's position clear and defined ideas about the rights and needs of women, their roles and status in society, and the solutions necessary to improve their workforce position. These ideas altered only slightly over the next two decades, although some became more sharply focused and assumed greater priority. These ideas about women underlay the issues on which Royce focused in her work with the Bureau as well as the interpretation that these issues were given. Ultimately, her quiet nature was overcome by a strong-willed commitment to use her position within the bureaucracy to educate both the government and the public, so solutions could be developed to women's inequality.

Royce assumed the position of Director with a strong commitment to the liberal principle of individual rights and freedoms, a principle which she applied to women. Embued with the postwar optimism about democracy and the commitment to human rights, Royce sought to extend the concept of *human* rights to *women's* rights. She believed that sex like race or religion was a characteristic with little effect on individual abilitities. Thus, like other active women in this period, Royce used the language, concepts, and methods of the human rights discourse to argue against sex discrimation in all facets of life.[15] This approach led her to declare, in her first public appearance in 1954, women's *right to work* outside of the home,

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[15] Dorothy McBride Stetson, "The Oldest Women's Policy Agency. The Women's Bureau in the United States," in *Comparative State Feminism,* eds. Dorothy McBride Stetson & Amy Mazur (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 1995), 261.

regardless of marital status and age. A woman was, she reminded her audience, "a person in her own right."[16] Yet, Royce also recognized the rising social anxiety in postwar society, caused in part by changing gender roles. Like many commentators of the time, she spoke often of a "changing world," but encouraged society to embrace and examine the changes to allow for a gradual development of new ideals and values on which society could be based.[17] In this way, Royce differed from many other social commentators who sought to reaffirm and reinforce traditional values and family life.[18] These commentators, seeking to explain the reasons why married women chose jobs, cited economic reasons. While Royce pointed to the importance of this factor, she was firm in her defense of other reasons why a wife or mother might choose to work. Like many professional women of the period, Royce invoked the ideas of psychologists and other "experts" on family and marriage to argue that working outside of the home could be a positive experience personally and for the family of a married woman.[19] Too much attention to children could harm them; the married woman needed outside interests

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[16] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-2-2 pt.1, Text of talk by Marion Royce on the role of the Women's Bureau on CBC radio programme "Canada at Work", 7 November 1954, 3.

[17] NAC, Marion Royce Papers (MR Papers) MG 30C206, Vol. 1, File #5, Speech entitled "The Role of Women Today", 1 October 1960, 12.

[18] Mona Gleason, *Normalizing the Ideal: Psychology, Schooling, and the Family in Postwar Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999); Mariana Valverde, "Building Anti-Delinguent Communities: Morality, Gender, and Generation in the City", in *A Diversity of Women. Ontario, 1945-1980* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995). This point is discussed in the Introduction.

[19] See for example, the article by prominent physician Marion Hilliard, "Stop Being Just a Housewife", *Chatelaine* (September 1956), 11. Joan Sangster, "Doing Two Jobs: The Wage Earning Mother, 1945-70", in *A Diversity of Women. Ontario, 1945-1980* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 106.

to widen her perspective and make her more interesting to her family.[20] Royce, however, also referred to the benefits of employment outside the home for the woman as an *individual.* Work outside the home was "diverting," it provided "companionship" with other workers, "a refreshing sense of independence" from earning, and for some, "a compelling and creative interest."[21] Royce was quick to note that not all women would want to work outside of the home and to defend the importance of the homemaking role. Still, she believed women's right to work was a matter of basic human and social justice. To the question, "Do Women Want Careers?" in 1963, Royce reminded her audience that there were many different women with many different wants and needs but the principle of individual rights remained:

> I am a strong believer in the principle of individual choice or perhaps better, individual commitment--the right and the will of a woman to make the kind of choices that have authenticity for her as a responsible human being all along the way of life.[22]

In 1970, the freedom to choose employment outside of the home was one of four fundamental principles stated in the Report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women (RCSW). By that time, Canadian society was ready to accept this concept; in 1954, women's right to work, regardless of marital status and number of children, was a radical declaration.[23]

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[20] NAC, Marion Royce Papers (MR Papers), MG 30C206, Vol. 1, File #5, Speech entitled "The Role of Women Today", 1 October 1960, p.6.

[21] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-2-2 pt.1, Text of talk by Marion Royce on the role of the Women's Bureau on CBC radio programme "Canada at Work", 7 November 1954, 3.

[22] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 1, File #5, Speech by Marion Royce to the Business and Professional Women's Club entitled "Are Women Amphibious?", 2 November 1963, 6.

[23] Freda L. Paltiel, "State Initiatives: Impetus and Effects", in *Women and the Canadian State*, eds., Caroline Andrew & Sonda Rodgers (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's

The right to work was a component of Royce's larger commitment to the principle of equality of opportunity. Postwar concern for human rights renewed nineteenth-century optimism and advocacy of the right of every person to equal treatment and opportunity to pursue their goals and receive society's rewards. For Marion Royce, this principle applied also to the situation of wage earning women. Utilizing the discourse of discrimination, she decried the "occupational inequalities" faced by women as fundamentally injust.[24] The list of occupational barriers recognized by Royce was long, including low wages, job segregation in low-status sectors, inadequate training and education, inaccessibility to promotion, and primary responsibility for care of home and children. For Royce, then, the construct of *inequality* framed her understanding of the *problem* of the wage earning wife and mother. This view contradicted the dominant discourse of the postwar period in which "family containment, pronatalism, and family welfare" structured most debate on the wage earning wife and mother, even among supporters.[25] For Royce, however, economic equality, achieved in part through participation in the workforce, was fundamental to the advancement of women in Canadian society. "Dignity and worth as persons," she declared, derived from occupational status and wage earning potential. Women in the home, despite their crucial role in society, were "without economic entity." Thus, equal opportunity in the labour force was necessary if

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University Press, 1997), 29; Monica Boyd, *Canadian Attitudes towards Women: Thirty Years of Change* (Ottawa: Labour Canada-Women's Bureau, 1984), 11.

[24] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-2-2 pt.1, Text of talk by Marion Royce on the role of the Women's Bureau on CBC radio programme "Canada at Work", 7 November 1954, 3.

[25] Sangster, "Doing Two Jobs" 1995, 106.

women were "to achieve adult status."[26] Royce's comments mirrored those of later femocrats defending their involvement in state feminism. Australian femocrats interviewed in the 1990s argued the importance of equal opportunity programs to achieve certain basic, preliminary gains. Such gains were necessary before women could pose a more revolutionary challenge to the structural inequality of society. Thus, one woman argued, "the most basic issue is the economic independence of women."[27]

To give women equal opportunity, Royce believed "occupational inequalities" could be overcome through government programs and legislation to improve women's chance to compete for jobs, education, training, and promotion. The liberal feminism that became the public face of the women's movement following the RCSW had antecedents in the strategies and ideas of earlier feminists like Royce. Perhaps because she lacked the anti-state critique of radical feminism, Royce believed strongly that the inequality faced by wage earning women could be removed by state action.[28] Informed by the rights declarations of the UN and the ILO, Royce supported campaigns by women's groups to extend anti-discrimination legislation to

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[26] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-2-2 pt.1, Talk by Marion Royce on role of the Women's Bureau on CBC radio programme "Canada at Work", 7 November 1954, 4; NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 1, File #5, Talk by Marion Royce to the Soroptimist Club entitled "Changing Expectations", 25 November 1964, 9.

[27] Chris Ronalds quoted in Eisenstein 1996, 78.

[28] On liberal feminism and the critique, see, Zillah Eisenstein, *The Radical Future of Liberal Feminism* (New York: Longman, 1981); Alena Heitlinger, *Women's Equality, Demography and Public Policy: A Comparative Perspective* (London: St. Martin's Press, 1993).

women.[29] A primary focus of the Bureau, also, was on improving women's access and overall level of training and education. While recognizing the differential educational needs of women, Royce argued education and training were important first steps to women's equality.[30]

The gender neutrality, individualism, and rationalism inherent in an equal opportunity framework did not preclude a concept of difference in Royce's ideas. In public statements, Royce frequently reassured her audience that women's primary role and concern remained with the family. It was a biological "fact" that only women could have children. These statements probably reflected a perceived need to disarm rising social fears about family disintegration. Yet, they were also the result of the conceptual fluidity of the equality of opportunity concept. Royce, like other feminist women of this time, blended the arguments of equal rights feminism with those of the maternal feminism of the early twentieth century. She combined a defense of women's natural position in the family with a recognition of the inequality faced by women in the workforce.[31] Thus, Royce often declared her belief that women's lives were and would continue to be different from men's. Women's lives were multi-faceted, involving a combination of family, work, and community. These roles, according to Royce, were not contradictory or exclusive, and they were of equal value, even for married women; it was not

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[29] Marion Royce, "Women's Work -- What is it Worth?" A Discussion Pamphlet on Equal Pay for Equal Work and Related Questions (World's YWCA, 1950). Doris Lewis Rare Book Room, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario.

[30] This topic was discussed in numerous speeches and writings of Royce over her lifetime. See Chapter Three for more discussion.

[31] Heitlinger 1993, 26-32; Barbara Sullivan, "Sex Equality and the Australian Body Politic" in *Playing the State. Australian-Feminist Interventions*, ed. Sophie Watson (London: Verso, 1990), 181-183.

necessary for women to choose between these roles, but it was important for them to find a balance between the many demands.[32] Equality, therefore, did not require that men and women have identical roles and lives; men and women were "complementary," not "identical."[33] The need to achieve balance between these roles justified the provision of extra legislation or programs for women. For women to have equal opportunity, special provisions were needed (such as day care and maternity leave) that would enable them to balance the conflicts between these roles. The achievement of equal opportunity did not require that men and women have identical lives, but rather an adjustment by society to ensure women had "choice."[34]

Implicit in the human rights discourse of the postwar period was the assumption that discrimination lay at the base of inequality. Throughout her term as Director, Royce argued that women's inequality was a product of societal attitudes and traditions which separated the lives of men and women and placed women in an inferior position. Most of the laws directly barring women from participation had been removed, yet women continued to face substantial occupational inequality. The problem, according to Royce, was attributable to "tradition, customs and folk-ways." In a 1960 speech, Royce spoke of the barriers women faced in the world of work. After outlining how women had entered many previously male dominated

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[32] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 1, File #5 Speech by Marion Royce entitled "The Role of Women Today", 1 October 1960, 3.

[33] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 1, File #5, Speech by Marion Royce to the Canadian Federation of University Women Triennial Conference entitled "What Now?", 19 August 1955, 9, 12.

[34] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 1, File #5, Talk by Marion Royce to the Soroptimist Club entitled "Changing Expectations", 25 November 1964, 10. See Chapter Five for more discussion.

fields, she noted how new barriers had gone up to replace those that had fallen. Ultimately, a new moral, social, and cultural "understanding" had to develop before women would be accorded their "worth as individuals."[35] Consequently, Royce believed public education was a crucial component in the struggle for women's equality.

In this commitment to women's rights, Royce was part of an ongoing and evolving women's movement in Canada. In her ideas, she reflected her peers, women who had led unusually public lives characterized by lifelong pursuit of career and dedication to social, religious, or community causes, through service organizations and paid work. Many of the women in organized women's groups believed, by 1954, in the principles of freedom of choice and equality of opportunity for women. Women's right to choose, both in marriage and paid work, formed the basis of public declarations and policy proposals to government. As well, education and training for women were primary projects for women's groups seeking to eliminate discrimination and aid women to compete equally with men in the workforce.[36] Undoubtedly, there was some disunity among women's groups. Reflecting the anxiety of the larger society, many groups remained divided and uncomfortable with the question of how (and even if) mothers should balance wage earning with their home responsibilities. Most avoided the question in 1954, buttressed by the reality that most married women with children stayed at

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[35] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 1, File #5, Speech by Marion Royce to the International Conference of the General Federation of Women's Clubs entitled "The Role of Women Today", 1 October 1960, 9-10; Speech by Marion Royce to the Canadian Federation of University Women Triennial Conference, 19 August 1955, 14.

[36] Geller-Schwartz 1995, 49.

home.[37] Still, these women did form the vanguard, paving the way for the women's movement of the 1970s.[38] In the early 1950s, the principle that women were entitled to the same rights and freedoms as other Canadians was a radical assertion, a first important step in building the concept of women's rights.[39]

The appointment of Marion Royce brought these ideas into the federal bureaucracy. Clearly, the government did not intend the Bureau to be an advocate for these "feminist" ideas. This intention is clearly reflected in the limited mandate of the Bureau, particularly its lack of control over research. Yet, the choice of Royce did, in essence, bring a representative of the women's groups into government. Over the next few years, Royce's ideas formed the basis of the work and recommendations pursued by the Bureau. Despite its limitations, the Bureau

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[37] A survey of the main publications of the NCW and the BPW reveal this emphasis on education and equal rights legislation like equal pay for equal work. There is little discussion of working mothers in the mid 1950s. See NCW, *Yearbook*, and BPW, *The Business and Professional Woman.*

[38] Jill Vickers, "The Intellectual Origins of the Women's Movements in Canada", in *Challenging Times. The Women's Movement in Canada and the United States*, eds. Constance Backhouse & David H. Flaherty (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992).
There is little written on the women's groups for the 1950s and 1960s, other than "official" histories commissioned by the groups. There is a good general discussion in Alison Prentice et al., *Canadian Women. A History,* 2nd ed. (Toronto: Harcourt Brace & Co., 1996), 410-428.

[39] In 1941, the US Women's Bureau noted the public "still has to be convinced that married women have the right to work...and that they can work without harm being done to the home" and to the standards of workers. In Canada, the 1943 assertion of the Sub-Committee on the Post-War Problems of Women that all women had a "right to work" challenged public opinion. Gail Cuthbert Brandt, "'Pigeon-Holed and Forgotten': The Work of the Subcommittee on the Post-War Problems of Women, 1943", *Histoire Sociale/Social History*, XV, 29 (May 1982), 259;
Lynn Y. Weiner, *From Working Girl to Working Mother. The Female Labor Force in the U.S., 1820-1980* (Chapel Hill & London: The University of North Carolina, 1985), 110.

produced impressive studies directed towards educating the public and the government, and to improving the educational and occupational opportunities of women. Royce's ideas underlay all of the publications and conferences of the Bureau and were clearly expressed in her speeches and other public appearances as Director. Ultimately, this work would play a crucial role in introducing feminist ideals into the government, in preparation for the events of the late 1960s.

Controlling the Collection and Interpretation of Information

With Marion Royce in the Director's seat and a small clerical staff assembled, the Bureau began operation in the Fall of 1954. The work to be done seemed straightforward. The primary function of the Bureau listed in reports was the "preparation, distribution and exchange of information on questions affecting women's employment."[40] Over the years, other functions were included in reports, some only intermittently, but the Bureau's role as an information gathering and disseminating agency remained primary. After all, the need for more information about wage earning women was the major reason for creating the Bureau. Yet, statements and reports from the Bureau show the potential ambiguity in interpreting what this information gathering role would involve. At times, Royce spoke of the Bureau's main role as an "informative" one, "information" became "knowledge"; the purpose of the material collected varied from the "exchange of information," to fostering "an intelligent approach to problems,"

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[40] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-2-2, pt.1, "Summary of Bureau's Function and Purpose", undated; Canada, Department of Labour, *Labour Gazette* (1953), 812.

to advancing "the opportunities of women in employment."[41] What is evident is that Royce immediately perceived the Bureau's major role to be much wider than suggested by the mandate of collecting and distributing information. Despite the restrictions imposed by limited resources and mandate, Royce believed the Bureau held an important *educational* role. Convinced that discrimination lay at the base of women's inequality, Royce believed an important step for improving the position of wage earning women was to change the "traditional" attitudes and beliefs held by the public and government. Through its publications, Royce argued in 1962, the Bureau intended to "cast light on the problems [of wage earning women] and promote constructive attitudes on the part of women themselves, those who employ them and those who are responsible for policies governing their work."[42] Consequently, a crucial question in the preparation of these publications was *who* would control the collection and interpretation of material. If the Bureau was to be more than a "sop" to the women's groups, it would need to have this control. Within the first five years of operation, the Bureau released its first publications, *Women at Work in Canada* (1957), *Married Women Working for Pay in Eight Canadian Cities* (1958), and *Occupational Histories of Married Women Working for Pay* (1959). These first publications revealed the intention of Royce to control both the collection and interpretation of information about wage earning

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[41] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-2-2, pt. 1, Reports and Summaries from the Women's Bureau, 1954 to 1967.

[42] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #8, "A Talk on the Work of the Women's Bureau and Problems of the Employment of Women" by M. Royce to Convention of the Canadian Federation of Business and Professional Women, 10 July 1962.

women.[43]

The Bureau's first publication, *Women at Work in Canada,* was aptly subtitled "a fact book on the female labour force of Canada." In subsequent reports and summaries of the Bureau's work, this publication and the revised editions which followed in 1958 and 1964 came to be denoted simply as the "fact books," reflecting their composition as compilations of statistical data from the census and other sources. They showed the growth of the female labour force, the age distribution of wage earning women, their marital status, as well as their occupational distribution and earnings. In reference to these studies in 1960, Royce noted that one of the "primary tasks" of the Bureau was to "assemble statistical data on women's participation in the labour force."[44] To this end, the "fact books" fulfilled the primary mandate of the Bureau. They did not include any new material but brought together statistics and analysis gathered by the Economics and Research Branch and the Dominion Bureau of Statistics .

A "fact book" was an obvious first publication for the Bureau to put together. Reflecting back on the early years of the Bureau in 1964, one writer noted that "the first challenge facing the new division was to discover who were the working women in Canada,

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[43] Canada, Department of Labour (Women's Bureau), *Women at Work in Canada. A Fact Book on the Female Labour Force of Canada*, 1957; Canada, Department of Labour (Women's Bureau), *Married Women Working for Pay in Eight Canadian Cities*, 1958; Canada, Department of Labour (Women's Bureau), *Occupational Histories of Married Women Working for Pay in Eight Canadian Cities* (1959).

[44] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File # 38-2-2 pt.1, "Draft of Material for Women's Bureau section of the Minister's Current Information Book", 14 December 1959, 1.

why they worked, and what type of occupations they choose."[45] In 1954, information existed about the numbers, marital status, and occupations of wage earning women but it was scattered over innumerable statistical publications put out by government bodies. No one publication existed which brought together this information and revealed "who were the working women in Canada." This gap had been one of the primary criticisms of the women's groups, who had argued that it inhibited their study of questions regarding wage earning women. As a result, Bureau reports suggest there was a demand for the "fact books" following publication.[46]

Clearly though, many questions about wage earning women could not be answered by examining the existing data. The problem was twofold. Regular labour force surveys and other studies done by the Economics and Research Branch and by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics did not distinguish between male and female in many of the questions. Marion Royce spoke of this problem in reply to criticism she received about the Bureau's inability, at times, to provide requested information. In reference to the data collected by the Department of Labour, Royce noted: "If [employers] don't give us a breakdown into male and female employees in answer to our questions about pensions, or safety factors, for instance, then we haven't got the figures to work from."[47] As well, government researchers failed to recognize problems specific to *women* and to collect the relevant material. The head of Economics and Research, W.R. Dymond, spoke openly of this problem in 1960. There were so many

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[45] *Labour Gazette* (1964), 772.

[46] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-2-2 pt.1, "Draft of Material for Women's Bureau section of the Minister's Current Information Book", 14 December 1959, 2.

[47] Gillen, "Marion Royce", 89.

questions about wage earning women to study that he recommended priorities be set.[48]

Of particular concern to Marion Royce was the lack of data collection and analysis about one of the fastest growing segments of the labour force, married women. The Bureau decided to address this problem early in 1955 when it initiated a major study of the new trend; the results of the study were outlined in the booklet, *Married Women Working for Pay*. The phenomenon of the wage earning wife was an obvious first topic of study for the new Bureau. Growing public and government concern about the social implications of women working outside of the home was one of the primary reasons for creating the Bureau. The introduction to *Married Women Working for Pay* notes the growing anxiety within society:

> Because of the household duties that married women generally assume in our society, there is widespread public interest in the effect on Canadian homes when so many wives and mothers are employed in the offices, ships and factories. Particular concern is expressed about the provisions that are made for children...[49]

Consequently, the relationship between employment and family life was the main theme of the study. Reflecting Royce's ideas, the study examined how women balanced the demands of employment with household and family duties. Existing data collected by the Labour Department and the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, emphasizing age, marital composition, and occupational distribution, was not adequate to explore women's daily experiences as wives, workers, and (in some cases) mothers.[50] The popular press of the time similarly failed to

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[48] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1906, File #38-6-6-4, "Seminar on the Work of the Women's Bureau, Department of Labour", 5 May 1960, 2.

[49] *Married Women Working for Pay* 1958, 10.

[50] In a November 1960 speech, Royce argued that despite wide public concern about the increase in married women's employment, there was no information about the situation of these

provide such insights. As Sangster notes, women's "daily struggles, worries and satisfactions were less than visible in the media debate and in the popular culture of the time." Mostly, these sources focused on the "necessity, consequences and appropriateness of working mothers."[51] *Married Women Working for Pay* examined why married women worked, the attitudes of the women to their work, and their plans for the future. As well, it delved into how these women blended waged work with home responsibilities by examining the distribution of housework, the attitudes of husbands, the impact on children, and the provision of care for children. To find the answers to these questions, the Women's Bureau organized a survey involving interviews with 786 married women in eight Canadian cities. The preparation of the questions, the interviewing, the tabulation of results, and the final preparation of tables and the manuscript involved the cooperation of the Women's Bureau with the Economics and Research Branch, the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, seven Schools of Social Work, and the Department of National Health and Welfare. Further analysis of this material in 1959 examined the employment histories of survey participants. Continuing the focus on the interrelationship between women's waged work and family life, the second study, *Occupational Histories of Married Women Working for Pay*, examined the long term impact of home responsibilities on women's employment patterns. While neither study could ignore questions about the "necessity, consequences and appropriateness" of wage earning for wives and mothers, both

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workers, and thus, the Bureau undertook the study. NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #13, Talk by Marion Royce to the Ontario Federation of Labour entitled "The Women's Bureau and its Concerns", 6 November 1960.

[51] Joan Sangster, *Earning Respect. The Lives of Working Women in Small-Town Ontario, 1920-1960* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 222-223.

provided important insight into the experiences and attitudes of wage earning women.

Interestingly, the study began within months of Royce's assumption of the Director's position. While exact details about the Bureau's first months are not available in the records, official summaries submitted to the Minister reveal the project began before February 1955.[52] Thus, the possibility exists that Marion Royce had the project in mind when she assumed the position of Director. A 1964 article in the *Labour Gazette* argues the study arose naturally from the results of the first "fact book":

> This first Women's Bureau survey [fact book] revealed the extent of a fairly recent phenomenon--married women working outside the home. The Women's Bureau therefore decided to conduct a study of these women to discover some of their characteristics, why they are working, their attitude toward their work, the kinds of jobs they are doing, and how they manage their dual responsibilities.[53]

In general, the summaries and publications of the Bureau take credit for initiating and coordinating the project.[54] No alternate evidence exists to suggest another agency planned the study previous to the Bureau's operation.

Labour Department officials, however, were supportive of the proposal to conduct a survey of married women workers. The proposed study added to the workload of staff in the other participating branches, because of the need to generate and analyze new data. Still, in

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[52] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-2-2 pt.1, Summaries of the activities of the Women's Bureau for inclusion in the Minister's information books, Dated 7 February 1955 and 13 May 1955.

[53] *Labour Gazette* (1964), 772-773.

[54] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-2-2 pt.1, "Draft of Material for Women's Bureau section of the Minister's Current Information Book", 14 December 1959, 2; NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #13, Talk by Marion Royce to the Ontario Federation of Labour entitled "The Women's Bureau and its Concerns", 6 November 1960.

public statements announcing the new study, the Minister of Labour stressed the necessity of the project because of the important "economic and social implications" of married women working outside of the home.[55] This support is not surprising given that the government's decision in 1953 to create a Bureau resulted in part from recognition of the growing importance of married women to the labour force.

For the Department, however, the main questions to be answered by the study centred around the economic (rather than social) implications of women's wage earning. A statement by Gregg announcing the project mentioned three aims; the first aim revealed the primacy of manpower issues:

> The first [aim] is to find out the types of jobs performed by married women in the labour force and their attitudes and plans in relation to their jobs. They will be asked about their training and experience to find out if they have occupational qualifications which are not being utilized in the jobs they are doing.[56]

Thus, Departmental officials structured the question of married women working outside of the home within the dominant "manpower" discourse of the 1950s. Ensuring the effective utilization of "human resources" remained a priority; the study *Married Women Working for Pay* was a first step to assessing this question as it applied to women. For the most part, government policy in the postwar period assumed and reinforced women's primacy in the home. Yet, as Pat and Hugh Armstrong note, there was a gradual shift to interest and policy

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[55] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-2-2 pt.1, Summary of the activities of the Bureau, 7 February 1955; *Labour Gazette* (1955), 1134.

[56] The second aim was to "relate the patterns of work to family and household responsibilities," the third was to ascertain women's reasons for working and their long-term plans. *Labour Gazette* (1955), 1134.

promoting women's participation in the labour force.[57]

Marion Royce understood the importance of labour supply issues in structuring the Department's response to the Bureau's work. In official correspondence and public statements, she often employed the language of manpower, production, and efficiency to justify the Bureau's work. A 1954 radio address was typical; Royce presented the Bureau as an agency concerned with women's rights as workers and with helping women "to make their full and rightful contribution to our expanding and rapidly changing economy."[58] In this sense, the federal Women's Bureau was similar to its counterpart in Ontario which, Joan Sangster argues, "publicly framed their goals in a language of productivity, efficiency, and maximum usage of the labour power."[59]

Yet, while Royce clearly understood the economic priorities which dictated departmental policy, the major focus of *Married Women Working for Pay* was on the "social implications" of women working outside of the home. In the final manuscript, manpower questions were a relatively minor theme. The issues stressed by Gregg were discussed in a section on occupational distribution with the conclusion that the women in the survey

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[57] Pat Armstrong & Hugh Armstrong, "Taking Women into Account. Redefining and Intensifying Employment in Canada", in *Feminization of the Labour Force. Paradoxes and Promises*, eds. Jane Jenson et al. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988), 66; Jane Ursel, *Private Lives, Public Policy. 100 Years of State Intervention in the Family* (Toronto: Women's Press, 1992), 231-233.

[58] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File # 38-2-2 pt.1, Text of broadcast by Marion Royce on the role of the Women's Bureau on CBC radio program "Canada at Work", 7 November 1954, 4.

[59] Joan Sangster, "Doing Two Jobs" 1995, 108.

"appeared to be making good use of their education and training."[60] But overall, these labour supply issues were not central to the study. Public concerns, particularly about the effect "on home and family when the wife or mother takes an outside job" framed the study. As Royce stated in 1960:

> Few developments in present-day society are more widely and bitterly discussed than this change in the marital composition of the female labour force. Married women who are working outside their homes are charged with neglect of their households, especially their children; they are frequently rated as cause number one of rising juvenile delinguency.[61]

In response to these public concerns, the study was in part a defense of the wage earning wife. Much of the popular debate assumed the demands of work and home were incompatible, attributing dire consequences to society and family life from the rising trend of employment for married women.[62] Royce believed these pronouncements were exaggerated, partly because the necessary analysis did not exist from which an informed debate could take place. Thus, she noted in 1960, the Bureau undertook the study to "secure a more accurate picture of the family and work situations of these women" and on "the effects, if any, on home and family."[63] This is not to say that Royce believed there were no problems arising from the "double burden"

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[60] *Married Women Working for Pay* 1958, 24.

[61] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #13, Talk by Marion Royce to the Convention of the Ontario Federation of Labour entitled "The Women's Bureau and its Concerns", 6 November 1960.

[62] Veronica Strong-Boag, "Canada's Wage-Earning Wives and the Construction of the Middle Class, 1945-60", *Journal of Canadian Studies* 29, 3 (Fall 1994), 5-25.

[63] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-2-2 pt.1, Summation of the Bureau's activities written for inclusion in the Minister's statement, 7 February 1955; *Married Women Working for Pay* 1958, 10.

experienced by wage earning women. In fact, the study concludes that there is "no doubt" problems exist from "the gainful employment of married women, particularly mothers," a conclusion which counteracts the assertions of some of the survey participants.[64] Nonetheless, the study is important because Royce tried not only to address public concerns but also to untangle the reality of women's everyday lives from the social hysteria surrounding the fears of family breakdown.

For this reason, *Married Women Working for Pay* provides the first (and only) glimpse of the wage earning wife and mother for this period. The issues addressed by the study were those which dominated commentary by "experts" and others throughout the 1950s and 1960s. The Bureau's analysis challenged many assumptions about the negative effects of women's employment. As well, it pointed to the central ideas and goals which would inform the Bureau's approach to women's rights in the following decade.

First, *Married Women Working for Pay* addressed the somewhat ludicrous assertion that employment had dire consequences for husbands and marital happiness. The hysteria found in popular articles like "I quit my job to save my marriage" was not mirrored in the comments of the study participants.[65] Husbands, it was reported, suffered no ill effects from their wives' absence. Directly addressing the public debate, the study noted the "concern" among "students of contemporary society" about the ill effects on a man's "status." In conclusion, the study argued: "Although a few of the husbands in this Survey were reported to resent the wives

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[64] *Married Women Working for Pay* 1958, 72, 73-74.

[65] Dorothy Manning, "I Quit My Job to Save My Marriage", *Chatelaine* (June 1955), 16; Veronica Strong-Boag, "Home Dreams: Women and the Suburban Experiment in Canada, 1945-60", *Canadian Historical Review*, LXXII (December 1991), 481-483.

going to work, a great many more were said to be grateful for their contribution to the family budget."[66] Husbands, in general, were supportive of their wives' decision to work; most even took on some of the housework, although the working wives continued to do the majority.

On the question of effects on children, the study's conclusions were more equivocal. The women who were interviewed argued their children experienced no harm (and even some benefits) from their work outside the home. The study reported this result but stressed it was the *opinion* of the women, not a conclusion of the study. Unlike in the case of husbands, the authors of the study did not accept these statements without question. Rather, they argued the women were not likely to speak openly of ill effects because of widespread social disapproval of their employment. This conclusion was reasonable. A recent study of women who had paid employment during the 1950s notes a similar "reluctance" among the women to "claim the true value of their work" because of the negative popular culture.[67] Still, the authors of *Married Women Working for Pay* struggled to defend the women or at least to diminish the critique. They argued there was no evidence to support the widespread accusation of child neglect. Most wage earning women, they assured the readers, did not have young children (they were childless or had older children). As well, the study noted, the women who were mothers "were practically unanimous in assuring the interviewer that [the children] were adequately looked after."[68] Thus, on the question of children, the survey's authors wavered in the conclusions. They reported that the mothers believed their children were well cared for and did not suffer

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[66] *Married Women Working for Pay* 1958, 75.

[67] Sangster, *Earning Respect* 1995, 233.

[68] *Married Women Working for Pay* 1958, 51-54.

from lack of attention. As well, the study did not suggest any ill effects despite reservations about the accuracy of the above statements. The authors seemed determined to diminish social criticism, but their defense amounted to a reassurance that most wage earning women were childless or widowed. As Joan Sangster argues about the Women's Bureau in the late 1950s, "even those sympathetic to working mothers often assumed an apologetic tone."[69] These authors, while not explicitly supporting the public equation of employment with neglect, reinforced this ideal with the implication that the family remained intact because mothers of young children did not work.

This focus on the balance between home and paid work led the study to a first tentative exploration of the need for "special services" for wage earning women. *Married Women Working for Pay* marks the beginning of the Bureau's campaign for expanded day care facilities and maternity leave provisions, although these measures were not explicitly demanded in the text. A May 1955 summary of the Bureau's activities included, for the first time, a fourth purpose of the study - to examine the "services needed to increase [women's] efficiency as homemakers and workers."[70] Both *Married Women Working for Pay* and *Occupational Histories* investigated the issue of child care, examining the existing provisions made by wage earning mothers and women's attitudes about whether more child care facilities were needed. The opinion that there was a need for more child care facilities was "widely held" but primarily by working women *without children.* The women with young children, while supportive of

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[69] Sangster 1995, 106.

[70] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-2-2, pt.1, Summary of the "activities of the Women's Bureau," 13 May 1955.

such initiatives, argued they would not use such facilities if available, primarily because of the problems associated with transporting young children to day care early each morning. The women in the study reported they were happy with the childcare arrangements they had made for young children but would "welcome" facilities for older children after school.[71] The study reported the results but challenged the assertion of the mothers that they personally would not use organized child care facilities. In summary comments, the report concluded that the lack of demand "expressed by mothers of small children" probably resulted from "a natural tendency for mothers to be protective in replying to questions about the care of their children."[72] The authors of the study assumed from the beginning that there was a need for expanded child care facilities (as did the women surveyed). Interestingly, the survey data did not answer the question about whether there was a *need*; to some extent the data even questioned whether there was a *demand*. Yet, in subsequent years, Marion Royce referred to this work as the impetus behind the Bureau's demand for expanded child care facilities for the children of wage earning mothers. Writing in 1960, Royce outlined the results of the study, including the assertion by the women of satisfaction with the care of their children. Still, she argued the question of adequate child care "is one of growing urgency in our communities" for "society" cannot afford to have its children neglected.[73] Popular anxiety about child neglect buttressed by the "science" of psychology underlay the reluctance of the Bureau to believe the assurances

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[71] *Married Women Working for Pay* 1958, 59-62.

[72] *Married Women Working for Pay* 1958, 62.

[73] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #13, Talk by Marion Royce to the Convention of the Ontario Federation of Labour entitled "The Work of the Women's Bureau", 6 November 1960..

of working mothers about the adequacy of their children's care. The Bureau, however, translated that concern into a debate on the need for more child care and the responsibility of society to provide it.[74]

In later years, Royce similarly pointed to the results of *Married Women Working for Pay* as the impetus behind the campaign for maternity leave and benefits. Interestingly, the study never mentions maternity leave. Yet, Bureau reports written after 1958 argue the study led to the conclusion that maternity leave legislation was needed "to make most effective use of women workers."[75] For many years after its publication, *Married Women Working for Pay* was "the only authentic information regarding married women in the Canadian labour force."[76] It is questionable whether the study pointed *directly* to a need for child care and maternity leave. Yet the Bureau cleverly utilized the results to justify these policy demands. The results, innocuous and uncertain at times, did suggest the balance of home and paid work was a "burden"; the Bureau construed these results to support their policy solutions.

Family welfare, or the maintenance of family stability, was a dominant discourse underlying *Married Women Working for Pay.* Women's rights as workers remained peripheral, even as the study defended the wage earning women against charges of neglect. It would be several more years before debate within the Bureau and the larger society included women's

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[74] The issues of child care and maternity leave and the Bureau's work in support is discussed in Chapter Five.

[75] *Labour Gazette* (1964), 773; NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #13, Talk by Marion Royce to the Convention of the Ontario Federation of Labour entitled, "The Work of the Women's Bureau" 6 November 1960.

[76] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #8, Report by Marion Royce entitled "Women" for inclusion in OECD Statement on Manpower Policy, 1965.

needs and rights as individuals and began to explore the implications of home and family responsibilities for women's workplace inequality.[77] In the mid 1950s when the study was being conducted and written, the dedication to "familism"[78] which dominated the larger society is found both in the answers and attitudes of the surveyed women and in the analysis given the material. Still, the study challenged some components of the dominant image of family life, in particular the presentation of women as exclusively mothers and wives and the notion of family life as the only centre of women's activity.

The examination of *why* women sought employment both reinforced and challenged the notion of women's primary attachment to the home. The authors of the study argued repeatedly that most married women worked outside of the home for economic reasons. This contention contributed an important insight to the growing popular debate of the time. While society had long accepted paid employment for wives in poor and immigrant families, the increase in married women's employment in the postwar period was a middle class phenomenon.[79] The conclusion that middle class women were working due to economic need strongly challenged the dominant assumption that these women were motivated by career interest or self-

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[77] By the mid 1960s, the Bureau began to explore the many causes of women's occupational inequality including "family structure". For example, see summary of 1964 Round Table Conference on Traditional Divisions Between Men's and Women's Work (1964) in *Labour Gazette* (1964), 357.

[78] Doug Owram, *Born at the Right Time: A History of the Baby Boom Generation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), chapter one; Veronica Strong-Boag, "Their Side of the Story': Women's Voices from Ontario Suburbs", in *A Diversity of Women. Ontario, 1945-1980*, ed. Joy Parr (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 52.

[79] Franca Iacovetta, "Making 'New Canadians': Social Workers, Women, and the Reshaping of Immigrant Families", in *Gender Conflicts*, ed. Franca Iacovetta & Marianna Valverde (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 291-293.

fulfillment.[80] According to the study, the women's wages were not necessary "to keep the family from want" but were used to raise the standard of living, by contributing to mortgages and the purchase of "extras" like household appliances and cars.[81] Undoubtedly, arguments stressing need were defensive, in the same manner as arguing the benefits to children. Economic need, unlike the concept of choice, was an acceptable reason for wage earning. Also, as Margaret Hobbs notes, the primary attachment of the wage earning wife and mother remains with the home and family; their wage earning activity is a "self-sacrificing strategy to meet the needs of their families."[82] In fact, this was the imagery employed in the discussion of women's reasons for working. In the concluding remarks, *Married Women Working for Pay* reassured its readers that the growing trend for married women to work outside the home "does not mean that home and family are no longer their primary interest"; rather these women work from concern for the "welfare of their families."[83] Still, the emphasis on need rather than self fulfillment or career was crucial. As argued in the study:

> Acceptance of the married woman in the working world has been furthered by public awareness that in these days of high prices, families with low-income heads are hard pressed to make ends meet. This becomes an important factor when families are setting up households...[84]

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[80] Julie Guard, "Womanly Innocence and Manly Self-Respect: Gendered Challenges to Labour's Postwar Compromise", in *Labour Gains, Labour Pains: 50 Years of PC 1003*, eds. Cy Gonick, Paul Phillips, & Jesse Vorst (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 1995), 125.

[81] *Married Women Working for Pay* 1958, 49.

[82] Margaret Hobbs 1993, 201-202; Sangster, *Earning Respect* 1995, 228-233.

[83] *Married Women Working for Pay* 1958, 76.

[84] *Married Women Working for Pay* 1958, 73.

Perhaps ironically, the consumerism that characterized postwar familism contributed to the dismantling of the male breadwinner norm. Rising standards of need, including the belief that each family should own a house, pushed many wives into the labour force to supplement insufficient male wages.[85] Nonetheless, the first step to public acceptance of women's wage earning was recognition that their employment was necessary.[86]

Equally important to challenging dominant gender norms was the conclusion that the married women workers saw themselves as *workers* and expected to continue working. Even before the study, the Women's Bureau argued that the entrance of married women into the labour force was a growing and a permanent social and economic change. The study results validated this contention. The women interviewed for the study supported employment for married women (although they were divided on the question of whether women with young children should work) and indicated their intention to continue working over the long term, particularly the women over thirty-five years of age.[87] These results not only challenged opposition to married women's employment (a view which was beginning to topple in the face of growing public acceptance) but also the idea of women's paid work, particularly that of married women, as temporary. Many commentators during this time, including those within the Department of Labour, viewed married women as a "reserve," a temporary labour source to offset manpower shortages in the burgeoning economy of the 1950s. The notion of "reserve"

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[85] Owram 1996, chapter one; Winifred Wandersee talks about changing definitions of "need" and "luxury" over time in Winifred D. Wandersee, *Women's Work and Family Values, 1920-1940* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), 1-26.

[86] Strong-Boag 1994,

[87] *Married Women Working for Pay* 1958, 36, 58.

also applied to married women because they were expected to work for only a few years of their adult lives. *Occupational Histories* challenged this view with the conclusion that the women "look on themselves as working women, and consider work outside the home as normal for them."[88] The significance of this finding was not lost on a writer in the *Labour Gazette*, who, in a summary of *Occupational Histories,* quoted this statement arguing it was "the most noteworthy impression" left by the study.[89] Ultimately, these results posed a challenge to the dominant gender roles; conceptualized as *workers* rather than as wives and mothers, the wage earning women expressed a long-term and rightful place in the labour force.[90]

To arrive at this conclusion required a re-definition of the notions of *attachment* and *commitment* to the labour force. Labour Department studies frequently spoke of workers' "attachment" to the labour force, a concept measuring full-time, continuous participation. In *Occupational Histories* the Women's Bureau argued a distinctive *female* pattern of labour force participation existed. Although the surveyed women saw themselves as long-term workers, the study argued that this "does not mean that they all expect to work without interruption" like men.[91] Both studies pointed to what Royce came to refer to as the "rick-rack" pattern of

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[88] *Occupational Histories* 1959, 61.

[89] *Labour Gazette* (1960), 263.

[90] Joan Sangster found in her interviews that many of the women who entered the labour force after World War II expressed a changing identity which included a self-image as a worker as well as a homemaker. Sangster, *Earning Respect* 1995, 245.

[91] *Occupational Histories* 1959, 61.

employment for women.[92] In the pre-war period, many women exhibited a two-stage pattern of employment; they would work for a few years after school but retire permanently when married. During the 1950s and 1960s, a more complex, three-stage pattern developed. Young women who entered the labour force following school continued to work after marriage. The birth of the first child, rather than marriage, occasioned withdrawal from employment. Yet, many women's employment history did not end at this point. Once children were grown, increasing numbers of women chose to re-emter the labour force. These results explained the changes in the marital and age composition of the female labour force.[93] For the Women's Bureau, the implication was clear. Wage earning women should be expected to have more interruptions in their work histories than men. Beyond the economic and social conditions that caused disruption for all workers, women had the additional factor of responsibility to home and family.[94] Yet, the Bureau argued, wage earning women were both "permanent" and "committed" members of the labour force, albeit with more frequent and longer absences than men. Women's "attachment" to the labour force needed to be assessed with attention to their distinctive pattern of participation, rather than by comparison to men. By this standard, the Bureau argued, over the next decade, for programs to facilitate women's attachment by aiding

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[92] *Labour Gazette* (1964), 773.

[93] Since the 1951 census, studies revealed an increase in both married and older (defined either as 35+ or 45+ years) women. For example, Canada, Department of Labour (Women's Bureau), *Women at Work in Canada. A Fact Book on the Female Labour Force*, 1964, 17-19; the *Financial Post* pointed to this trend as well in its frequent discussion of the shortage of women for "pink collar" jobs. For example, "You'll Hire Older Women; Miss Giggles Will Marry", *Financial Post* (4 May 1957), 1, 8.

[94] *Occupational Histories* 1959, 7,8.

the transitions between home and employment.

In conclusion, *Married Women Working for Pay* and *Occupational Histories* are important because they established, from the beginning of the Bureau's existence, the principal concerns and future direction of its work. The importance of these first studies to the Bureau's subsequent work is seen in the freqency with which the material and its analysis were restated in later articles and speeches.[95] A 1964 article in the *Labour Gazette,* outlining the ten year history of the Bureau, stressed the importance of *Married Women Working for Pay*:

> The problems of these women--care of children while the mother works, hours of work, possibilities of part-time work, training and retraining, hostile social attitudes--provided the material for much of the work of the Women's Bureau.[96]

It is noteworthy that many of the problems stressed in this summary were not emphasized by the women in the survey; the emphasis on these questions in subsequent Bureau work reflected the Bureau's *interpretation* of the results. The information collected by the survey provided important insights into the home life, financial situation, and attitudes of married women workers, but it did not provide definitive answers about the "social implications" of female employment. Royce's commitment to women's right to work and to achieving some balance between the dual roles of paid work and family structured the interpretation given the results. Consequently, the Bureau construed these results to support an agenda focused on vocational training for women, revision to equal pay laws, and improvements to child care and maternity

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[95] These studies form the basis for many of the Bureau's publications and Royce's speeches over the next decade. Direct reference is made to these studies in speeches such as Royce's speech to the Convention of the Ontario Federation of Labour on 6 November 1960 [NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #13]; and in a number of articles such as, "Proportion of Married Women in Canada's Female Labour Force" *Labour Gazette* (1959), 242-243.

[96] *Labour Gazette* (1964), 773.

protection laws.

Integration Into the Department of Labour

The Bureau's determination to control the collection and interpretation of data was important; "the power to redefine the terms of an issue is a crucial step towards winning a new policy."[97] In general, five stages characterize the process of policy development. The first two, according to Michael Howlett and M. Ramesh, involve "agenda-setting" and "policy formulation." The first involves placing a problem on the agenda of government; the second refers to the process of developing solutions to the proposed problem.[98] Policy analysts are increasingly interested in what Carol Bacchi terms the "problem definition," a construct which impacts on both these early stages. The definition of a problem affects whether an issue makes it onto the government's agenda. Once on the agenda, the definition structures the solutions devised by government.[99] For the Bureau, the potential to influence policy existed in the complexities of problem definition. To successfully define the terms surrounding the question of married wage earning women, the Bureau needed to go beyond controlling the content and interpretation of its publications. In this pre-Royal Commission period, the Bureau needed to introduce women's concerns into the discourse of state. As the first women's policy agency, it

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[97] Heather MacIvor, *Women and Politics in Canada* (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 1996), 340.

[98] The last three are: iii) "decision-making"; iv) "policy implementation"; and v) "policy evaluation". Michael Howlett & M. Ramesh, *Studying Public Policy. Policy Cycles and Policy Subsystems* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1995), 11-15.

[99] Carol Lee Bacchi, *Women, Policy and Politics. The Construction of Policy Problems* (London: Sage Publications, 1999), 35-36.

faced many common problems with subsequent agencies formed after 1970 - insufficient resources, a limited mandate, and spatial and ideological separation from the workings of the rest of the Department.[100] Yet, the problem of "marginalization" was particularly acute for the Bureau because women's issues or the problems of wage earning women were not on the agenda of the state. From 1954 to 1967, Marion Royce struggled to integrate the ideas and concerns of the Women's Bureau into the work of the other divisions of the Department. She did this through efforts to improve cooperation between branches on issues of importance to women, while maintaining efforts to control the collection and interpretation of information related to wage earning women. Before the Bureau could do anything more than be a "useless cipher" or "sop to the women's groups," it needed to bring "women" into the Department of Labour.

Royce began to speak openly of the need for greater "integration" of the Women's Bureau with the other branches of the Department in early 1960. In May, the Bureau held its first conference, entitled a "Seminar on the Work of the Women's Bureau."[101] Invited to the seminar were representatives from all of the Labour Department's branches and committees. In the letter of invitation, Royce spoke openly about the seminar's purpose:

> Everyone is agreed, I think as to the desireability of such integration of our work within the total programme of the Department, but to give that integration reality requires not only ad hoc communication but some more vital thinking

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[100] Eisenstein 1996, 69-74; Sue Findlay, "Feminist Struggles with the Canadian State: 1966-1988", *Resources for Feminist Research* (Special Issue on 'Feminist Perspectives on the State'), 17, 3 (September 1988), 5-9.

[101] Although not intended to be a regular event, the conference eventually became an annual event sponsored by the Bureau to examine issues of interest to the Bureau.

together.[102]

In later correspondence, Royce similarly revealed a growing perception of isolation and lack of integration with other branches and personnel. In response to a Departmental questionnaire on the effective use of staff resources, Royce cited a "wasteful lack of integration" within the Department; efficiency, she argued, required more "cooperative planning" of projects which impact on more than one branch.[103] The notion of improving communication and cooperation among branches working on similar projects was a goal most bureaucrats could agree to in principle. But Royce believed the concerns of the Women's Bureau were integral to the work of other branches, a concept which belied the structural separation of issues inherent in bureaucracies and the general indifference to women's issues. In a letter to Helen James of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, with whom Royce had an open and forthright relationship, Royce defined clearly her idea of "integration." The 1960 seminar, she argued, was in part "to test the reality of our integration within the Department" but also "to get some thinking on our job and in the process launch a few ideas that we need to get through to other branches."[104] Integration, as understood by Royce, meant the inclusion of the Women's Bureau in the work of other branches when relevant as well as the inclusion of the Bureau's *ideas* about women and their needs as the basis for proposals. Through the annual conferences sponsored by the

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[102] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1906, File #38-6-6-4, Memo inviting all Directors of Branches of Department of Labour to "Seminar on the Work of the Women's Bureau", 22 March 1960.

[103] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-2-2 pt.1, "Review of activities of the Women's Bureau in response to request of August 21, 1962, 4 September 1962.

[104] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1906, File #38-6-6-4, Letter from Marion Royce to Miss Helen James (Supervisor of Women's Interests, CBC), 26 May 1960.

Bureau after 1960, Royce sought to place women's issues onto the agenda of the Department, while setting the terms of the debate.

This conference strategy was also a response by the Bureau to the ongoing problem of inadequate resources. In the invitations to the 1960 seminar, Royce reminded the other branches of the dependence of the Bureau "upon the resources of the entire Department."[105] The Bureau's lack of independent means to conduct research increased the urgency to ensure integration of women's issues into the thinking of the Department. It also demanded integration among branches to ensure cooperation on joint issues.

Royce's organization and direction of the 1960 seminar is an example of her efforts to control the content and interpretation of discussions about wage earning women. As Chair, Royce did not give one of the three talks delivered at the seminar. Instead, she invited three participants to discuss work done in their branches on topics relevant to the work of the Women's Bureau. One of the papers, on the "Work of the Economics and Research Branch in the area of Women's Employment," resulted in a dispute between Royce and the presenter, W.L. Dymond.[106] In the paper, Dymond noted briefly new data showing that women accounted for a disproportionate percentage of the gross monthly movement in the labour force and that rates of part-time and part-year work were rising, most likely due to the rise in employment by married women. Intrigued by this evidence of movement both between jobs and in and out of

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[105] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1906, File #38-6-6-4, Memo from Marion Royce to Directors of all Branches of the Department of Labour, 22 March 1960.

[106] Dymond was the Director of Economics and Research. The other two papers included: i) a discussion of "The Aims and Programme of the Women's Bureau as Anticipated Before Its Inception" by the Assistant Deputy Minister, Mr. Haythorne; and ii) an overview of "Trends in Legislation Affecting Women's Work" by E. Lorentsen of the Legislation Branch.

the workforce by married women, Royce asked Dymond to devote more of his presentation to this issue. Dymond obliged, but begrudgingly. He presented his *original* paper at the seminar; the requested material was given in a separate talk by a staff researcher from Economics and Research.[107] The researcher, Svanhuit Josie, was an economist whose job with Economics and Research included completing research for the Women's Bureau. By directing Royce's request to Josie, Dymond maintained the separation between the concerns of the Women's Bureau and those of his branch in relation to wage earning women. Undaunted by these events, Royce continued to emphasize these two issues at the conference. For example, she directed the participants to discussion of these issues when debate turned to future questions for study. As well, the minutes of the seminar, written by Royce and circulated to participating members after the conference, emphasized these two points in the summary of Dymond's paper (they are listed second and third) and the additional information prepared by Josie was attached in its entirety.[108] Obviously, these two issues were not the only questions emphasized by Royce during the seminar. But the example of this dispute reveals Royce's efforts to "get through to other branches" the ideas and agenda of the Bureau.

This minor dispute between Royce and Dymond highlights the difficulty of issue or problem definition faced by the Bureau. Most members of the Department of Labour recognized a need to study issues "peculiar" to women workers, as the Labour Minister had

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[107] The full text of these three papers, and the correspondence between Royce and Dymond regarding his paper are found in, NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1906, File #38-6-6-4.

[108] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1906, File #38-6-6-4, Minutes of the "Seminar on the Work of the Women's Bureau, Department of Labour, 5 May 1960".

argued in his first statement announcing the Bureau in 1953. The economic priorities which first precipitated departmental interest in wage earning women remained. Still, there was disagreement about which problems or issues needed to be studied first. Dymond noted this point at the 1960 seminar. Arguing the growing importance of women to Canada's labour supply, Dymond spoke of the increasing emphasis on studying wage earning women within the Economics and Research Branch. Nonetheless, he argued there was a need to priorize which issues most demanded attention because the Department simply could not complete all the research necessary at that time. Royce was in agreement. In her summary comments, she argued the need to set priorities, to establish the most important issues to be examined, as the preeminent question for discussion.[109] Yet while Royce and Dymond could agree on the need to establish priorities, they were unable to agree on the importance of specific issues, as witnessed by the dispute over Dymond's paper.

Part of the problem of issue definition faced by the Bureau was the severely limited concept of women's issues within the Department. In theory, departmental studies and programs included all workers; in reality, however, they reflected the experiences and characteristics of a generic "male" worker. Department officials failed to recognize this fact, leaving the Bureau with the prelimary task of proving that female and male workers had very different experiences and problems. Over the years, Royce consistently requested that data from studies (both departmental and external) be broken down by sex and age. When a study did not include this distinction, Royce wrote to the author, requesting the information and that

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[109] Ibid.

provision be made to collect the data in future studies.[110] For the Bureau, this was a practical demand; the publication work of the Bureau depended on the availability of new data on wage earning women.[111] Yet Royce also recognized the larger policy implications of this failure to distinguish between male and female. On several occasions, including during her early participation on a committee examining the "older worker" problem, Royce argued that the solutions developed were based on the experiences of men and would not meet the needs of women.[112]

Essentially, the Bureau in these early years faced the prelimary task of bringing "women" into the consciousness of the Department. Critics of state feminism note that separate women's policy bodies result in the separation and isolation of women's issues from the other business of government.[113] For the Bureau, the limited government concept of which issues were relevant to women further exacerbated this problem of isolation. Throughout her term as Director, Royce stressed that women should be taken into account in *all* the work of the

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[110] In its work on occupational training, the Bureau distinguished between the problems and needs of older women and younger women (Discussed in Chapter Three). Consequently, "age" as well as "sex" was considered a relevant category of distinction. NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1908, File #38-9-22, Letter from Marion Royce to O.C. Elliott (Department of Veterans Affairs), 28 June 1955.

[111] The practical considerations of these requests were evident in a comment made to *Chatelaine* in 1964. Referring to data collected by employers and submitted to the Department, Royce argued the failure to distinguish between male and female employees meant less data was available for the Bureau to compile and analyse in its own work. Gillen, "Marion Royce", 89.

[112] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1905, File #38-6-2-6, Minutes of the Interdepartmental Committee on Older Workers, 27 September 1954 -continuing.

[113] Findlay 1988, 6; Janine Brodie, *Politics on the Margins. Restructuring and the Canadian Women's Movement* (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 1995), 46.

Department. This demand was far more contentious than the request for sex and age distinctions in research and program development; consequently, it elicited greater resistance. On occasion, officials in other branches protested participation in the annual conference because they perceived no connection between their work and wage earning women. At the 1960 seminar, Royce addressed this contention. "Women," she argued, "make up [such] a considerable segment of the labour force" that their concerns must impact in some manner on the work of all the Labour Department's divisions.[114] Over the years, Royce repeatedly decried the lack of consideration of women in the studies, legislation, and programs of the Department. For example, in 1959, Royce commented on several reports examining skill acquisition in male dominated, technical fields. "Following true to form," she began, "I cannot forbear to express regret at the complete lack of reference to women."[115] Even if women were a small number or non-existent in the sample of workers studied, she wished the report to explain that these fields of work were not "closed" to women. Women's absence in these fields, she argued, was instructive about their overall situation.[116] Recently, feminists and femocrats have questioned the utility of "artificially constructing a category of 'women's issues'" within government. By definition, "women's" concerns become separate from the business of state, leaving government

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[114] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1906, File #38-6-6-4, Minutes of the "Seminar on the Work of the Women's Bureau, Department of Labour, 5 May 1960".

[115] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1909, File #38-11-2-3, Memo from Marion Royce to P. Cohen, 23 July 1959.

[116] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1909, File #38-11-2-3, Memo from Marion Royce to R.H. MacCuish (Assistant Director, Canadian Vocational Training Branch), 3 November 1959.

to ignore the potential impacts for women of policies which appear gender-neutral.[117] Within the Labour Department in the 1950s, however, there was no category of "women," leaving government to ignore the situation of wage earning women except for on a few token issues, such as equal pay. For the Bureau, then, the first step was to make "women" an "issue."

As an additional strategy, the Bureau attempted to promote concern for wage earning women within the Department by increasing the representation of women on committees and within branches. In this manner, the Bureau reflected the beliefs of the major women's groups that women's rights could be attained by placement of women into prominent positions in govenment, business, and law. The Bureau's preoccupation with female representation also stemmed from a belief that consciousness and sensitivity to women's issues required a female presence in relevant positions. In 1962, Royce wrote to the Chair of the National Advisory Committee on Technological Education. Requesting a list of the members of the committee, she argued, "since there is a tendency to overlook girls and women in discussions relating to technological education I should like especially to know whether any qualified women are included." Royce's comments suggest annoyance at the exclusion of her branch from this committee; the Bureau's strong focus on vocational training and education issues, as well as its involvement on similar committees, clearly suggested its expertise would be relevant. Undoubtedly, the omission of the Bureau from this committee reflected a belief within the

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[117] Sandra Burt, "The Several Worlds of Policy Analysis: Traditional Approaches and Feminist Critiques", in *Changing Methods. Feminists Transforming Practice*, eds. Sandra Burt & Lorraine Code (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 1995), 371; Marian Sawer, *Femocrats and Ecorats. Women's Policy Machinery in Australia, Canada and New Zealand*, Occasional Paper Series. Fourth World Conference on Women (Geneva, UN Research Institute for Social Development, 1996), 3, 5-7.

Department that the male dominated technology fields were outside of the Bureau's mandate. In this case, Royce argued she would be willing to accept a man on the committee who was "in touch with the education of girls in this sphere."[118] Over the years, however, the Bureau would argue on numerous occasions for greater female representation in the other branches as well as within the Bureau itself.

At least twice during her term as Director, Royce petitioned for more staff to be assigned to the Bureau. The two requests for which evidence was found, in July 1963 and February 1966, were both for an "Economist 3," a position which would give to the Bureau a relatively high level research staff. As justification for the request, Royce listed a number of points, including the increasing workload of the Bureau, but ended with the assertion that the Bureau's work required a person, presumably a woman, with both an awareness and sensitivity to women's issues and the problems facing wage earning women. Referring to the type of work done by the Bureau, Royce argued in her request:

> Since the field is one in which biassed pre-suppositions are common, it is particularly important to have such studies carried out by highly qualified personnel, mature in outlook. For this reason a person of some experience as well as possessing the essential background of education is required.[119]

Since research staff already working for the Department of Labour undoubtedly possessed the experience, maturity, and education mentioned, the crux of Royce's argument was that she wished to have a person who also possessed an ideological affiliation with the Bureau. The

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[118] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1908, File #38-9-17, Memo from Marion Royce to C.R. Ford (National Advisory Committee on Technological Education), 29 November 1962.

[119] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-2-2 pt.1, Establishment Review form, Administrative Services Branch - Personnel Division, 11 July 1963.

need for the Bureau to rely on other government branches for data collection and research was an ongoing frustration for Royce. She clearly believed her work to be handicapped by research staff who failed to recognize the significance of issues or to conduct analysis on the questions which the Bureau deemed most significant. A case in point is found in a disagreement between Royce, G.V. Haythorne (Assistant Deputy Minister), and Walter E. Duffet (Dominion Statistician) in May 1963. The Dominion Bureau of Statistics was preparing a series of monographs on the labour force from the 1961 census. The statistician, Walter E. Duffett, refused to include one on the subject of women in the labour force, arguing the purpose of the program to be the examination of "social phenomenon" not specific "types of people." Haythorne, who originally requested the monograph on wage earning women, concluded this argument sounded "reasonable." Royce, however, objected; noting the questionable distinction between "social phenomenon" and "types of people," Royce asserted the answer was both "superficial" and "most unsatisfactory."[120] Over the years, the Bureau continually struggled with insufficient or inappropriate data because researchers viewed the questions facing the Bureau as less important than others. For Royce, the solution was for the Bureau to conduct its own research. By hiring a researcher with the right "presuppositions," she hoped to control the collection and interpretation of data.

The outcome of these requests was mixed; the Department refused to grant the Bureau its own research staff but compromised, partially, by assigning a female researcher in Economics and Research specifically to the work of the Women's Bureau. Royce was probably

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[120] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1904, File #38-11-1, Correspondence between Marion Royce, H.V. Haythorne, and Walter E. Duffett, 10 May to 1 June 1963.

not surprised by the Department's refusal, both in 1963 and in 1966. In 1963, the Department was in the midst of an "austerity program," a government wide attempt to cut costs and staffing. As well, Royce recognized that her request crossed jurisdictional divisions within the Department. The Deputy Minister discussed the Bureau's petition for an Economist with W.R. Dymond, the Director of Economics and Research. In response, Dymond reasserted the sole responsibility of Economics and Research for all research functions, an assertion with which the Deputy Minister agreed. However, in an interesting concession, both men acknowledged that the Economics and Research branch had not been able to adequately provide research services to the Bureau in the past. Consequently, the Deputy Minister assigned Mrs I.E. Johnson, a researcher in Economics and Research, to the work of the Women's Bureau beginning in 1964.[121] This move marked an important victory for Royce and the Bureau. Until 1962, the Bureau benefitted from a similar arrangement, with Svanhuit Josie permanently assigned to the Bureau's work. The arrangement appears to have worked well since Royce and Josie had similar perspectives.[122] The end of this arrangement in 1962 probably prompted Royce to petition for a researcher for the Bureau.

While Royce did not succeed at securing a new staff position for the Bureau, she probably perceived the outcome as a partial victory. Royce recognized the importance of having a representative of the Bureau in other branches associated to its work. In a review of

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[121] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-2-2 pt.1, Memo from P.R. Parent (Director, Administrative Services) to Marion Royce, 5 December 1963.

[122] The analysis of data and preparation of the final manuscript for *Married Women Working for Pay* was done by Mrs Josie. Subsequently, in 1966, Royce first approached Josie when authorized to hire on contract a researcher to undertake a study.

the Bureau's activities in September 1962, Royce complained directly of the Department's failure to replace Josie. The loss of a researcher directly assigned to the work of the Bureau, she argued, accentuated the problem of insufficient integration between the two branches.[123] Femocrats in Canada and Australia in the 1970s sought integration of women's concerns through a similar strategy, often termed the "hub" and "spokes" method. To avoid marginalization and increase sensitivity to women's issues, they tried to create a system with a coordinating women's policy agency at the centre (the "hub") with representatives placed throughout the main government bodies (the "spokes").[124] Royce's efforts to place representatives in other branches extended beyond Economics and Research. In July 1965, she petitioned for the creation of a new position in the Technical and Vocational Training Branch. There was a significant overlap in the work of the two branches which justified an arrangement similar to that held with Economics and Research. The position requested was to be "related to the Women's Bureau" and "devoted to the special problems of training for girls and women."[125] In the Legislation Branch, another division with which the Bureau had significant contact, Royce benefitted from the assistance of Edith Lorentsen, a senior bureaucrat with sensitivity to

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[123] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-2-2 pt.1, "Review of activities of the Women's Bureau in response to request of August 21, 1962", 4 September 1962.

[124] Australian feminists achieved some success in this strategy in the 1970s, mainly because a government Royal Commission (the Coombs commission) recommended this model as the best means for representing women's affairs. See Eisenstein 1996, 23-25; Sawer 1996, 4-5.

[125] It appears this position was approved. Records showing the final decision were not found; however, the petition had the approval of the Assistant Deputy Minister. NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-2-2 pt.1, Memo from Marion Royce to W.R. Dymond (Assistant Deputy Minister) proposing a new position to be created in the Technical and Vocational Training Branch, 28 July 1965.

the problems of wage earning women.[126] While the Bureau never acquired more staffing during Royce's years as Director, it did achieve some success at developing contacts within the other branches to further integration of its concerns.

The problem of inadequate resources was an important factor in these requests for additional staff for the Bureau and the other branches. The meagre staffing and budget of the Bureau, established in its first two years, became more of a problem by the 1960s. In the requests for an Economist, Royce pointed to the growing workload of the Bureau, arguing that the "existing resources are inadequate to the need." Other branches on which the Bureau depended for services were also "overloaded" and "unable to direct resources to specialized studies urgently needed in the field of women's employment."[127] By the early 1960s, the Bureau wished to undertake several "specialized studies" which required the collection and analysis of new data. Yet, its efforts were frustrated by the growing inability of the other branches to complete routine tasks in the midst of increasing workloads and insufficient resources. Thus, two studies in the early sixties, one on rehabilitation services and one on collective bargaining in nursing, were left incomplete when other branches could not supply the Bureau with the requested information or needed analysis. These circumstances occasioned a rather terse reply from Royce to a government questionnaire accompanying the "austerity campaign." To the question of which activities carried on by her branch could be done

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[126] While no evidence exists to suggest intentional networking between Royce and Lorentsen, their correspondence reveals a cooperative working relationship and similar ideas about legislation and the needs of wage earning women.

[127] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-2-2 pt.1, Establishment Review Form, Administrative Services Branch - Personnel Division, 11 July 1963.

elsewhere, she answered none, noting that supporting services for the Bureau were already not "fully supplied."[128]

In January 1963, the Bureau submitted a proposal to complete two studies. An examination of the circumstances surrounding this proposal reveals both the obstacles faced by the Bureau and the strategies it used to deal with these difficulties. The proposal by Royce outlined two new "high priority" projects, a new "fact book" and a "comprehensive study" of several issues arising from women's increasing labour force participation. Royce sent the proposal directly to G.V. Haythorne; the wording used suggested it was not a request for *permission* but rather was an enquiry into "possible resources." By taking the matter directly to the Assistant Deputy Minister, Royce sought to overcome a number of obstacles. Previously, the Bureau had requested assistance from Economics and Research to prepare a new "fact book" based on the 1961 census. The work requested of Economics and Research did not require collection of new data but analysis and preparation of existing material. In response to this request and for the foreseeable future, the Director of Economics and Research argued he was unable to allocate any staff to new projects due to the "pressure of work." Royce's subsequent prosposal to Haythorne signalled her intention to pursue the matter further. In the proposal, she requested permission to hire on contract a researcher for the projects, mentioning specifically Svanhuit Josie for the first project.[129] Haythorne's response was mixed. He

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[128] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-2-2 pt.1, "Review of activities of the Women's Bureau in response to request of August 21, 1962", 4 September 1962.

[129] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1904, File #38-11-1, Memo from Marion Royce to G.V. Haythorne, 28 January 1963.

approved the funding for hiring a contract researcher, effectively putting the project in progress. But his response to Royce's second project reveals the problem of priority and interpretation so often faced by the Bureau. Haythorne suggested the two projects be combined. Using the data from the census, Haythorne assured Royce that Josie would be able "to include in a revised fact book significant observations on some of these questions." For the future, he suggested a "more intensive search" might be prepared based on the census data as well as other material developed by Economics and Research.[130] While Haythorne revealed his support, through extended funding, to the work of the Women's Bureau, he failed to see the distinction between the first and second studies. For the second study, the Bureau intended to examine a number of new issues for which data would have to be generated and analyzed. Consequently, in the proposal, Royce had emphasized that this study would require a lot of "preliminary work" by a researcher to develop the "authentic data" needed. While a revision of the "fact book" was an important project given the recent census and the rapidly changing nature of the female labour force, its source base was not adequate to answer the questions proposed for the second study. Haythorne's response revealed either a failure to understand the distinction or an assessment that the issues which Royce sought to examine were not important enough to warrant the cost of a researcher. His comments suggest a second study, if completed in the future, would be limited to issues which could be examined through existing material.

Still, some positive outcomes resulted from this event. By taking the matter to the Assistant Deputy Minister, Royce resuscitated the first project which had been placed on an

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[130] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1904, File #38-11-1, Reply to Memo of 28 January 1963 from G.V. Haythorne to Marion Royce, 6 February 1963.

indefinite waiting list by Economics and Research. The study received direct approval through funding to hire a researcher; the result was the publication of a revised "fact book" in 1964.[131] As well, Royce was able to select the researcher for the project. She appointed Svanhuit Josie with whom she had worked previously and shared an ideological bond. Furthermore, this event contributed to the decision in December 1963 to appoint a permanent researcher from Economics and Research to the projects of the Women's Bureau. Royce's request for an economist led to official recognition that Economics and Research had not been providing its services to the Bureau, an indisputable point given the paper trail in matters such as the above proposal.

To further the goal of integration, Royce returned to the conference strategy in 1962. In March, the Bureau sponsored a "consultative group on the role of the Women's Bureau in relation to the preparation of girls and women for participation in the labour force."[132] While the focus this time was on the Bureau's vocational work rather than its place in the Department of Labour, the goal of improving integration, communication, and cooperative planning remained.[133] This time, however, the conference included participants from various social, labour, and business agencies, an important change demonstrating the Bureau's enlargement of the concept of integration to include non-governmental organizations. Following this meeting,

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[131] Canada, Department of Labour (Women's Bureau), *Women at Work in Canada. A Fact Book on the Female Labour Force*, 1964.

[132] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1905, File #38-6-6-2, Letter of invitation to the consultation from Marion Royce to Miss. F.M. Richards (Sun Life Assurance Co.), 19 February 1962; and to Mr. P.R. Parent, 12 February 1962.

[133] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1905, File #38-6-6-2, "Preparation of Women for Participation in the Labour Force", Summary of meeting held 21 March 1962.

Marion Royce began investigations into having a "consultative committee" for the Bureau. The proposed committee would be a permanent, advisory body which would meet annually and correspond as necessary, with the Bureau performing a central coordinating role. The committee would include members from relevant government departments as well as representatives from labour, business, women's groups, the universities, and social service agencies. The plan had the added benefit of allowing the Bureau to draw on the expertise and experiences of persons who studied and interacted with wage earning women. In a letter discussing the proposal for a consultative committee, Royce specifically noted that the Bureau strove to keep "in touch with the field through travel and occasional seminars or meetings of an ad hoc character."[134] Through a permanent advisory body, Royce hoped to expand the Bureau's resources by inclusion of these "experts" in its work. The Bureau could serve as the coordinator, determining the issues to be emphasized and then bringing the relevant expertise together. Of primary importance, Royce wanted a permanent advisory body to remove the ad hoc nature of planning and analysis, and to facilitate continuity in thought and action. This point was stated in a 1962 letter when Royce argued: "I think, however, that the time has come when we might profit from the advice and stimulus of such a group, which would also ensure breadth of outlook and a degree of continuity in our planning."[135] It is noteworthy that Royce began investigating the potential of a permanent consultative body at the same time as she

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[134] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1905, File #38-6-2-4, Letter from Marion Royce to Miss Rose Terlin (Director of Women's Bureau, Pennsylvania), 11 October 1962.

[135] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1905, File #38-6-2-4, Letter from Marion Royce to Mr. S. Aminoff (Charge d'Affaires, Swedish Embassy), 5 October 1962.

expressed vehement frustration about the lack of coordination within the Department and the inability of the Bureau to access and control research functions.

By January 1963, Royce decided against creating a permanent consultative committee, seeking instead to achieve her goals through annual conferences with specific themes. It is not clear why she abandoned the plan. Despite support for the plan from the Assistant Deputy Minister, Royce never went beyond the stage of planning for the format and function of the group. Numerous letters were written to people participating in similar consultative bodies to ask their advice on these questions. Eventually, in a memo to Haythorne on 25 January 1963, Royce noted her decision not to pursue the plan with the statement that she found no "satisfactory suggestion" about how such a body should operate.[136] Following this decision, however, conferences hosted by the Women's Bureau became an annual event.[137]

Over the next four years, the Bureau held annual conferences centred around topics which clearly reflected its major policy goals. The 1963 consultation included women trade unionists. It was, according to Royce, "an informal exchange regarding problems that they find most urgent at the present time."[138] This consultation was unusual because it turned to female trade unionists to speak for women, rather than the usual cadre of "experts" from women's

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[136] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1905, File #38-6-6-3, Memo from Marion Royce to G.V. Haythorne, 25 January 1963.

[137] For the first time in September 1962, a departmental summary includes as one of the functions of the Women's Bureau the organizing of consultations on topics regarding wage earning women. NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-2-2 pt.1, Summary for the Women's Bureau section of the Minister's Information Book, 5 September 1962.

[138] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1905, File #38-6-6-3, Memo from Marion Royce to G.V. Haythorne, 25 January 1963.

groups, social service agencies, and the universities.[139] The 1964 "Round Table Conference" returned to the format of including a range of experts from governmental and extra-governmental agencies and focused on the topic of "traditional divisions between men's and womens' work." Along with the causes and effects of job segregation, the conference focused on how to alter "the concepts, attitudes and practices that help to perpetuate these distinctions."[140] In 1965, Royce chose the topic to correspond with similar discussions at the International Labour Conference on the "employment of women with family responsibilities." Along with discussing several issues, conference participants also discussed policy solutions to the problems raised.[141] The 1966 consultation, broadly focused on "changing patterns in women's employment," was concerned with vocational counselling and training issues.[142] By the use of these conferences, the Bureau was able to expand its access to research facilities and to direct the issues under consideration.

Through the conference format, the Bureau also sought to extend its mandate to include

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[139] One point which arose from the 1960 Seminar was that the Women's Bureau should arrange for discussion with "organizations of women who are employed". Reliance on women's groups as the representatives of women may not give adequate expression to the problems of women workers because these organizations are composed primarily of women without work experience. It is possible the format of the 1963 consultation was a result of this conclusion.
NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1906, File #38-6-6-4, Minutes of the "Seminar on the Work of the Women's Bureau" held 5 May 1960.

[140] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1906, File #38-6-6-5 pt.1, Memo from Marion Royce to W.R. Dymond (Assistant Deputy Minister), 19 October 1963.

[141] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 4156, File #722-3-5, Note attached to conference papers entitled "Summary".

[142] Published reports exist summarizing the papers and discussions of these conferences.

education of both the public and the government. It has been argued that the Bureau strove, within the Department of Labour, to control both the issues under discussion as well as the interpretation of those issues. The conferences were a public extension of that process. Within the wide and varied subjects chosen for the conferences, the Bureau structured discussion towards the key issues which were becoming the focus of its research and policy agenda - equal pay laws, maternity protection, child care, and vocational training. For participants at the 1963 conference, there were "suggested" topics for discussion despite the stated intention to allow wage earning women to view their own concerns. Under the topic "wages and salaries," participants were directed to consider "developments relating to job-rating and equal pay."[143] For the 1965 conference, although the theme was chosen to correspond with discussions at the ILO, Royce stressed that the ILO recommendations were not the subject of debate. Rather, the purpose of the discussion was to focus on four issues with "special applicability" to the Canadian situation.[144] The four topics chosen for analysis and policy debate corresponded to the major goals of the Bureau - counselling and training for women, child care facilities for wage earning mothers, maternity leave, and part-time work.[145] On several occasions, Royce spoke of the educational function of the conferences. Participants discussed ways to change social attitudes. As well, participation in the conferences was in itself an "educational

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[143] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1905, File #38-6-6-3, Memo from Marion Royce to G.V. Haythorne, 25 January 1963.

[144] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1906, File #38-6-6-6 pt.1, Letters from Marion Royce to Provincial Deputy Ministers of Labour, 19 January 1965.

[145] Canada, Department of Labour (Women's Bureau), *Report of a Consultation on the Employment of Women With Family Responsibilities*, 1965.

experience." Referring to the conferences in 1964, Royce concluded:

> It is my abiding hope that by the slow process of education we may be able to break through some of the cocoons that we have woven round traditions that are no longer meaningful and indeed, as you suggest, a disservice to women - one might add to men also - in the labour force.[146]

Through the process of debate and achieving consensus, participants experienced changes in their own attitudes. Since the participants were members of important governmental and non-governmental agencies, and thus were a potential policy network, their education was an important prelude to policy development.

The potential for the conferences to aid the development of a policy network was evident to Royce. The objectives of the conferences - education, access to research and expertise, agenda setting, and problem definition - are all important components in the early stages of policy development. To further these objectives, the Bureau needed to develop an effective lobby to pressure the government to act, since clearly the Bureau lacked sufficient influence on its own. By the late 1950s, policy development appeared to Royce to be a logical outcome of the Bureau's research and educational work. A 1959 summary of the Bureau's activities argued the purpose of research was "to foster an intelligent approach to women's problems."[147] Clearly though, the Bureau lacked the mandate and resources to translate its goals into public policy. By bringing together interested "experts" and organizations, the Bureau sought to create a network of persons working together to analyze the issues and

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[146] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1908, File #38-9-15, Letter from Marion Royce to Robert F. Leggett (National Research Council), 16 October 1964.

[147] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-2-2 pt.1, "Draft of Material for Women's Bureau section of the Minister's Current Information Book", 2.

develop policy proposals, and, to raise public awareness and lobby government agencies. As coordinator, the Bureau hoped to control the agenda and the terms of discussion. In a 1964 article, Royce noted the importance of the Bureau's reliance on outside agencies and persons. The function of the Bureau, according to Royce, was to "find ways of selecting issues vital and real to people and to stimulate interest in them. We document the issues, and they carry on from there in response."[148] Through the conferences, Royce sought to develop a network of supportive non-governmental groups whose work and lobbying efforts could be directed and coordinated by the Bureau. The example of the US Women's Bureau undoubtedly influenced this strategy. During the early 1960s, the US Bureau effectively acted as the centre of an increasingly organized women's rights movement to achieve a number of important successes, including the 1963 Equal Pay Act.[149]

Conclusion

These various integration strategies of the Bureau are similar to the tactics of femocrats in Australia and Canada after 1970. Feminist assessments of the success of these strategies for realizing goals vary. Still, it is important to note that other "equality-seeking" movements have employed similar means to integrate their concerns into the business of government and to

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[148] *Labour Gazette* (1964), 773.

[149] The U.S. Bureau was able to play an important coordinating role due to the effective leadership of Esther Peterson. Dorothy McBride Stetson, "The Oldest Women's Policy Agency. The Women's Bureau in the U.S." in *Comparative State Feminism*, eds. Dorothy McBride Stetson & Amy Mazur (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 1995), 256; Leslie Pal, *Interests of State: The Politics of Language, Multiculturalism, and Feminism in Canada* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993), 43-44.

influence policy development.[150] Obviously, Marion Royce in the 1950s and 1960s did not have these later experiences from which to draw. Still, Royce's efforts at integration were important to ensure the Bureau became an active voice for wage earning women and not simply a "sop" to the women's organizations. At the time that Royce entered the bureaucracy as head of the only government body concerned specifically with women, government attention to women's issues was virtually non-existent. Royce's efforts to integrate her bureau with the other branches of the Department met with mixed success. Few branches or officials regularly contemplated the gendered impact of their work; they often viewed the Bureau's work as less important, failed to recognize which issues were relevant to the Bureau, or simply were hampered by overwork which made them unable to help. Still, the Bureau did succeed at improving its control and access over the resources it needed to conduct research and produce meaningful studies on the conditions of women's employment. This success allowed the Bureau to produce a number of important and insightful studies on the conditions facing wage earning women, studies such as *Married Women Working for Pay*. Through these activities, including the annual conferences, the Bureau also sought to educate both the public and the government, to change the social attitudes which it believed facilitated occupational inequality. As the 1960s progressed and the concept of women's rights acquired greater acceptance within a changing social, economic, and political climate, the work of the Bureau turned towards developing policies to meet women's needs. The conferences, in particular, were a means for utilizing the resources of outside agencies to further the policy goals of the Bureau. The success of the Bureau in achieving or influencing government towards these policy goals is the

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[150] Geller-Schwartz 1995, 49-50; Sawer 1996, 15; Eisenstein 1996; Pal 1993, 43-44.

test of the success of this strategy and is examined in subsequent chapters. Still, the Women's Bureau was, throughout the 1950s and 1960s, a strong feminist voice within the government bureaucracy. In the period before women's issues assumed a place on the government agenda, this voice was crucial for it helped to define the issues, preparing the field for the women's rights movement which would come to prominence by the end of the 1960s.

CHAPTER THREE

"The foundation stone of all other efforts to improve the economic status of women": Education and Vocational Training for Women

In its first years of operation, the Bureau had clearly demonstrated an intention to play an active role within government as the central agency concerned with all matters related to wage earning women. The research conducted in the first years of operation revealed significant occupational inequalities faced by women in the labour force, particularly in job opportunities, wages, and promotions. As well, their struggle to care for children and homes while earning wages troubled Royce. By the late 1950s, the Bureau was no longer content to simply document these problems. Instead, it began to search for solutions to raise the status of women in the labour force and to help women achieve balance between the many facets of their lives. Increasingly, the Bureau's attention turned to the question of women's level of education and vocational training to address women's inequality.[1]

In September 1964, a journalist asked Marion Royce about the future of the Bureau and about what "practical and realistic solutions" were needed to address the problems of wage earning women. "As I see it," Royce replied after a few minutes, "the most important things are to...educate and train girls to the realization that marriage and children, important as they are, will never be all of their life...and to stimulate girls toward planning for the future rather

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[1] As well, the Bureau focused on the issues of wage disparity, and the problems of wage earning mothers. Its efforts to revise the equal pay law and to develop maternity protection and child care programs are discussed in Chapters Four and Five.

than just drifting along."[2] Royce's comments reflected her conclusion that wage earning women were woefully unprepared in education and job training for successful participation in the labour force. To arrive at this conclusion, Royce utilized the human rights discourse of the postwar period which equated inequality with lack of access to education. The Bureau's studies had revealed that Canadian wage earning women were segregated into a few low-paid, low-status occupations. Clearly, increased education and job training were needed to open up opportunities for women in a wider range of jobs and in jobs with higher status and renumeration. Thus, the Bureau decided it must "encourage general competence and occupational skills among women workers" if women were to achieve equality in the labour force. In response, the Bureau issued a large body of vocational publications focused on educating society about the importance of job preparation for women, and on providing information to women about opportunities in a variety of traditional and non-traditional occupations. As well, the Bureau recognized that women's responsibility for home and children adversely affected their access to and maintenance of viable job skills. Royce concluded that women needed vocational training programs adapted to their intermittent pattern of labour force participation and their household responsibilities. Consequently, a second component of the Bureau's vocational training activities involved lobbying government and private agencies to develop training services specific to women's needs. The Bureau's vocational training activites were based on Royce's belief that social stereotypes and sex roles minimized the importance of job training and streamed women into "female" occupations. To

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[2] Mollie Gillen, "Marion Royce: Expert on Canadian Women", *Chatelaine* (September 1964), 93.

achieve equality, therefore, required that women change their identities and expectations to match those of male workers.

Overall, the Bureau had minimal success in influencing the conception and delivery of vocational training programs for women. At times, Royce's speeches and writings suggested that the problems of segregation, wage inequity, and discrimination were more complex than suggested by the concept of gender stereotypes and sex roles. Nonetheless, the faith attached to education and job training to address inequality placed these vocational training activities at the centre of the Bureau's agenda in the 1960s. Consequently, Royce argued the importance of vocational training in 1965 with the conclusion that "adequate vocational training is the foundation stone of all other efforts to improve the economic status of women."[3]

Education and Equal Opportunity in the Postwar Period

During the postwar period, the Bureau participated in a discursive environment in which education and vocational training were equated with human rights and equality. The equal opportunity framework construed inequality as a problem of "inadequate access, unwarranted discrimination, and a lack of education."[4] In this conceptualization, education was the "great equalizer," the means to level distinctions and disadvantages arising from class, race, and religion; *access* to education was the problem to be addressed in the struggle for equal

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[3] NAC, Marion Royce Papers (MR Papers), MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #9, Speech by Marion Royce entitled "Changes in the Female Labour Force over the Past Ten-Year Period", no date (around 1965), 15.

[4] Janine Brodie, *Politics on the Margins. Restructuring and the Canadian Women's Movement* (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 1995), 42.

opportunity. According to Carol Lee Bacchi, "an access model" has been "the dominant problematization of girls' inequality in education in Anglo-Saxon countries."[5] Commentators concerned about equal opportunity pointed to differences in the level of access and in the content of education received by disadvantaged groups. Inevitably, education was conflated with the dominant problem of the equal opportunity era, the problem of unequal opportunities in the labour market. Commentators argued for improved access for the disadvantaged to higher levels of education, to nontraditional areas of study, and to job specific training programs. Vocational training, understood as all forms of education directed towards improving the knowledge, skill level, and employability of a person, became an important solution to the problem of inequality.[6]

The discursive equation of education/vocational training with improved job opportunities and, thus, with equality found expression in human capital theory in the 1960s. First outlined in 1960, human capital theory established a link between economic growth and the level of investment in "human resources," particularly in education. To maintain economic prosperity, theorists argued a need for massive government investment to improve educational services and facilitate access for all citizens. The theory fit within the equal opportunity discourse because it embraced the concept of accessibility to educational opportunities. As well, some theorists argued a person's level of education was the principal indicator of future

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[5] Carol Lee Bacchi, *Women, Policy and Politics. The Construction of Policy Problems* (London: Sage Publications, 1999), 115.

[6] Commentators of the time used the term "vocational training" specifically in reference to any education directed towards improving job skills. The more general term "education" includes vocational training as well as learning to acquire basic literacy and academic skills and for personal development.

earnings; consequently, the provision of more equitable education would result in a reduction of wage disparity among different groups. In Canada, the theory appealed to governments struggling with shortages of technical, professional, and skilled labour, the imperative to maintain economic growth, and a commitment (in principle at least) to the demand for greater social and economic equality. Consequently, the federal and provincial governments responded with a massive expansion of post-secondary education in the late 1960s.[7] By 1960, then, accessibility to education entered the policy agenda of government and became a dominant premise in social and economic theory.

Within the international community, particularly as represented by the United Nations (UN) and the International Labour Organization (ILO), the equation of equality with education was prominent during the 1950s and 1960s. Participants in international forums revealed their faith in education through a strong emphasis on vocational training directed towards "disadvantaged workers," including women. In a speech in Ottawa in August 1960, a member of the ILO Office for the Co-ordination of Women's and Young Workers' Questions stated unequivocably that the major obstacle barring women from high positions in business and industry was a "lack of opportunities to receive adequate vocational preparation." This faith in training to improve the status and conditions of women's employment was also the basic assumption of an ILO report on "Women Workers in a Changing World." Women's "employment opportunities," the report argued, "is [sic] determined by what they have to offer

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[7] Kjell Rubenson, "Adult Education: The Economic Context", in *Choosing Our Future. Adult Education and Public Policy in Canada*, eds. Frank Cassidy & Ron Faris (Toronto: OISE Press, 1987), 78-79; Lin Buckland, "Education and Training: Equal Opportunities or Barriers to Employment?", in *Research Studies of the Commission on Equality in Employment* (Canada: Supply and Services, 1985), 134.

in training and ability."[8] Similar statements in the reports and speeches of the ILO and the UN during the 1950s and 1960s analyzed labour force inequality as a function of inadequate vocational preparation.

In Canada, the women's organizations similarly emphasized education and vocational training as the solution to the inequality faced by wage earning women. Groups such as the National Council of Women (NCW) and the Business and Professional Women's Clubs (BPW) had developed a strong concern and were working on a number of issues related to wage earning women by the mid-1950s.[9] For these groups, a higher level of education for women as well as access to the same educational content as men were the primary goals to ensure women "their rightful place" in the public sphere of paid work and government.[10] In the 1940s and 1950s, the problems of "older" women seeking to enter the labour force after years in the home dominated the discussions of the Trades and Professions Committees of the NCW. Many women's groups created specialized job training programs in their communities to offer "re-

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[8] Quoted in Canada, Department of Labour, *Labour Gazette* (1960), 894; and in *Labour Gazette* (1964), 387.

[9] For a discussion of the ideas and actions of the NCW and BPW in the postwar years, see Chapter One. See also, N.E.S. Griffiths, *The Splendid Vision. Centennial History of the National Council of Women of Canada. 1893-1993* (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1993), 286.

[10] Canadian Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs (BPW), *The Business and Professional Woman*, XXV, 8 (Sept-Oct 1957), Doris Lewis Rare Book Room, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario, 8; Linda Geller-Schwartz, "An Array of Agencies. Feminism and State Institutions in Canada", in *Comparative State Feminism*, eds. Dorothy McBride Stetson & Amy Mazur (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 1995), 49.

fresher" courses or skill training to aid these women.[11] By the 1960s, the "status" of women in Canadian society dominated discussion within the groups. The Trades and Professions Committees of the NCW argued for improvements to the equal pay act and to women's vocational training as a means to facilitate greater equality of opportunity. The President of the Ontario NCW, Nazla Dane, argued that the government should utilize women to offset critical labour shortages in the professional and technical fields. Obviously, she asserted, many women needed counselling and training but it was "worth the time and money."[12] Clearly, Dane drew on economic arguments suggestive of human capital theory to appeal to government priorities, but the equation of equality with improved education and training was explicit in her argument.

As an individual and as Director of the Bureau, Marion Royce was familiar with these arguments in support of vocational training. Before 1954, her work with the international Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) brought her in contact with the debates of the UN and the ILO.[13] After 1954, she continued to follow the debates and recommendations of

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[11] The "older woman worker" was a prominent issue in the debates of the women's groups during the 1950s. It coincided with concern within government and international forums about the problems faced by the "older worker" whose skills were outdated and who faced discrimination due to age. A large component of the increase in employment among married women in the postwar period came from older women whose household responsibilities had diminished, usually when the children were all in school. The term "older woman worker" used by contemporaries refers to this group. When measured statistically, "older women" included women aged 35+ or aged 45+. See the journal of the NCW for the years 1948 through the 1950s. National Council of Women of Canada (NCW), *Yearbook*, Doris Lewis Rare Book Room, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario.

[12] Nazla Dane, "Womanpower", *Canadian Commentator* (November 1958), 13-14.

[13] As a consultant for Social and International Questions with the World's YWCA, Royce's work required reporting on and participating in the work of the UN (particularly the UN

these bodies on matters affecting human rights and women. Women's Bureau records contain copies or summaries of UN and ILO declarations from as early as 1952, including publications which emphasized the "great importance attached by the experts" to vocational training for women.[14] Royce frequently cited these works in her speeches and writings and included excerpts in the Bureau's column in the *Labour Gazette*. As Monique Bégin argues, the Bureau drew heavily on the work of the ILO to develop its policy goals.[15] As well, Royce's involvement with the women's groups brought her in contact with these ideas in the early years of the Bureau when she was studying the problems of wage earning women. The women's groups kept Royce informed about their proposals and activities and invited her to their annual meetings and other forums. The Soroptimist Clubs of Toronto, for example, invited Royce to be the moderator of a panel discussion on the problems faced by older women workers in May 1956. In several of the talks, participants emphasized the need for vocational counselling as a first step to aiding the older woman returning to work.[16]

Clearly, Royce was receptive to the ideas and policy proposals of these international bodies and the women's groups. The issue of women's education had dominated her

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Commission on the Status of Women) and the ILO.

[14] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1905, File #38-6-2-6 pt.2, Report prepared by ILO for the UN Commission on the Status of Women entitled "The Employment of Older Women Workers", Dated 7 February 1957.

[15] Monique Bégin, "The Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada: Twenty Years Later", in *Challenging Times. The Women's Movement in Canada and the U.S.*, eds. Constance Backhouse & David H. Flaherty (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992), 27.

[16] *Labour Gazette* (1956), 806-809.

professional career both as a teacher and as a consultant with the YWCA.[17] As the *wage earning* women became the focus of her work after 1954, the discursive equation of education with equality offered potential solutions to the problems she was studying. Following her retirement from the Bureau in 1967, Royce resumed work at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education as a research associate with the Department of Adult Education. Her research involved a study of existing programs and trends in continuing education for women.[18] The choice of this occupation for her "retirement" reflects not only her expertise as recognized by her peers but her own ongoing interest and belief in the importance of education and vocational training for women.

The connection of the Bureau to international agencies and the women's groups continued into the 1960s as vocational training became a major policy goal of the Bureau. In 1958, when Canada acquired a seat on the UN Commission on the Status of Women, Royce was appointed as an assistant (and then alternate in 1959) to the Canadian representative.[19] In her capacity as assistant/alternate, Royce prepared reports for the Canadian delegate including a report on the "access of girls and women to education outside the school." In the report, Royce

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[17] Royce's professional background is outlined in Chapter Two.

[18] The research was detailed in new reports in 1968. For example see the *Windsor Star* (21 August 1968) and the *Timmins Press* (16 August 1968). Marion Royce, *Continuing Education for Women in Canada. Trends and Opportunities*, Monographs in Adult Education, No. 4 (Toronto: The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1969).

[19] This body, created to study and make recommendations on all aspects of women's status in political, economic, social and educational fields, also focused on vocational guidance and training when discussion turned to women's "economic opportunities." For example, see the summaries of discussions of the UNCSW in *Labour Gazette* (1960), 594 and *Labour Gazette* (1962), 920.

argued the importance of the UN's leadership role for stimulating "greater creativity and relevance" in the development of vocational programs in all countries.[20] Similarly in 1958, Royce wrote to the NCW asking for assistance to prepare a report for presentation to the Department of Labour's Vocational Training Advisory Committee. The letter noted the ongoing role of the the Council and its affiliates in gathering information about the problems of older women workers and in providing training programs.[21] Thus, as in the case of the ILO and the UN, the Bureau drew heavily on the work of the women's groups to develop its policy goals. The primary importance attributed to education by these groups pointed the Bureau towards vocational training as a measure to equalize women's opportunities in the labour force.

Education and Vocational Training to Aid the Working Woman

By the late 1950s, women's inequality in the labour force had become a major concern of the Women's Bureau. The early research of the Bureau during the 1950s had revealed a number of problems faced by wage earning women.[22] As the Bureau expanded its role beyond information gathering to include policy advocacy, it began to examine the potential of education and training to address these problems. By the late 1950s, education and vocational

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[20] NAC, Marion Royce Papers (MR Papers), MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #5, Report of the Canadian Delegate on the UNCSW, 14th Session, March 28 to April 14 1960, entitled "Access of Girls and Women to Education Outside the School", Dated 8 April 1960.

[21] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, Vol. 1904, File #38-9-20, Letter from Marion Royce to Mrs. Rex Eaton (President, NCW), 17 October 1958.

[22] Studies like *Married Women Working for Pay* revealed a number of problems faced by women including lack of job training, low wages, segregation and concentration into low status areas of the economy, and the double burden faced by married women and women with children.

training had become principal components in Royce's analysis of the obstacles to women's equality in the labour force.

Royce frequently argued for educational equality for women using the discourse of equality of opportunity and human rights. Her speeches began by declaring the "demonstrable fact" that women had become "an integral part of the labour force." "Work outside the home," she would continue, "at some period of life, if not continuously, is a part of practically every woman's experience."[23] Studies analyzing census material and other data had repeatedly demonstrated the growth and changing composition of the female labour force, including the tendency of married women to re-enter the labour force after the child rearing period.[24] This fact, according to Royce, meant that Canadian women were now *both* wage earners and homemakers. The developing representation of women's inequality as a problem of labour market opportunity led Royce to argue that women's participation in paid work was crucial to the realization of equality.[25] "Work for pay," she argued, "is the most widely accepted criterion of meaningful particupation in our society." Adult social status accrued from a person's occupation, both from the prestige attached to the job and the wage level. Reflecting the

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[23] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #8, Speech given at Meeting of the BC Vocational Education Association, Vancouver, 2 December 1964, 8.

[24] Women's Bureau and government studies had revealed not only an overall increase in women's labour force participation but the trend towards participation by "older" women. The participation rate of women from 45 to 54 years of age, for example, rose from 18.9% in 1950 to 34.7% by 1963. This group had the fastest rising participation rates among women. Canada, Department of Labour (Women's Bureau), *Women at Work in Canada. A Fact Book on the Female Labour Force*, 1964, 18-19.

[25] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #8, Speech given at Meeting of the BC Vocational Education Association, Vancouver, 2 December 1964, 8.

influence of human capital theory, Royce argued women needed education and training to enter the occupations which would allow them "status" in society.[26] In the foreword to *Vocational and Technical Training for Girls*, the Bureau directly posited the perceived relationship between women's "status" and their level of job training. "In a broader context," the writer observed, "adequate vocational preparation is a prerequisite for all other action aimed at bettering the condition and status of women workers."[27] Thus, the Bureau's focus on vocational training was part of its overall commitment to women's rights and equality in this period.

Yet, despite the importance of paid employment to women's equality, significant barriers continued to degrade women's opportunities to participate equally. One significant problem noted by Royce was the segregation and concentration of the female labour force. Part of the overall increase in women's employment in the postwar period resulted from a large growth in jobs deemed "female." These jobs, even those requiring some education and training such as stenography, were for the most part lower paid and of lower status than jobs held by men. This fact was well known and publicized by the Bureau from its earliest studies. The first 1957 "fact book" noted that most women workers were "still employed in fields that have been traditionally or have come to be considered the special domains of women," fields which are generally "lower paid."[28] Compounding the problem was the small number of these female

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[26] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #5, Report of the Canadian Delegation on UNCSW, 14th Session, entitled "Access of Girls and Women to Education Outside the School", Dated 8 April 1960.

[27] Quoted in Canada, Department of Labour, *Labour Gazette* (1962), 96.

[28] Canada, Department of Labour (Women's Bureau), *Women at Work in Canada. A Fact Book on the Female Labour Force of Canada*, 1957, 19, 33.

occupations. The 1964 "fact book" noted that almost two-thirds of all wage earning women in 1961 were found in only ten occupations. Despite wide job availability, women had few occupational choices available and the jobs that were available were generally low-paid.[29] For the Bureau, the expansion of "female" jobs in the post war period was a mixed blessing. While Royce perceived the economic prosperity and job expansion of the period crucial to women's entrance into the labour force, she also recognized a number of inequities which diminished women's status as workers.

To understand why women were stuck in low-paid, low-status jobs, Royce turned to the question of education and training. Women, she argued, were not receiving adequate job training because societal attitudes and traditions minimized the importance of job training and career choice for women.[30] Commentators of the time often argued women were stuck in entry level or low skill jobs because of a personal lack of training and commitment to their future jobs. This interpretation of employment inequity as a problem of *choices* made by individuals continues in debates today.[31] Inequality in this interpretation is an individual problem; the

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[29] The study found that 66.3 percent of all wage earning women in 1961 were found in the following ten occupational groups: stenographers, typists and clerk-typists; clerical occupations; sales clerks; maids and related service workers; school teachers; bookkeepers and cashiers; nurses; farm labourers; waitresses; sewers and sewing machine operators. *Women at Work in Canada* 1964, 26, 50-56.

[30] Although women's overall level of education was increasing in the postwar period, women who received higher education were still overwhelmingly concentrated in traditional, female areas. For example, in 1961, the female percentage of students enrolled in the following university programs was: education - 48 percent, nursing and household science - 100 percent, business - 7 percent, engineering - 0.7 percent, medicine - 10 percent, law - 5 percent. Buckland 1985, 139.

[31] The 1984 report of the Royal Commission on Equality in Employment states that business representatives argued that the major reason for the under-representation of

victim is responsible for her position in the labour force based on degree of willingness to invest time and money in training. The Bureau rejected this assessment, arguing the problem was more complex than a simple lack of training and personal commitment. In her speeches about vocational training and the problems of wage earning women, Royce pointed to the cultural messages received by young women, messages which placed them in the untenable position of choosing between marriage and career when this choice was no longer realistic.[32] Society deemed career planning irrelevant for the young woman planning to marry and have children. An even greater obstacle to the young woman choosing a future was the cultural glorification of glamour over intellect for women. Society, according to Royce, valued beauty and femininity for the young woman over intelligence and physical prowess; a handsome husband and children were considered a greater accomplishment than diligence in employment, education, or community service. Thus, in a 1964 speech, Royce condemned the glorification of femininity that pervaded postwar culture arguing:

> Femininity and intelligent self-determination are regarded as incompatible. Glamour rather than intellectual competence is the generally coveted attribute of women in our society. When we encounter a Barbara Ward, once having established that she is an exceptional woman -- when as a matter of fact she is an exceptional human being -- we are at pains to comment on her femininity.[33]

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disadvantaged groups in certain jobs was "the scarcity of qualified candidates." Canada, Royal Commission on Equality in Employment (RCEE), *Report*, 1984, 130.

[32] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 2, File #28, Report of the CBC Conference on "The Real World of Women", held in Toronto from 6 to 9 September 1962, Talk by Marion Royce for discussion "Woman at Work -- II", 73.

[33] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #8, Speech given by Marion Royce at a Meeting of the British Columbia Vocational Education Association, Vancouver, 2 December 1964, 8.

Such attitudes, according to Royce, meant that young women perceived work outside of the home as a short term diversion before marriage and did not plan for employment and pursue the necessary training. Ultimately, Royce noted, women were "victims" of social values which belied the increasing importance of paid work in women's lives. What was needed was a change in attitudes and values of the whole society; once society accepted the importance of vocational training for women, young women would make better choices.[34]

For older women as well, societal prejudices and concepts of femininity operated to hinder their job and training opportunities, but in different ways. In an interesting contradiction, older women were often overlooked for clerical jobs, one of the fastest growing sectors of the economy, because of stereotypes which associated secretaries with young, beautiful and feminine women. The same glorification of femininity that operated to discourage young "girls" from training and remaining in the labour force also operated to make them desireable to employers. Consequently, as Royce noted frequently, there was a gross underepresentation of older women in clerical jobs despite the high demand for more secretaries by business and the willingness of older women to do these jobs.[35] Women over

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[34] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 2, File #28, Report of CBC Conference on "The Real World of Women" held in Toronto from 6 to 9 September 1962, Talk by Marion Royce for Discussion on "Women at Work -- II", 73. Lin Buckland also argues the influence of "cultural norms and values" to explain the different choices made by men and women when choosing careers and pursuing education and training. Buckland 1985, 145.

[35] While 96% of all workers in this area were women, the proportion 35 years of age and older was only 23.5%. NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #8, Article by Marion Royce on "The Older Woman and the Working World", 23 May 1961, 5. Of interest is the *Financial Post* article which argues business will have to turn to the "older" woman to fill clerical shortages. "You'll Hire Older Women; Miss Giggles Will Marry", *Financial Post* (4 May 1957), 1, 8.

thirty-five, Royce noted, were just entering the "second phase" of their adult life, a period of greater freedom from homemaking and childcare responsibilities when they could devote their efforts to activities outside of the home.[36]

In Royce's assessment, then, negative stereotypes and discrimination resulted in the bad educational choices women made. This focus on sex roles and stereotypes and their impact on women has dominated the liberal feminist theorization of oppression.[37] While instructive about the socialization of women into gender-specific roles, the concept of sex roles and stereotypes is problematic. As Carol Lee Bacchi argues: "When the problem is seen to be a racist or sexist *attitude*, to be prejudice, this reduces racism and sexism to *individual* aberration, suppressing recognition of the institutional and structural dimensions of discrimination."[38] Within this problematization, the solutions developed to address inequality have focused on changing women's identity and attitudes and have ignored the impact of constraints such as the gendered division of labour and the impact of power in gender relations.

At times, Royce's comments hinted at the inadequacy of this focus on prejudice to understand women's inequality. Her speeches noted the frustration of highly educated "career" women who frequently faced "rejection" of their "intellectual and administrative capacities" and were discriminated against in decisions related to hiring, promotion, and pay. Bureau

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[36] Ibid., Article by Marion Royce on "The Older Woman and the Working World", 23 May 1961, 14.

[37] Canada, Royal Commission on the Status of Women, *Report*, 1967; R.W. Connell, *Gender and Power. Society, the Person and Sexual Politics* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987), 33.

[38] Bacchi 1999, 94.

publications pointed to the experiences of female teachers who were poignantly aware of the limitations on their careers and wage potential by the preference given to male teachers for supervisory positions and teaching of higher grades.[39] The problem, according to these publications, stemmed from social attitudes which attributed to women personality traits, such as passiveness, which were deemed incompatible with responsibility and supervision.[40] Not surprising, given the equal opportunity framework structuring Royce's analysis, her awareness of the social construction of personality attributes did not include recognition that the valuation of "female" attributes was also socially constructed, a product in part of power in gender relations. The concept of discrimination also did not allow for a conceptualization of biological or cultural "differences" between the sexes, including in personality attributes. Consequently, Royce's comments suggested instead that these attitudes towards career women were unjustified because women could act "just like men" if given a chance. As Carol Lee Bacchi notes, this concept suggests "fairness means simply 'treating likes alike'," which is essentially "assimilationist."[41]

Similarly, Royce recognized that many female jobs were cursed by low wages regardless of the level of education and training. A series of articles done in 1956 and 1957 on the occupations of skilled and professional women highlighted the low wages which plagued

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[39] NAC, Department of Labour, RG 27, Vol. 1905, File #38-6-6-2, Report of a Consultation entitled "Preparation of Women for Participation in the Labour Force", Held on 21 March 1962, 5; *Labour Gazette* (1956), 1513-1516.

[40] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 4156, File #722-3-6, Women's Bureau Bulletin No. IV "Consultation on the Occupational Preparation of Women", April 1962.

[41] Bacchi 1999, 94-95; Connell 1987, 33-34.

professional fields like nursing, social work, and library science.[42] Royce also recognized that many tasks previously done in the home had moved into the public sphere, thereby creating jobs dominated by women. This recognition led her to confess to "misgiving at the lowness of salaries paid" to women hired for the Visiting Homemaker Service, a program of which the Bureau was otherwise highly supportive.[43] This program hired mostly older women, reflecting the concentration of these women into jobs "closely related to the work of the home."[44] While Royce's comments suggested that wages did not always reflect the skill and responsibility required in a job, she did not explicitly make the connection between the wage levels in many women's jobs and society's devaluation of women's homemaking and caring skills. It would be another decade before feminists began to explore how the social construction of skill and the power relations of society influenced wage levels.

Nonetheless, the Bureau did recognize that women's primary responsibility for home and children was a major obstacle to equal participation in education/training and employment. In the discourse of vocational training, women included two types - the young "girl" between high school and marriage, and the "mature" or "older" woman seeking to re-enter the labour force after a period at home. To aid the young woman, the problem was to overcome the belief

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[42] *Labour Gazette* (1956), 1514; (1947), 41, 43, 46, 166, 301, 302.

[43] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1908, File #38-9-3, Letter from Marion Royce to Helen James (Assistant Supervisor, Talks and Public Affairs, CBC), 8 November 1956.

[44] Speaking in 1961, Royce noted that older women comprised over 60 percent of all housekeepers and matrons, 65 percent of all female cooks, 69 percent of dressmakers and seamstresses. NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #8, Article by Marion Royce on "The Older Woman and the Working World", 23 May 1961, 4-5.

that marriage and family were incompatible with employment. As Royce argued repeatedly over the years, the likelihood of labour force participation for women, including wives and mothers, was increasing. Quoting a US study in 1957, she noted that the "work potential" of a girl born in 1950 had risen to 15.4 years from 12.1 for those born in 1940, a 27 percent increase in only ten years.[45] Thus, all young women needed to be encouraged to prepare for a future which included paid work, even if they intended to marry and have children. In fact, most young women, Royce argued, would still marry, have children, and stay at home at least during the early childhood years. Despite this "unique role within the family," however, work was now as important to women's lives as home and they needed to be educated for both these roles.[46] For the "older" woman trying to re-enter the labour force, the responsibilities of home and children presented different obstacles. Frequently, these women possessed few marketable job skills, except the "housewifely skills" which prepared them only for low-paid service jobs. Job training and skills acquired previous to marriage and children were often out-dated or obsolete. To re-train presented particular obstacles to women. As Royce noted, many women chose to work because of economic need; these women lacked the resources to pay for vocational training and were reluctant to devote the time when money was needed immediately.[47] Household responsibilities, including the care of children after school, placed

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[45] *Labour Gazette* (1957), 1285.

[46] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #8, Speech given by Marion Royce to the British Columbia Vocational Education Association, Vancouver, 2 December 1964, 8.

[47] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1905, File #38-6-2-7-2, Address by Marion Royce to the National Employment Committee on "Participation of Mature Women in Canada's Labour Force", 26 May 1965.

restrictions on the amount of time available for activities outside of the home and women's ability to participate in adult training programs in the evening. In 1960, the Bureau highlighted some of these difficulties in the study *A New Career After 30* which explored the experiences of older women involved in a two-year social work program.[48] Despite these barriers, however, Royce was emphatic that the young "girl" and the older woman must receive vocational training. "In the modern world," she would often conclude, "the question: 'What shall I do when I grow up?' is as truly feminine as it is masculine."[49]

The Vocational Training Program of the Bureau

With the conviction that women were woefully unprepared for equal participation in the labour force, the Bureau began to investigate means to improve women's access to education and vocational training. In its vocational training activities, the Bureau received extensive, although not unqualified, support from the Department of Labour.

Undoubtedly, the Bureau's preoccupation with vocational training, unlike some of its other goals, fit within the existing agenda of the Department. Vocational training, both as it involved studying and preparing publications on job opportunities and developing training programs geared towards specific sectors of the labour force, was a primary focus of the federal Department. The ongoing preoccupation of the Department with "manpower" shortages

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[48] Canada, Department of Labour (Women's Bureau), *A New Career After 30. The Report of an Enquiry by the Women's Bureau*, 1960. Buckland found similar economic and social barriers to education and training for women in her 1985 report prepared for the RCEE. Buckland 1985, 145.

[49] *Labour Gazette* (1956), 1512.

increased the importance of vocational activities in the postwar period. Assessing the supply of workers, the skills available and needed, the demands of the economy, and future directions in the job market were all primary considerations of departmental publications and programs in these years.[50] An examination of the structure of the Department and its publications reveals the growing link between manpower issues and vocational training. In 1961, committees in which the Department participated included the Committee on the Problems of Older Workers, the Committee on the Training of Skilled Manpower Research Programme, the Canadian Vocational Training Advisory Council, and the National Advisory Committee on the Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons. While the specific subject of each committee varied, the overriding focus was on developing training programs to mobilize the country's manpower where it was most needed. This preoccupation was evident as well in the *Labour Gazette*, the official journal of the Labour Department. The May 1962 issue, for example, included twenty-one articles that fit within the category of "manpower/vocational" concerns.[51]

Due to the prominence of vocational training issues in the Department's agenda, the Bureau received extensive, although not unqualified, support for its own activities in this area. In fact, it appears the Department expected the Bureau to focus on vocational issues to some extent right from the beginning. As noted in Chapter Two, the Bureau's first study, *Married Women Working for Pay,* received approval because of the Department's need to assess the skill

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[50] A history of the Labour Department notes the increasing focus on "manpower" questions during the 1950s which led to research on the "needs of the labour market" and the development of programs. See *Labour Gazette* (1967), 436.

[51] Article titles included "Education and Employment", "Technical Education Abroad", "Services Available to Disabled Persons" and "Social, Economic Problems of Older Workers". See *Labour Gazette* (May 1962).

level and skill utilization of the married female labour force.[52] Bureau reports reveal it participated in many of the above committees as the representative for women workers.[53] The resistance experienced by the Bureau to its integration efforts was not evident in 1965 when Royce requested a woman be hired in the Technical and Vocational Training Branch and assigned to the work of the Bureau. The position, which Royce argued was necessary to ensure that vocational training programs did not ignore the needs of women, received the support of the Assistant Deputy Minister, W.R. Dymond.[54] Similarly, the vast majority of the Bureau's publications during these years were vocational in subject suggesting both the support received from the Department for this type of work and the greater availability of data for compiling this type of material.

The Bureau's vocational activities through the 1960s were twofold. Through research and publishing, it strove to educate the public about the need for improved services and to provide occupational information to women. As well, the Bureau lobbied outside agencies and the Labour Department to develop vocational counselling and training programs geared towards the specific needs of women.

By 1964, a significant proportion of the Bureau's publications were vocational or

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[52] See Chapter Two. (page 25)

[53] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-2-2 pt.1, "Reply of the Women's Bureau, Department of Labour" to the Questionnaire of the Royal Commission on Government Organization, 8 March 1961.

[54] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-2-2 pt.1, Memo from Marion Royce to W.R. Dymond, 28 July 1965.

occupational in subject.[55] The growing prominence of vocational themes in the Bureau's bibliography reflected not only the importance attributed to this issue but also the conviction that public education was an effective approach to it. Since Royce viewed women's inadequate job preparation as a product of social stereotypes and sex roles, the first step towards the goal of better job training for women had to be a re-evaluation of those attitudes. Consequently, the Bureau argued for publicity campaigns to counter "some of the limiting stereo-types and attitudes" which restricted women's job options, lowered wages and promotion opportunities, and inhibited job training.[56] In this emphasis on public attitudes, Royce was not alone. Education campaigns had been the approach of the government to the problem of discrimination against older workers since World War II and was often the solution suggested in ILO reports.[57]

Through its publications, the Bureau developed an educational campaign directed at challenging social attitudes about the role of work in women's lives. An early survey of university educated women specifically stated the educational purpose of the publications. The results, stated the author, might "provide material for reflection on women's attitudes to work"

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[55] By 1964, the Bureau had published seven monographs, three of which dealt with occupational opportunities or research on vocational training issues. Amongst the more numerous bulletins and "reprints" (bulletins reprinted from the Women's Bureau page in the *Labour Gazette*), there were approximately twenty available in 1964, of which thirteen were occupational/vocational in subject. A list of Women's Bureau publications is printed in Gillen, "Marion Royce", 92.

[56] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #8, Speech given by Marion Royce to the British Columbia Vocational Education Association, Vancouver, 2 December 1964, 9.

[57] Educational campaigns continue to be the dominant approach of government to fighting discrimination against disadvantaged groups. See RCEE, *Report*, 130; Bacchi 1999, 117.

as well as "be suggestive for girls who are thinking about their future."[58] Most of the vocational publications included introductions arguing the need for women to prepare for a work future even if they intended to marry.[59] In addition, some studies were analytical in nature, outlining the Bureau's investigations into issues such as why women choose particular careers, the pros and cons of various occupations, and the factors affecting training experiences. The Bureau undertook the study *A New Career After 30* to explore the experiences of a group of older women in a re-training program. The Bureau intended the study to provide "insights" into "the education and recruitment of women for professional work," not to detail job "opportunities" in social work.[60] Thus, the publications had a multi-faceted educational purpose - to educate the young woman and the overall society about the growing importance of training while analyzing some of the relevant issues connected to women's training.

The studies also had a more direct and practical educational purpose; they provided occupational information to women about the available jobs, the training required, and future prospects in the labour market. Accompanying the belief that women needed to be educated about the importance of training, the Bureau also assumed that women needed information about the job market. Royce believed that most women, particularly the young, were not familiar with the full range of job "opportunities." In reference to the segregation of wage

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[58] *Labour Gazette* (1956), 1513.

[59] For example, see Canada, Department of Labour (Women's Bureau), *Vocational and Technical Training for Girls at High School, Post High School and Trade School Levels of Education in Canada*, 1962.

[60] *A New Career After 30*, 1960. See also *Labour Gazette* (1961), 23.

earning women, one Bureau article questioned "whether girls are made aware of other occupations or even the new possibilities in fields in which women have always worked."[61] Participants at Bureau conferences frequently agreed. They stressed the importance of the Bureau's occupational publications and argued "for more popular guidance material directed to teen aged girls, whose pre-occupation with marriage frequently leads them to consider too lightly their future place in the working world."[62]

Consequently, the Bureau produced a large number and variety of occupational publications during the 1960s, with the stated purpose of broadening women's career goals. "Wider horizons of occupational possibilities must be opened to women," Royce declared in 1964, "and that will mean breaking through some of the limiting stereo-types and attitudes."[63] One direction the Bureau encouraged women to take was into the male-dominated and professional occupations like law and medicine. The focus was not on all of the male-dominated fields; many high-paid male job areas were never mentioned in this discourse, particularly in heavy industry and mining. As well, the Bureau encouraged women to consider careers in the high-skill technical fields, such as engineering, which were suffering the worst labour shortages in the postwar period. The hypocrisy and social stereotypes which inhibited women's participation in jobs requiring technical and scientific knowledge formed the basis of

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[61] *Labour Gazette* (1963), 37.

[62] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1905, File #38-6-6-2, Report on Consultation entitled "Preparation of Women for Participation in the Labour Force", 8; RG 27, Vol. 1906, File #38-6-6-4, "Seminar on the Work of the Women's Bureau, Department of Labour", 6 May 1960.

[63] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #8, Speech by Marion Royce to the BC Vocational Education Association, Vancouver, 2 December 1964, 9.

a 1957 speech. The attitude that considers only men for these fields, Royce argued, was "everywhere."

> We succumb, for instance, to a prevailing myth that girls cannot "do" mathematics and science; and except in times of emergency such as a war situation, we lapse into traditional conceptions of what constitutes suitable work for women. Despite the acknowledged fact that the woman worker is here to stay, girls are given little assurance that there are other fields for women than home-making, office work, teaching and nursing.[64]

Over the years, Bureau publications explored "opportunities" for women in many non-traditional areas, including science, math, medicine, engineering, architecture, and law.[65] These publications repeatedly reminded readers that the scientific, technical, and professional fields were "open" to women. The young woman was told she must pursue training which will "utilize her capabilities and be satisfying to her," regardless of restrictive social norms.[66]

To achieve the objective of increasing occupational diversity among women, many of the Bureau's publications also focused on enlarging the number of *female* occupations and the skill requirements of existing ones. Changes to the postwar economy resulted in the development of new fields and the rising prominence of some existing ones. Expansion of the welfare state, for example, increased the occupational diversity and the demand for workers in the health and social services. In speeches and writings, Royce argued that jobs in the human services may be more attractive to women. The "helping occupations," she argued, provided "the kind of work in which for centuries women have found not only a means of livelihood but

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[64] Quoted in *Labour Gazette* (1957), 1285.

[65] For example, *Labour Gazette* (1959), 380-381; Canada, Department of Labour, *Fields of Work for Women - Physical Sciences, Earth Sciences, Mathematics*, 1964.

[66] *Fields of Work for Women - Physical Sciences, Earth Sciences, Mathematics*, 7.

a sense of vocation."[67] Consequently, Bureau publications also surveyed "opportunities" for women in the new and the old female occupations.[68] The fact that these occupations were (or would eventually be) deemed "female" was not construed as a problem; Royce believed women's inequality stemmed from their segregation into low-skill jobs. Thus, the emphasis of the Bureau was on encouraging women to move into fields requiring *higher education and skill* because of the assumption that jobs requiring more training or education were higher in status and pay. Consequently, the Bureau also argued for the "rehabilitation" of existing low-skill female jobs. In 1957, Royce argued a need "to lift the standards of service occupations in which large numbers of women are employed by establishing training requirements and licensing applicants." As justification, she pointed to the example of nursing aides who, following a process of professionalization, had acquired "a sense of the dignity and worth of their chosen work."[69] She did not, however, mention the low wages that continued to plague this field. Similarly, the Bureau presented the new field of "visiting homemaker," which was supplanting the traditional domestic servant, as a new and potentially good "career" for mature women.[70] The failure of previous efforts to "professionalize" domestic service did not stem

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[67] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #8, Speech by Marion Royce to the BC Vocational Education Association, 2 December 1964, 9.

[68] For example, *Vocational and Technical Training for Girls* discussed jobs such as dental hygienist, physical and occupational therapist, medical laboratory technician, radiology technician and well baby nurse. *Vocational and Technical Training for Girls*, 1962.

[69] *Labour Gazette* (1957), 1287-1288.

[70] *Labour Gazette* (1957), 1288. Throughout the 1950s, women's groups and others continued to argue for programs to raise the "status" of domestic service, in effect ignoring the dismal failure of previous attempts to do so, such as the "Home Aide" program of the early post

this enthusiasm. As noted previously, Royce recognized that many low-skill jobs were designated "female" because they originated from tasks previously done in the home; there was, however, no recognition that the low-status of these jobs accrued from their *femaleness* rather than their *skill* level. Consequently, a 1962 publication of the Bureau surveying "training possibilities" for mature women similarly pointed older women toward "careers" in jobs based on their "housewifely skills."[71] The purpose of this publication was to encourage the older woman to take some training before entering the labour force. Optimistically, Royce ignored her own misgivings about the low status of these jobs because of her belief they could be "professionalized" by raising the education and training requirements.

Similar contradictions existed in the publications which encouraged women to enter the new technical and male-dominated fields. A career in many of the scientific and professional fields raised the problem of how a woman would balance the requirements of her job with family life. Many fields simply were not adaptable to women's intermittent pattern of labour force participation, since they demanded a long period of education and then continuing participation in the field to keep abreast of changes and to develop a reputation. By 1960, there were many prominent women who had succeeded in demanding professional careers, including Marion Royce, but most of these women were not married. The Bureau was aware of this problem and the obstacle this reality presented to the average woman who wanted to marry and

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war period. For a discussion of the "Home Aide" program, see: Ruth Pierson, "'Home Aide': A Solution to Women's Unemployment After World War II", *Atlantis* 2, 2 (Part II) (Spring 1977): 85-97.

[71] Canada, Department of Labour (Women's Bureau), *Job Training for the Mature Woman Entering or Re-entering the Labour Force*, 1962.

pursue a career. At the 1964 conference, one paper spoke of the limitations placed on women's job choices and advancement by the "family structure" of society.[72] The publications of the Bureau that explored non-traditional fields spoke openly of the difficulties of combining these careers with marriage and children. While these publications encouraged women's participation, they offered few solutions. At times, the Bureau suggested that women look to the lesser, associated fields that required less educational preparation and ongoing participation in the field.[73] Rather than becoming a chemist, the young woman with a talent for science was encouraged to train as a lab technician. In most cases, the solution offered placed all the onus on the individual woman to cope; optimistically, the prospective female scientist was told "where there is a will, there is a way." The equal opportunity discourse of the Bureau offered no ideological position to challenge women's primary responsibility for home and children; lacking this critique, the Bureau found comfort in the liberal notion of the individual, free to compete on personal merit. The concept of sex roles and stereotypes explains women's disadvantage by focusing on the "deficits" of women, on the attributes that women lack as a result of their socialization. The solution, thus, focuses on changing women and their expectations to allow them to aspire towards the goals of men.[74] It does not allow for

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[72] Canada, Department of Labour (Women's Bureau), *Report on a Round Table Conference on Traditional Division Between Men's and Women's Work*, 1964. This paper is published separately, see, Oswald Hall, "Gender and the Division of Labour", *Canadian Personnel and Industrial Relations Journal* 11, 3 (July 1964): 20-29.

[73] For example, see, *Fields of Work for Women - Physical Sciences, Earth Sciences, Mathematics*, 1964, 8-9.

[74] Jane Gaskell, Arlene McLaren & Myra Novogrodsky, *Claiming an Education. Feminism and Canadian Schools* (Toronto: Our Schools/Our Selves Education Foundation, 1989), 11-16.

conceptualizing the different attributes and tasks of women and men, and offers few answers to help women include their particular responsibility for children. Thus, Royce assured her audience in 1964 that:

> the girl with special talent for or interest in a traditionally masculine field ought not to be diverted from it. Even though family responsibilities may require that she leave the field temporarily or work only part time, if she is really committed she will find ways of keeping in touch.[75]

Despite these flaws, the Bureau's vocational publications were important for several reasons. First, they addressed a problem of shortages of vocational material directed towards girls. There is evidence of demand by women, employment and guidance services, and employers for the Bureau's publications and the information supplied. In May 1958, the Bureau first noted "a growing demand for material on vocational counselling for girls and women."[76] After the publication of *Vocational and Technical Training for Girls*, the Bureau was "ambushed" with requests for copies, primarily from school guidance services.[77] A member of the Guidance Services division of the Department of Education spoke favourably about the publication. "I do not know," she concluded, "of any publication that fulfills the

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[75] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #8, Speech by Marion Royce to the BC Vocational Education Association, Vancouver, 2 December 1964, 9.

[76] Requests for vocational material were made directly to the Bureau. NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-2-2 pt.1, "Draft of Material for 'Women's Bureau' Section of the Minister's Current Information Book", 6 May 1958.

[77] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1905, File #38-6-6-2, Letter from Marion Royce to M. Elizabeth Smith (Director of Personelle Placement Service), 2 March 1962. *Vocational and Technical Training for Girls at high school, post high school and trade school levels of education in Canada* was a monograph published by the Bureau in 1960 outlining job opportunities for the young woman leaving school. Reprinted in 1962, Royce notes the "enthusiastic reception" it received and the "continuing requests for it." Canada, Department of Labour (Women's Bureau), 1962 Reprint, vi.

purpose of this one."[78] Similarly, *Chatelaine* noted the wide and growing demand for Bureau publications outlining opportunities for women in the sciences and mathematics.[79] As well, recent studies suggest that cultural messages, teachers, text books, and guidance counsellors continue to stream women into gender specific occupations and areas of study.[80] Through its vocational publications (and speeches and other writings), the Bureau challenged assumptions about the natural attributes of women and the gender roles ascribed from them. Although the concept of sex roles and stereotypes does not fully explain women's inequitable education and training, it was important in the 1950s and 1960s to reveal the existence of stereotypes and show their impact on women's socialization. The "problem without a name" had to first be identified.[81]

Along with the publication of vocational information, the Bureau attempted to improve women's overall level of education and training by facilitating the development of training programs and services for women. As noted previously, Royce did recognize the extra burden placed on women by their responsibility for the household and for children. Consequently, she argued the need for job training programs *geared specifically to the life course of women.* Due to women's intermittent pattern of labour force participation, the financial, emotional and physical demands of child bearing, and the changing nature of the job market and the economy,

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[78] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1905, File #38-6-6-2, Letter from Miss P.R. Detenbeck to Marion Royce, 6 March 1962.

[79] Gillen, "Marion Royce", 93.

[80] RCEE, *Report*, 133-134.

[81] Gaskell et al. 1989, 2. Betty Friedan coined the phrase "the problem without a name" in *The Feminine Mystique* (Harmondsworth: Penquin, 1965 {1963}).

Royce argued women needed to receive job training throughout their adult lives. As well, training programs had to be flexible to address the time and financial constraints faced by women. Existing patterns of job preparation, in which young people received the majority of their education and skill training before entering the work force, were not adequate for women. "We must get it through our heads," Royce declared in 1962, "that vocational training, like education, must be a continuous process all through life rather than a single initial investment preceding one's first job."[82] Consequently, Royce turned to the concept of "lifelong learning." While many educational theorists in the postwar period argued the imperatives of lifelong learning for all adults, Royce believed it was particularly applicable to the needs of women.

To facilitate lifelong learning, the Bureau envisioned a major expansion of adult and continuing education programs. The content and theory of adult education was changing in the postwar period. Originally developed to provide enrichment and literacy to the "uneducated," adult education was, by the postwar period, focused towards providing job-related upgrading for adults with existing skills and education.[83] This emerging concept of adult education fit perfectly with Royce's belief in lifelong learning for the wage earning woman. Older women, Royce argued, needed "refresher" training after a period of absence from the labour force; each absence, regardless of length, necessitated the upgrading of old skills or the acquisition of new ones. Adult education programs, the Bureau argued, should also be available to women during

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[82] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 2, File #28, Report of a CBC Conference on "The Real World of Women" held from 6 to 9 September 1962 in Toronto, Talk by Marion Royce on "Woman at Work -- II", 74.

[83] Thomas Kelly, *A History of Adult Education in Great Britain* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1970), 365-368; Harold W. Stubblefield & Patrick Keane, *Adult Education in the American Experience* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1994), 262-270.

the years when they were in the home, not just those women ready to re-enter the labour force. Women with education or training needed to keep their skills up-to-date. As Royce argued, "continuous learning and more adequate occupational preparation" was important even "while their children are small." To justify the costs of investing in the older woman, Royce pointed to the "wealth of potentiality in women of this age group" with their higher "career interest" and potential for twenty to thirty years of uninterrupted participation.[84] In *A New Career After 30*, the Bureau recommended more "services" offered by the community, such as school lunches, to help give women time to upgrade.[85] Royce also suggested the establishment of on-the-job training courses to allow women to be paid while training.[86] Thus, the Bureau's concept of vocational training for women went beyond the goal of equalizing women's skills with men's; programs were to be developed specifically to offset the problems created by women's primacy in the home.

As well, counselling or career guidance programs were a critical component of the special services the Bureau envisioned for women. Repeatedly, Royce argued that "counselling for women was perhaps even more urgent than for men."[87] For the young woman leaving school, guidance needed to encourage a "long term" perspective on the future. "The long

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[84] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #8, Speech by Marion Royce to the BC Vocational Education Association, Vancouver, 2 December 1964.

[85] *A New Career After 30*, 1960, 22-23.

[86] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1905, File #38-6-2-7-2, Address by Marion Royce to the National Employment Committee on "Participation of Mature Women in Canada's Labour Force", 26 May 1965.

[87] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1905, File #38-6-2-6 pt.2, Minutes of the Committee on Older Workers, 25 September 1957.

view," Royce argued, "is equally important for boys, but girls, more than boys, have to view their prospects against the background of future family responsibilities."[88] But counselling had to be available also for the older woman returning to the labour market. These women needed information about the kinds of jobs available and the education or training necessary, as well as advice on how to apply for a job, and about the "rhythm" and culture of the work place. Even more, they needed the "morale" offered by counselling; such services should offer support to build confidence while aiding in the decisions. To meet the needs of these women, the Bureau argued for expansion of guidance services in high schools and in the community, and for better training of the counsellors on technology changes, labour demands, and future trends.[89] In 1968, following her retirement from the Bureau, Royce argued her belief that "counselling is the key to the whole thing." Guidance was crucial before any training could take place.[90]

Thus, Royce demanded both equal treatment and preferential treatment in education and training for women. In this manner, she deviated from the traditional or "absolute" equal opportunity framework of the time period to argue for what has been termed a "relative" equality of opportunity. As Alena Heitlinger argues, relative equality of opportunity includes "'preferential treatment' in favour of racial minorities and women" and is "consistent with a broader notion of equal opportunity" because it is intended to address inequalities arising from

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[88] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #8, Speech by Marion Royce given at Meeting of the BC Vocational Education Association, Vancouver, 2 December 1964, 10.

[89] The emphasis on guidance services was augmented by a report presented to the 1962 conference by Dr. Bruce McFarlane of Carleton University. NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1905, File #38-6-6-2, Report on Women's Bureau conference entitled "Preparation of Women for Participation in the Labour Force", held 21 March 1962.

[90] Quoted in *Windsor Star,* August 21, 1968.

women's dual responsibilities, thereby placing women at an equal "starting point" to compete.[91] Thus, the vocational solutions proposed by the Bureau included female-specific programs to address the challenges presented by women's intermittent pattern of labour force participation. In this analysis, the Bureau did not question women's sole responsibility for home and family. However, it did argue for greater *societal* responsibility to provide, through legislation and programs, special provisions for women, to help them achieve a balance between the many facets of their lives.

To achieve these goals, the Bureau attempted to assume a leadership role, to direct other agencies, governmental and external, about the form vocational programs should take. The Bureau recognized the advantage of utilizing the resources of outside agencies, as well as of developing policy networks to achieve its goals.[92] As well, recourse to external agencies stemmed from recognition that the actual *provision of services* must come from outside of the Bureau. At no time did Royce argue a direct administrative or operational role for the Bureau in the development of improved vocational services. In speeches and other activities, Royce argued that the necessary programs must come from a *combination* of government and private bodies. The Bureau's role was to educate and direct these bodies to the type and form of service needed. Thus, the purpose of the 1962 conference, according to Royce, was to bring together people "with special competence in vocational counselling and training" to examine the "emphases" needed, "with special attention to the role of the agencies and organizations

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[91] Alena Heitlinger, *Women's Equality, Demography and Public Policies. A Comparative Perspective.* (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1993), 31-32.

[92] See Chapter Two.

concerned with these problems."[93] Royce perceived a complementary role between outside agencies and the government. In a speech written for the United Nations Committee on the Status of Women, Royce spoke of the importance of forums which brought together representatives of many organizations. Through "working together," she argued, government and private organizations could cooperate in developing programs "wherein the freedom of the voluntary groups is left intact while the resources of governments are made available for their use."[94] This concept of a large cooperative network may appear unduly optimistic, but it was probably the only possible solution given the jurisdictional obstacles to developing vocational programs in Canada. Constitutionally, education in Canada is a provincial responsibility, economic development and human resource planning is federal, while labour matters fall to both levels of government. As well, studies show that adult education has traditionally been provided by local governments, school boards, and voluntary associations and community groups. As a result, Canada has not been able to develop a consistent, coordinated, and properly funded vocational training system.[95] Thus, the Bureau attempted to influence the development of vocational programs by lobbying the various components in this complex system.

In this cooperative network, the Bureau clearly perceived a role for the Department of Labour. As noted, the Department supported the Bureau's efforts to provide vocational

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[93] *Labour Gazette* (1962), 394.

[94] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #5, Speech written by Marion Royce for presentation to UNCSW entitled "Access of Girls and Women to Education Outside the School", 8 April 1960.

[95] RCEE, *Report*, 130; Buckland 1985, 141.

publications. In the provision of vocational services as well, the Department had long included women in its training activities. The demand for female workers in the postwar period meant labour supply concerns included women.[96] Yet, the Department, in training matters as in other areas, did not always distinguish between the specific needs of women and those of male workers. Royce's experiences on the Committee on Older Workers provides an example.[97] As the representative for women, Royce made repeated efforts to force the committee to treat the needs of older women separately from those of older men. In 1958, Royce prepared a report on the vocational needs of older women and presented it to the committee. Although polite, committee members refused to examine the training needs of women separately from those of men.[98] In frustration, Royce decided to turn the Bureau's efforts towards research on this question. Two studies resulted - *A New Career After 30* in 1960 and *Job Training for the Mature Woman Entering or Re-entering the Labour Force* in 1962.[99] In other forums, however, Royce did achieve some success. In 1965, the National Employment Committee

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[96] See Chapter One.

[97] The Committee on Older Workers was one of numerous departmental and interdepartmental forums created to address the "manpower" questions that dominated the Labour Department in the postwar years. Formed in late 1953, it was a subcommittee of the National Advisory Committee on Manpower. "Older Workers" were one of the targetted groups in the Department's policy of achieving manpower needs through immigration and the reclamation of "disadvantaged" workers. Women were not one of the target groups in the early 1950s.

[98] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1905, File #38-6-2-2, Minutes of Committee on Older Workers, 1954-1962.

[99] *A New Career After 30*; *Job Training for the Mature Woman*, 1962. See also, NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1905, File #38-6-2-6 pt.3, Memo from H.L. Douse (Secretary, Committee on Older Workers) to Marion Royce, 25 July 1962.

invited Royce to attend a meeting to discuss the older woman worker.[100] Subsequently, a subcommittee was formed to examine the problems of women in employment.

Awareness of women as a separate category of worker, however, did not ensure the development of programs to address women's specific needs. As the training discourse within the Department enlarged to include women as a separate category, the Department's interpretation of women's job training needs remained severely constrained. A good example is the debate at the 1960 Seminar. The Director of Economics and Research, W.R. Dymond, recognized the increasing importance of wage earning women to the country's economy. Nonetheless, he suggested it would be more "socially worthwhile" for the Department to direct its training resources towards women who were "permanently committed to the labour force," rather than "providing older married women with training."[101] The concept of "permanently committed" included only a small proportion of the female labour force - the few "career" women who, for various reasons, participated in the labour force without interruption for most of their adult lives. The tendency to view only these women as deserving of training meant inclusion in government training programs would continue to be structured around the needs and patterns of men. The specific problems faced by married women and older women remained outside of the priorities of government; the women for whom Royce advocated remained on the periphery, a reserve force of lesser importance to the economy.

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[100] See Minutes of National Employment Committee, NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1905, File #38-6-2-7-2.

[101] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1906, File #38-6-6-4, Paper presented by W.R. Dymond on "Work of the Economics and Research Branch in the Area of Women's Employment", 7.

Perhaps because of the intransigence of government, Royce devoted considerable effort towards encouraging the private sector to provide the specialized vocational services she envisioned. In various statements, Royce explicitly outlined her intention to rely on outside agencies to implement these objectives. Before the Vocational Training Advisory Council in 1958, Royce expressed her hope of utilizing the women's groups in Canada to provide specific vocational services to the older woman re-entering the labour force. Referring to groups in the US which had implemented a number of programs, Royce argued that the Canadian groups "could be depended upon, and with their help more could be achieved." Even with the aid of government, she believed "some original stimulus from the women" was necessary "to get things moving."[102] The groups, whose interests and ideas coincided with those of the Bureau throughout these years, were a reasonable source for the Bureau to turn towards, especially since they had been developing female-centred training services since the early 1950s.

Throughout the 1960s, Royce pointed to two examples of the type of program she envisioned, both of which were created and operated privately. In speeches on vocational training issues, Royce frequently highlighted the "pride and joy" of the Bureau, the Quo Vadis School of Nursing which provided nursing education to women over 30 years of age without previous experience or training.[103] The school, which began operating in September 1964, was created by a private group affiliated with the Catholic Hospital Conference of Ontario. Royce's enthusiasm was understandable; inspiration for the program originated from *A New Career*

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[102] Quoted in *Labour Gazette* (1958), 1358.

[103] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #9, Speech by Marion Royce entitled "Changes in the Female Labour Force over the Past 10-Year Period", 1965, 17.

After 30, the 1960 publication of the Bureau investigating the experiences of women undertaking professional training after a period at home. Speaking in 1964, Royce referred to Quo Vadis as an example of the complementary relationship she envisioned between the Bureau, which would document and stimulate interest in programs, and private bodies, which would "carry on from there in response."[104] Also mentioned as an example of the type of programs needed were the "visiting homemaker" services. Variously funded and operated by non-profit organizations in cooperation with different levels of government, these programs similarly aided the older woman returning to work.[105] Within a period of approximately one month, they provided training in homemaking skills as well as the care of the elderly and children. For the mature woman, Royce frequently argued these programs had some important attributes; the period of training was short and most of the training occurred on the job, under the supervision of instructors. In this manner, the woman who wished or needed to earn money right away, could enter employment quickly while still acquiring marketable job skills.[106] Both programs pointed to the potential for success at achieving the specialized training programs the Bureau envisioned.

The Bureau's success, however, in the actual achievement of programs and services for

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[104] *Labour Gazette* (1964), 773.

[105] Some visiting homemaker services were operated privately under the auspices of the Canadian Red Cross Society or with funding from other charitable organizations. In 1958, the Ontario government passed the Homemakers' and Nurses' Services Act which provided funding in cooperation with municipalities for the creation and operation of training programs for visiting homemakers. See *Labour Gazette* (1959), 265.

[106] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1905, File #38-6-2-7-2, Address by Marion Royce to the National Employment Committee on "Participation of Mature Women in Canada's Labour Force", 26 May 1965.

women was limited. In 1965, Royce reported to the National Employment Committee that despite improvements in training facilities for women, much more was needed, particularly for training women still at home with children.[107] As a research associate at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education following her retirement, Royce prepared a monograph outlining continuing education services for women in Canada. From this research, she noted "substantial" improvement in the availability of continuing education, but stressed the continuing inadequacy of services to meet the need and demand. Success in the achievement of these programs, Royce argued, would remain precarious "until a climate of opinion is created for acceptance of women in new roles."[108] In particular, special vocational services for woman who wanted to have a career and a family were minimal despite the proliferation of adult and continuing education programs in the two decades after 1945.[109] Vocational training and education theory continued to be based on the "permanently committed" worker.

What is evident from the Bureau's ideas on vocational training was its reluctance to question the gendered division of labour. In an article on the Ontario Women's Bureau, Joan Sangster argues that it too recognized the gendered division of labour but did not "challenge"

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[107] Ibid.

[108] Royce 1969, 6; *Windsor Star* (August 21, 1968).

[109] Both Kelly and Stubblefield & Keane note the enormous expansion of adult education programs in the postwar period (in Britain and the U.S.). Stubblefield & Keane term the postwar period "the age of adult education". Kelly 1970, 333-395; Stubblefield & Keane 1994, 251-270.
Royce's survey of continuing education programs suggests the pattern was the same in Canada (although her focus is specifically on program availability for *women*). Her survey reveals the vast expansion in adult and continuing education programs particularly during the 1960s. Royce 1969.

this division. Created out of a similar preoccupation with "manpower" shortages, the Ontario Bureau was restricted in its mandate to "aiding the integration of women into the jobs where they were 'needed'."[110] To some extent, the federal Bureau did "challenge" the segregation of the labour force into male and female jobs by arguing for women's right to realize their potential as human beings and for women to enter all job areas. The Bureau's analysis of the causes of women's occupational inequality and its concomittant attempts to enlarge women's occupational opportunities were premised on the desire to break women free from female job ghettos. Similarly the Bureau's publications revealed an insightful understanding of the relationship between women's primary responsibility for the home and their inequality of opportunity in job advancement and wages.[111] Yet, the Bureau stopped short of arguing that women's primary responsibility for home and children was the *basis* of their occupational inequality. In fact, the Bureau was always quick to point out it was not challenging women's domestic role.[112] The objective of reconciling work and family roles meant that the Bureau was left accepting the gendered division of labour as a social norm but striving to find means to overcome its worst consequences for women's employment.

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[110] Joan Sangster, "Doing Two Jobs: The Wage Earning Mother, 1945-70", in *A Diversity of Women. Ontario, 1945-1980*, ed. Joy Parr (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 108.

[111] For example, Bureau publications attributed women's low wages, in part, to their primary responsibility for home and childcare and to family structure. *Woman at Work in Canada*, 1964, 55-56.

[112] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #8, Speech by Marion Royce to the BC Vocational Education Association, Vancouver, 2 December 1964, 8.

Conclusion

Despite minimal success in influencing the direction of Departmental training services, the Bureau continued to emphasize the importance of its vocational activities in the struggle to improve women's employment conditions. Better training and education for women was, in Royce's opinion, the "foundation" of all other efforts to improve the working conditions and status of women. Consequently, the Bureau viewed, with increasing alarm, a plan to restructure a number of federal departments including Labour in late 1965. The changes, which went into effect in January 1966, moved manpower and training issues from the Department of Labour to the new Department of Manpower and Immigration. The concern of the Bureau resulted from its loss of involvement in vocational training matters. The Bureau's vocational publications were, in many respects, a success because they were widely utilized and fulfilled a need which otherwise was neglected. As a result, the production of these publications had assumed increasing priority in the publication efforts of the Bureau throughout the 1960s. Subsequent government efforts to raise women's status in the labour market have similarly focused on challenging gender stereotypes and broadening women's career goals. It is difficult to ascertain the long-term impact of these publications on women's identity and expectations. Statistics reveal that women continue to pursue education and job training that prepares them for work in segregated female job areas.[113] Nonetheless, the Bureau's challenge to gender stereotypes and the attempt to broaden women's career goals was an important first step in the struggle to improve women's labour force position. Women's roles in postwar

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[113] Jane Gaskell, *Issues for Women in Canadian Education*, Working Paper No. 32 (Ottawa: Economic Council of Canada, 1992), 9-14.

society were changing and, as Royce freqently argued, social values and traditions needed to be re-evaluated and adapted. Similarly, Royce's efforts to develop vocational training programs specific to women's life experiences were important. While she could note few successes by 1968, her ideas were important because they pointed to the impact of women's home responsibilities on their access to education and training and suggested the need for women to be treated differently in the search for equality. In the struggle for maternity protection laws and child care programs, these ideas would assume greater prominence. Perhaps as a result of frustration with the jurisdictional impediments to developing training programs, Royce opposed the separation of vocational training from the mandate of the Bureau in 1966. "Policy with respect to the potential economic role of women in Canada," she argued, must "be studied in the broadest dimension."[114] Training and manpower issues were as crucial to the concerns of women's employment as the standards and legislation issues remaining in Labour's mandate. For Royce, this meant that there should be only one advisory body in the field of women's labour and that body should have jurisdiction in all four areas, regardless of the separation of departments. Five months later when Royce retired as Director, most of these issues remained unsolved, leaving her unsure about how the Bureau could effectively aid wage earning women without exercising some responsibility in the area of vocational training.

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[114] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1905, File #38-6-2-7-2, Letter from Marion Royce to Mr. H.L. Snodgrass, 24 August 1966.

CHAPTER FOUR

"A statement of public policy": The Struggle for a More Effective Equal Pay Law

From the beginning, the Women's Bureau found itself entangled in the struggles over equal pay legislation. During the 1950s and 1960s, equal pay was the preeminent issue in the struggle for women's equality. The philosophy of liberal individualism underlying postwar feminism correlated women's inequality with sex discrimination. Consequently, women's groups and other rights advocates called on governments to implement anti-discrimination laws.[1] By the early 1950s, equal pay laws were the centrepiece in a growing campaign for equal treatment for women. The injustice of paying one person a lesser wage for the same work had a symbolic potency that placed equal pay laws before broader anti-discrimination provisions. As a result, the issue of wage inequity became an important focus of the Bureau. At a 1962 Conference on the "real world of women," Royce outlined the major legislative demands of the Bureau which she grouped into two categories; "protective" legislation which incuded measures like maternity leave was needed to "safeguard" women's and children's health, while "rights" legislation such as equal pay worked to guarantee women's "rights as workers." Consequently, even after the enactment of the first federal equal pay law in 1956, equal pay remained a priority issue for the Bureau in its struggle for women's equality.

Yet the concept of equal pay as *rights* legislation was problematic. In defense of the

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[1] Barbara Sullivan argues this point in reference to the period after 1970. The equation of "inequality" with "sex discrimination" was clearly formulated by many of the women's groups and the Women's Bureau during the years of this study. Sullivan, "Sex Equality and the Australian Body Politic", in *Playing the State. Australian-Feminist Interventions*, ed. Sophie Watson (London: Verso, 1990), 173-189.

1956 equal pay law, the federal government argued it was an "educational" law, which operated as a "statement of public policy" against discrimination. While Marion Royce valued rights-based laws, the 1956 equal pay law had obvious limitations. The standard of equal pay for *equal work* did not aid the majority of wage earning women because of the segregation of the female labour force. As a "statement of public policy," the question arose if a more effective law might stand as a better model. By the 1960s, the concept of human *rights* blurred with the notion of labour *standards* in the debate about the objectives of an equal pay law. Marion Royce believed the law should address the real causes of wage inequity, rather than simply making a statement about women's right to equal treatment. The major objective of the Women's Bureau became the inclusion of the equal pay provisions in the Canada Labour Code; the equal pay law, Royce argued, could make a statement while being actively enforced. The other major issue which entered the debate by the 1960s was the question of revising the law's wording to include equal pay for "comparable" rather than "identical" work. Among the participants in the debate, this issue was more contentious. The Bureau, in particular, vacillated in its response to this measure. An examination of the debate and gradual revision of equal pay during these years points to some of the limitations and potential of using the state to achieve equality demands. The outcome of this process was partly influenced by the extent to which the Women's Bureau worked in cooperation or in contradiction to the women's groups. As well, the outcome reflected the priorities and policy agenda of the Department, and the larger national and international political context. The concept of equal pay and its legislative form evolved as a result of the discursive and political struggles that occurred in the years from 1953 to 1967.

Definitions and Background of Equal Pay in Canada

The idea of a law ensuring equal pay for equal work was not new to Canada in 1953. The Trades and Labour Congress first included equal pay in its principles in 1892. Sustained support for an equal pay law was sporadic, however, until the Second World War. During the war years, the recruitment of women into war industries to replace men gone overseas sharply focused attention on the practice of paying women lower wages than men. For some, the concept of being paid the same wage for equal work was a simple matter of justice; for others, particularly within the labour movement, it was primarily a question of protecting male wage rates from downward pressures. Following the war, an organized and concerted campaign in support of equal pay legislation developed, primarily through the efforts of women's groups, in particular the Canadian Federation of Business and Professional Women's Groups (BPW).[2] International support for human rights, including the rights of women, strengthened the campaign. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 included among economic rights "the right of everyone without any discrimination to equal pay for equal work." (Article 23) In 1950, the International Labour Organization (ILO) passed Convention 100 on Equal Remuneration for Work of Equal Value. The efforts of the BPW met with success in 1951 when Ontario passed the Female Employees Fair Renumeration Act, effective as of January

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[2] On the postwar movement in support of equal pay, see, Shirley Tillotson, "Human Rights Law as Prism: Women's Organizations, Unions, and Ontario's Female Employees Fair Remuneration Act, 1951", *Canadian Historical Review*, LXXII, 4 (1991): 532-557. On the treatment of equal pay and other "women's issues" within the labour movement, see for example, Pamela Sugiman, *Labour's Dilemma. The Gender Politics of Auto Workers in Canada, 1937-1979* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 42-57; Alvin Finkel, "Trade Unions and the Welfare State in Canada, 1945-90" in *Labour Gains, Labour Pains: 50 Years of PC 1003*, eds. Cy Conick et al. (Halifax: Ferwood Publishing, 1995).

1952.[3] Similar equal pay for equal work laws followed in quick succession both federally and among the other provinces. By the end of the 1950s, eight provinces (the exceptions were Quebec and Newfoundland) had equal pay laws.[4] The federal government had passed a law, effective as of October 1956, that applied to employees under federal jurisdiction and in industries under contract with the federal government. The laws varied widely in the wording used; the federal act banned wage inequity for "identical or substantially identical" work, while the Saskatchewan act used the term "comparable" work. In all the laws, the enforcement provisions were weak because they required an aggrieved employee to register a complaint. By 1963, the principle of equal pay for equal work was firmly established in Canadian law but activity under the laws was virtually non-existent.

The variation and ambiguity in terminology used to define the idea of equal work was not exclusive to Canada. Thomas Flanagan argues that considerable overlap and ambiguity in terminology was typical for the period before 1970 in many countries and in international agencies.[5] The specific definitions of today attributed to the terms "equal work," "comparable work," and "equal value" are not necessarily applicable when analyzing equal pay legislation

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[3] Shirley Tillotson attributes the Ontario government's decision to introduce equal pay in 1951 largely to the pressure of the BPW. Tillotson 1991, 542. Also, see, Alison Prentice et al., *Canadian Women. A History*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: Harcourt Brace & Co., 1996), 353-354.

[4] Saskatchewan and British Columbia followed Ontario with laws in 1953. Manitoba was next with a law in 1956, then Nova Scotia and Alberta in 1957, Prince Edward Island in 1959, and New Brunswick in 1961. Quebec did not specifically pass an equal pay law. In 1965, however, it enacted legislation prohibiting discrimination in employment, including on grounds of "sex." Newfoundland included equal pay as a section in its human rights code in 1971.

[5] Thomas Flanagan, "Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value: Some Theoretical Criticisms", *Canadian Public Policy* 13, 4 (December 1987), 435-436.

and debates for the postwar period. The equal pay laws that emerged provincially and federally in Canada in the 1950s and 1960s were all equal pay for equal work laws, despite variations in wording. Even in Saskatechewan, where the term "comparable work" was used, the legislation required the payment of equal wages only when two people with similar qualifications were doing *identical work in the same establishment.* As a result, employers and commissions established to hear complaints used minor deviations in job content to justify differential wage structures.[6] The term "equal value" is particularly misleading. Used by commentators and in legislation occasionally during this period, "equal value" was usually a synonym for "equal work."[7] The present-day concept of "equal value," which calls for comparisons of job *content* across occupations and workplaces, was not part of the understanding and debate of the period under discussion. During the 1960s, however, distinctions did develop between the concepts of "equal work" and "comparable work." Proponents calling for revision of existing laws called for comparisons *between jobs in the same establishment based on comparisons of skill, effort and responsibility.* Through a revised definition of "comparable work," they sought to overcome the rigidity of the existing laws which applied to few wage earning women. Gradually, then, the meaning of these terms altered over the twenty year period, reflecting the changing demands and goals of equal pay advocates.

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[6] The report of the RCSW clearly demonstrated this problem. For example, see, Canada, Royal Commission on The Status of Women in Canada, *Report*, Ottawa, 1970, 75-76; Patricia McDermott, "Pay and Employment Equity: Why Separate Policies," in *Women and Canadian Public Policy*, ed. Janine Brodie (Toronto: Harcourt Brace & Co., 1996), 92.

[7] Flanagan 1987, 435-436.

Equal Pay Legislation - The "First" Project of the Bureau

Early records of the Bureau refer to equal pay as its "first project". In October 1954, only one month after Royce's assumption of the Director's position, the Assistant Deputy Minister, A.H. Brown, handed to the Bureau the task of examining the equal pay issue. Brown instructed Royce to "determine the extent and nature of the alleged problem" and to advise on the "necessity or advisability or practicability" of legislation or an "alternate" measure. As well, Brown suggested Royce might want to establish a committee under her Chairmanship to work on the issue. In its first months of operation, then, the Bureau seemed destined to play an important policy-making role in determining the outcome of the equal pay question. Royce's leadership on this issue, however, was tenuous. Only seven days later, Brown informed her that the Minister had ordered a committee be found immediately. Royce was, however, appointed Chair of this new equal pay committee and instructed to study the equal pay question and determine a course of action for the Department.[8] The Bureau would head the committee but the government clearly had an agenda which was directing the outcome.

The Labour Minister ordered the creation of a committee because he believed immediate action on equal pay was necessary. External pressure on the government to enact equal pay for equal work legislation had been growing since the Second World War. As argued in Chapter One, the BPW's campaign for equal pay, in combination with other priorities and policy concerns, had motivated the government to create the Women's Bureau; the Department was able to delay action on equal pay in 1953 by arguing it needed a Bureau first to

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[8] National Archives of Canada (NAC), Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-6-2-5, Memo from A.H. Brown (Assistant Deputy Minister of Labour) to Marion Royce, 8 October 1954; Memo from A.H. Brown to Marion Royce, 15 October 1954.

examine the issue.[9] Consequently, the decision to hand the equal pay issue to the Bureau shortly after it became operational was not surprising. Memos to Royce from Brown stressed the "considerable pressure" being exerted on the Minister by equal pay supporters and noted the need for quick action by the government. While Royce's initial instructions suggested some preliminary research into the existence and extent of wage inequity was necessary, a second memo made it clear that the government would not wait for tangible information before acting. The Minister, both memos stated, wanted to reach a conclusion "before the matter comes up for further discussion in the House."[10] Thus, external pressure on the government was intense by October 1954.

Royce recognized the urgency of the matter and the need for quick resolution even before she received the instructions from Brown. In one of her first letters as Director, Royce wrote to Alice K. Leopold, her counterpart at the United States Women's Bureau. Asking for information on the question of equal pay, Royce referred specifically to ongoing pressure on the Canadian government. "These circumstances," she concluded, "make me realize that one of our first tasks in the new Bureau will be to do some careful work on this subject."[11] True to her inclinations, Royce began preliminary investigations into the advisability of a federal equal pay law. On 27 September 1954, she wrote to the Economics and Research Branch requesting any existing information on a number of questions, including the number of women under federal

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[9] See Chapter One.

[10] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-6-2-5, Two Memos from A.H. Brown to Marion Royce, 8 October 1954, 15 October 1954.

[11] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1907, File #38-8-2, Letter from Marion Royce to Alice K. Leopold (Director, U.S. Women's Bureau), 21 September 1954.

jurisdiction, the wage rates of these women including the existence of a pay differential, and the existence of collective agreements which included equal pay clauses.[12] As Chair of the new equal pay committee, Royce stressed to the other members the time constraints structuring their work, due to the "considerable support" and "likelihood of revival" of the issue in the House.[13] Clearly, Royce recognized the prominence of the equal pay question in the Department's agenda and believed the Women's Bureau should play an important role in researching the issue.

The "considerable pressure" noted by Brown and Royce referred to the ongoing campaign of the BPW. Following the equal pay victory in Ontario in 1951, the BPW continued to lobby the other provinces and the federal government to enact equal pay laws in their jurisdictions. In 1953, the election of Ellen Fairclough (Member of Parliament, Hamilton West) as an opposition member strengthened the BPW's campaign for a federal law. A long-term member of the BPW, Fairclough brought the campaign directly to the House.[14] In 1953 and again in 1954, Fairclough introduced a private member's bill supporting a federal equal pay bill. By the Fall of 1954, support for equal pay was growing within the Conservative

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[12] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-6-2-5, Letters between Marion Royce and Walter E. Duffett (Economics and Research Branch), 27 September 1954 and 12 October, 1954.

[13] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-6-2-5, Memo from Royce to Members of Department of Labour Committee on Equal Pay for Equal Work, 19 October 1954; Minutes of 1st Meeting of Committee on Equal Pay for Equal Work, 26 October 1954.

[14] Prentice et al. 1996, 354; Ellen Louks Fairclough, *Saturday's Child: Memoirs of Canada's First Female Cabinet Minister* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 87-88.

Opposition.[15] During second reading of the bill in March 1954, Fairclough noted that public opposition to the bill had also largely "disappeared," even among male workers. For women, she asserted, "it is a matter of simple justice. It ensures that women workers will receive what they are entitled to receive for the work they do."[16] The cogency of Fairclough's arguments, the obvious growing support, and the "likelihood of revival" left the Minister determined, by early 1955, to have some answers before the next sitting of the House. As expected, Fairclough did re-introduce her equal pay bill at first opportunity during the session beginning in January 1955. "Considerable support" for the measure was demonstrated again. The government defeated the bill on third reading, as expected with a majority in the House; support for the bill was evident, however, with 83 votes in favour to 107 against.[17]

External pressure from the BPW and the National Council of Women (NCW) augmented Fairclough's efforts in the House. During debate on Fairclough's bill in 1954, the Labour Minister, Milton Gregg, challenged Fairclough's assertion of widespread support for equal pay laws by arguing that the NCW had not petitioned in support of the measure. The preeminence of the NCW as the recognized "voice" of women was used by Gregg to suggest equal pay did not have wide support among women.[18] However, the failure of the NCW to

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[15] At the time, newspaper reports credited Fairclough for forcing the government to introduce an equal pay law. Mary Lowrey Ross, "Ellen Fairclough. First Woman in the Cabinet", *Saturday Night* (31 August 1957), 34; Jeannine Locke, "Meet the woman who broke a ninety-year taboo", *Chatelaine* (August 1957), 6.

[16] Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 2 March 1954, 2590.

[17] Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 15 February 1955, 1175-1182.

[18] This point is discussed in more detail in Chapter One. Also, see, Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 2 March 1954, 2594.

support equal pay from 1944 to 1954 was a deviation from its past support. As N.E.S. Griffiths notes, "the Council was appalled at the lapse of its traditional, explicit support for equal pay for equal work, something which had been an integral part of its resolutions from the time of its foundation."[19] Council members moved quickly to correct the mistake, by petitioning the government in support of equal pay. Similarly appalled, Fairclough arrived at the House the next day with three NCW members, including the Minister's wife.[20] Reflecting on these events the following year, Fairclough suggested Gregg had "temerity" for questioning the support of the NCW for equal pay. Referring to the prominence of Gregg's wife in the NCW, Fairclough suggested that Gregg, with "about as close a connection with that body as any member in the House," should "have known that was likely to call forth an immediate response." Gregg conceded, stating the situation was now very different. The women's groups, he argued, did "constitute a very important element of public opinion."[21]

While these comments could be construed as obsequious political rhetoric, other evidence suggests the pressure of the women's groups was a component in the government's final decision to act on equal pay. The BPW subsequently claimed responsibility for the law,

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[19] N.E.S. Griffiths, *The Splendid Vision. Centennial History of the National Council of Women of Canada. 1893-1993.* (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1993), 261. See also discussion of this issue at NCW annual meeting, reported in, The National Council of Women of Canada (NCW), *Yearbook. 1954*, Doris Lewis Rare Book Room, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario, 38-39.

[20] Ross, "Ellen Fairclough", 34.

[21] Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 11 February 1955, 1087, 1089-1090.

as it had done in 1951 with the Ontario law.[22] Twenty years later, Milton Gregg specifically noted the influence of the women's organizations in forming the final legislation. Their demands, he argued, resulted in the decision to pass a separate equal pay law rather than adding "sex" as one of the prohibited grounds for discrimination in existing employment rights laws.[23] By February 1955, even as Gregg argued against Fairclough's third equal pay bill, his comments revealed the inevitability of legislation. His concluding remarks to the House recognized the fundamental justice of paying a worker, regardless of sex, the same wage for the same work:

> I wish to repeat that I support fully the principle of equal remuneration for equal work, and all reasonable and practical measures for the extension of the application of the principle in this country.[24]

No longer able to argue against the *principle* of equal pay, Gregg justified the government's continuing inaction by stating the matter was under investigation by the newly formed Women's Bureau. The Department, he argued, needed more information before an informed decision could be made. Clearly to claim a matter is under investigation can be construed as a stalling tactic. In fact, this appears to have been Gregg's motive. By the time of this debate in February 1955, the Minister had received the recommendations of the equal pay committee chaired by Royce in January, but the Department was not yet ready to make an announcement

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[22] The Canadian Federation of Business and Professional Women (BPW), *The Business and Professional Woman*, 25 (July-August 1956), 13; 26 (July-August 1958), 18. Doris Lewis Rare Book Room, University of Waterloo.

[23] Sandra Burt, "New Brunswick Connections to the Federal Department of Labour", Unpublished Paper, 1986.

[24] Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 11 February 1955, 1091.

of its intentions. The combined pressure of the women's groups with Fairclough in the House created a demand which the government could no longer ignore.

Of questionable influence in the government's decision was public opinion. The campaign for an equal pay law by Fairclough and the women's groups was voiced in the discourse of equal rights. Proponents argued that women were equal citizens and entitled to the same rights and responsibilities as men. Within the ideological climate of the postwar period, with the glorification of democracy, freedom, and universal human rights, the notion of equal pay for equal work should have received wide public support. However, as some scholars argue, these postwar ideals were potentially contradictory in interpretation; they were used to justify both greater familial and public democracy for women as well as a reassertion of the pre-war patriarchal structure. The nostalgic desire for a return to an idyllic, stable family life fuelled the postwar glorification of women's role in the home.[25] The result, as revealed by a general study of mass circulation Canadian magazines from the early 1950s, was a diminishment of the idea of equal rights as applied to women.[26] While there were several prominent articles which presented an eloquent defense of women's right to equal pay, they

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[25] Mariana Valverde, "Building Anti-Delinguent Communities: Morality, Gender, and Generation in the City," in *A Diversity of Women. Ontario, 1945-1980*, ed. Joy Parr (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 39; Doug Owram, *Born at the Right Time: A History of the Baby-Boom Generation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 12; Kimberley Marie Speers, "The Royal Commission on the Status of Women. A Study of the Contradictions and the Limitations of Liberalism and Liberal Feminism", Masters Thesis, Queen's University, 1994, 73, 80.

[26] The survey included issues of *Chatelaine*, *Saturday Night*, the *Financial Post*, and *Maclean's* during the 1950s and 1960s.

were matched in number by those that argued against the principle.[27] As well, the articles in support of equal pay were generally written by women prominent in the women's groups or the socialist movement which was equally supportive of equal pay. Overall, the number of articles which argued for women's equality were miniscule compared to the majority of articles exhorting women to find fulfillment in their lives at home. These results may explain why government sources made no mention of public support or opposition to equal pay; the "considerable support" noted in Royce's correspondence with the committee members appears to have referred to the Opposition benches. Consequently, as Cerise Morris notes, the pre-1960 campaign of the women's groups in support of women's rights was done in "relative isolation from the main currents of national thought."[28]

Some evidence does exist, however, to suggest equal pay was a notion with wide acceptance by the early 1950s. Although the campaign for women's rights may have appeared contradictory to a gender order premised on difference, some commentators were able to support equal pay even as they espoused women's unique role as homemaker. The NCW supported in principle many equality issues despite a notable indifference to the problems of working women and an ideology premised on women's unique role in the family.[29] As well,

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[27] A good example is two articles published one week apart in *Saturday Night*. Charles S. Gulston, "The Fallacy of Equal Pay for Equal Work", *Saturday Night,* 17 February 1945, 10; Lucy Van Gogh, "Equal Pay for Equal Work is Practical", *Saturday Night*, 24 February 1945, 10.

[28] Notes prepared by the Women's Program in the Secretary of State, 1974. Cited in Cerise Morris, "'Determination and Thoroughness'" The Movement for the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada," *Atlantis* 5, 2 (Spring 1980), 4.

[29] For more discussion, see Chapter One.

many observers no longer perceived equal pay as a threat to the dominant position of men in the work force. Reflecting back on the passage of the equal pay law, Milton Gregg stated in 1975 that there was no resistance to the Act at the time of its passage. It was, he argued, "considered to be in the field of do-good legislation" which "won't do any harm." According to Gregg, many people simply believed the laws would not "work."[30] Consequently, announcement of the government's intent to introduce equal pay in January 1956 generally received positive coverage in the newspapers. The headline of the *Globe and Mail* on 31 July 1956 proclaimed, "Long Overdue. All parties approve Equal Pay legislation."[31] A Gallup Poll taken in 1954 revealed that over half of respondents agreed that women should receive equal pay for equal work and almost three quarters of those agreed a bill should be passed.[32] Despite the still contentious nature of women's rights, it appears an equal pay law had achieved wide acceptance by 1956, perhaps because few could think of a good reason to oppose it.

Given this political context, the final recommendations of the equal pay committee chaired by Royce are surprising. The committee, despite its instructions to develop a "viable" policy response, was severely restricted in its power to influence the course of policy on equal pay. The committee members were aware of the limitations they faced, both in the amount of time available to complete the work and the policy options which would be acceptable to government. Nonetheless, in the final report issued in January 1955, the committee did *not*

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[30] Quoted in Burt 1986.

[31] *Globe and Mail* 31 July 1956,

[32] Monica Boyd, *Canadian Attitudes Towards Women: Thirty Years of Change* (Ottawa: Labour Canada [Women's Bureau], 1984), 21.

recommend immediate legislation. Shortages of information and time constraints left the committee unable to accurately evaluate "the extent of the problem" and to develop "viable" and effective legislation. Instead, since the majority of female workers fell under provincial legislative jurisdiction and since many of the provinces had newly enacted laws, the committee recommended the government "observe closely the legislative efforts of the provinces to establish equitable standards of remuneration."[33] Interestingly, Gregg used these same arguments in response to Fairclough's equal pay bill one month later. But as noted above, Gregg was stalling for time. Consequently, the government ignored the recommendations of the equal pay committee. On 18 April 1955, the Deputy Minister of Labour directed a new committee be formed to develop legislation for equal pay.[34] The new committee included previous members but Marion Royce was not appointed to the position of Chair. Clearly, Royce's committee had "failed" to do its job; in response, the Minister formed a new committee with specific instructions to develop a bill.

The report of the equal pay committee appears, at first glance, to be a failure in many respects. The committee did not respond to the demands of the government nor did it support the goals of the women's groups. Instead, the report called for an "enquiry," a recommendation suggestive of bureaucractic sidestepping. Yet, on closer examination, the report was an insightful appraisal of the situation facing the federal government and the limitations of equal

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[33] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-6-2-5, Report of the Department of Labour Committee on Equal Pay for Equal Work for Men And Women, January 1955, 32-33.

[34] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-6-2-5, Memo from A. H. Brown to Bernard Wilson (Chair of Committee to draft equal pay legislation), 18 April 1955.

pay legislation. The equal pay committee based its recommendations on the question of whether a federal law was necessary or practical. The committee emphasized the inadequacy of existing information and its inability to generate the needed data given time limitations. More time and a different source of data, the report argued, were needed to really examine the extent of wage differentials in federal industries and the cause of those differentials. The shortage of information stemmed in part from the difficulty of assessing the strengths and weaknesses of provincial laws. Existing equal pay laws in Ontario, Saskatchewan and British Columbia had been in place for short periods and did not provide guidelines as to the best approach to addressing wage equality. Also, the report echoed the main argument of the Department of Labour against a federal law by pointing to the fact that most business and industry in Canada fell under provincial legislation.[35] Thus, lacking adequate information about the nature of wage inequity in federal industries and about the workings of existing laws, the committee realistically questioned the utility of creating a federal law.

It was this focus on the potential *effectiveness* of an equal pay law that led to the equal pay committee's failure to recommend legislation. The focus of the committee's analyis was the problem of *wage disparity* between men and women. Consequently, the report suggested the federal government hold a "public enquiry" into the question of wage inequity. A public enquiry, the committee argued, would facilitate an analysis of the problem of wage inequity while acting as a means to educate the public about the problem of wage discrimination. "Many social injustices," the report argued, "have been corrected or at least ameliorated as a

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[35] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-6-2-5, Report of the Department of Labour Committee on Equal Pay for Equal Work for Men and Women, January 1955, 32-33.

result of general public realization of their existence." Underlying the committee's recommendations was the knowledge that an equal pay for equal work law would not provide redress for the wage imbalance between men and women. A "rational explanation" of this problem, the report concluded, "is not that unequal rates are paid for the same work but that there are other factors which need to be corrected." Thus, the proposed enquiry was to examine the larger question of "why the earnings of women are so low as compared to those of men." As well, the report argued the federal government would have a greater impact on the problem through a public forum directed at information and education than through a limited law affecting a small number of women.[36] Thus, the committee's report was based on a realistic appraisal of the limitations of equal pay legislation. A federal equal pay for equal work law would not address the problem of wage disparity, because federal labour legislation was limited in jurisdiction and because wage inequity was rooted in more complex sources than could be alleviated by a simple "equal work" formula.

The government ignored the recommendations of the equal pay committee because its primary objective was not to address the problem of wage inequity. For the Minister, the goal was to appease the Opposition and the women's groups, particularly in the face of growing public support for the principle of equal pay. Gregg knew a law requiring equal pay for *equal work* would have little effect on the level of women's wages. During the 1955 debate on equal pay, Gregg emphasized the ineffectiveness of "equal pay for equal work" laws. Inequality between men's and women's wages, he argued, was the result of "many factors":

not the least of which is the customary practice of establishing the rates for jobs,

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[36] Ibid., 28, 33-34.

> in the traditional occupations of women, at lower levels than those authorized for the jobs for which men are hired. It is a situation about which we need to have more exact information, one for which equal pay legislation *does not provide a remedy.* {emphasis mine}[37]

Gregg was not alone in his assessment; most people, he argued in 1975, believed the legislation simply would not "work."[38]

The equal pay committee chaired by Royce recognized the political agenda of the government. Royce's memos to the committee clearly outlined the time constraints and external pressures faced by Gregg. Still, the committee did have some power to influence the development of equal pay legislation, particularly with regard to the wording and administration. As Hester Eisenstein notes, the ability of women's units to influence policy depends, in part, on being able to recognize both the limitations and possibilities arising from the political, ideological, and structural impediments of the bureaucracy.[39] By failing to recommend legislation, Royce lost the opportunity to play a direct role in the development of the law.

The work of the equal pay committee also conflicted with the agenda of the women's groups. The women's groups conceptualized wage inequality as a problem of sex discrimination. Within this problematization, the focus was to develop anti-discrimination

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[37] Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 11 February 1955, 1088.

[38] Quoted in Burt 1986.

[39] Hester Eisenstein, *Inside Agitators. Australian Femocrats and the State* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996), 72.

laws aimed at changing public attitudes.[40] Due to the symbolic importance of equal pay in the fight for women's equality, the groups lobbied for a separate, women's equal pay law rather than lobbying for inclusion of "sex" in existing human rights laws. According to Gregg's recollections, there was discussion of amending the Federal Employment Practices Act (FEPA) rather than introducing a separate equal pay law. The women's groups, according to Gregg, believed "it would be much better for the women to have something clear and distinct of their own in that field rather than to be sort of an annex to this race, colour, origin and all that sort of thing."[41] The groups continued to fight for amendment of the FEPA after 1956, but they believed a separate equal pay law was needed because it would make a stronger statement specifically focused on *women's* rights. Thus, the objective of the groups was to direct attention to women as a distinct group facing discrimination. They supported the proposed 1956 equal pay law because they believed it would achieve this goal.

Unfortunately, because of different objectives, Royce and the women's groups worked in opposition at this stage of the equal pay debate. Royce was familiar with the lobbying activities and arguments of the women's groups.[42] As well, she adhered to the liberal feminist ideology of the women's groups which saw social values and discrimination as the source of inequality. The report of the equal pay committee, which clearly reflected Royce's ideas, discussed the potential of equal pay laws to change public attitudes. Wage rates, the report

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[40] Pat Armstrong & Hugh Armstrong, "Lessons from Pay Equity", *Studies in Political Economy*, 32 (Summer 1990), 31.

[41] Quoted in Burt 1986.

[42] Royce had a long history of involvement with women's groups and remained involved as Director of the Bureau. See Chapter Two.

argued, were ultimately affected by "social traditions and attitudes." An equal pay law would not "solve all the problems of women's economic status"; enactment of the principle of equal pay in law, however, would stand as a "standard for the community" and promote "social recognition of the value of [women's] work."[43] Thus, Royce believed there was an educational benefit to equal pay laws; her opposition to the equal pay law stemmed from the belief that more effective educational methods existed. By failing to support the objectives of the women's groups, however, Royce failed to place their focus on women's rights within the Department.

Regardless of the inadequacy of the equal work standard to address wage disparity, the demand of the women's groups for women's rights needed to find expression in the government. The government's decision to introduce an equal pay law in 1956 did not represent the placement of women's rights on the government agenda. It was a politically expedient response to the increasingly effective campaign of Fairclough and the women's groups. In fact, the government continued to exclude women's concerns and the concept of sex discrimination from the rights discourse of the period. Throughout this period, the federal government refused to amend the FEPA in accordance with the demands of organized women. Similarly, speeches on discrimination in employment, by both Milton Gregg and his successor Michael Starr, did not include sex as one of the bases of discrimination an employee could

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[43] NAC, Department of Labour, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-6-2-5, Report of the Department of Labour Committee on Equal Pay for Equal Work for Men and Women, January 1955, 28, 30.

face.[44] Thus, Gregg introduced and defended the 1956 equal pay law in the House, not on the principle of justice to which Fairclough had repeatedly appealed, but within the economic parameters governing departmental priorities. The bill, he argued, should be seen as "recognition of the important part that women have to play and are playing in our Canadian economy" and an "encouragement of them to take an even larger share in the responsibility for Canada's rapid growth."[45] Without a commitment to women's rights, Gregg configured the legislation within the language of labour supply, production, and growth. Equal pay, then, was a measure to promote women's labour force participation rather than to alleviate the sources of wage inequity.

The different conception of the equal pay problem by the participants points to the often contradictory results of turning to state legislation to address women's concerns. The struggle for an equal pay law reveals the state was in fact a "contested terrain," one in which interests representing women, while not equal, were able to influence the policy outcome.[46] The women's groups undoubtedly forced the implementation of a federal equal pay law, an accomplishment despite the law's limitations and the government's indifference to women's rights. Nonetheless, the priorities and goals of the Labour Department restricted the response of officials to the demands and structured the eventual form of the law. Notably, the main disagreement over the objectives and policy solutions occurred *within* the Department between

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[44] Milton Gregg, "Law an an Anti-Discrimination Weapon", *Labour Gazette* (1954), 1432-1434; Michael Starr, "Job Justice - We Can't Turn Back", *Labour Gazette* (1958), 34-37.

[45] Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 30 July 1956, 6660.

[46] Armstrong & Armstrong 1990, 30.

the equal pay committee and the Minister, a fact which points to the complex and diverse nature of the state. An equal pay law which would make a "statement" about women's right to equality, as demanded by the women's groups, was less of a conflict to government priorities than a public enquiry directed to examining the causes of wage disparity. The women's groups succeeded in their demand, but the lack of cooperative work between the groups and Royce suggests problems with the "insider/outsider" model of understanding interaction between the state and women's groups. As some scholars note, outside pressure by women's groups may not coincide with the goals and priorities of femocrats within government. When external pressure does not coincide, and perhaps even conflicts with internal goals, the effect can be to undermine rather than aid one another.[47] While Royce understood the rights-based objectives of the groups, she believed more effective educational methods were needed. It is difficult to assess the likelihood of success if Royce and the women's groups had acted in cooperation to demand a federal enquiry. The government lacked any conviction to address the complex issue of wage disparity and was content to introduce a law which would apply to a few workers and lacked enforcement strength. The failure of Royce and the women's groups to work together resulted in a law which more closely addressed the Department's goal of appeasement than the purpose of educating the public about women's rights. Tillotson's assessment of the Ontario equal pay law applies equally to the federal law. The educational benefit of the law was partly negative by providing legitimacy for employers' means of keeping women's wages low rather

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[47] See, for example, Jane Ursel, "Considering the Impact of the Battered Women's Movement on the State: The Example of Manitoba", in *Women and the Canadian State*, eds. Caroline Andrew & Sanda Rodgers (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1997), 155-179.

than making a statement about their right to equal wages.[48] If there had been more cooperation between Royce and the women's groups at this crucial time, they could have acted together to frame a law with greater enforcement and administration provisions. While not providing a solution to wage inequity, a more effective and enforceable law would have made a better statement.

Milton Gregg introduced the federal equal pay for equal work bill into the House of Commons in January 1956. Entitled "the Female Employees Equal Pay Act," the law prohibited paying a female employee at a lower rate than a male for "identical or substantially identical work." After some delays, the bill reached the first reading in July. In his speech to the House, Milton Gregg gave credit for the bill to Ellen Fairclough and to the women's organizations. Notably, he suggested the Bill might have some limitations and problems, which would eventually have to be addressed, but claimed that it was still valuable as a "national standard" of equal pay for women.[49] Gregg's comments foreshadowed the subject of future debate over the Bill. The questionable educational value of the bill as well as its clear limitations to affect women's wages became the focus of the Bureau's efforts to revise the bill in the following years. Ironically, given the fate of Royce's recommendations as Chair of the equal pay committee, she was present in the House for the third reading of the Bill in August. Presented as an "advisor" to the Minister, Gregg stated that Royce would "hold a watching brief on the administration of this legislation."[50] The Bureau was not given responsibility to oversee

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[48] Tillotson 1991, 545.

[49] Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 30 July 1956, 6659-6660.

[50] Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 6 August 1956, 7084.

the administration of the law or to evaluate its effectiveness. On her own initiative, however, Royce did assume a "watching brief" over the legislation in the following years.

The Silent Years -Tauting the Government Line, 1956-1961

Over the next five years, the issue of equal pay faded into obscurity within the Department of Labour. Gregg's assertion in the House that the shortcomings of the legislation would be addressed over time became an empty promise. The Department did not undertake studies to determine the nature and extent of wage disparity, nor to analyze the application of existing equal pay laws, despite the strong argument for more analysis by the equal pay committee. Royce perceived the lack of follow-up on both these questions as a problem. Enquiries about Canada's equal pay laws (both federal and provincial) often reached the Bureau; interested persons assumed the Bureau would have information about this issue which was so clearly related to women's labour force participation. These enquiries placed Royce in the uncomfortable position of acknowledging she was unable to give a "critical appraisal." Her recommendation to several enquiries was to write to the BPW which was doing some follow-up work, and might be able to provide more information! In 1960 a fellow Labour Department member requested information on equal pay; "there has been curiously little such follow-up of the legislation," Royce replied in frustration.[51] While Department officials acknowledged to the Bureau the need for more information about "the factors affecting

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[51] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1904, File #38-11-4-5, Letter from Marion Royce to John Mainwaring (Canadian Embassy, Belgium), 2 November 1960; Vol. 1903, File #38-4-11-4, Letter from Marion Royce to Nora J. Lowe (Chair, Alberta Employment Conditions Committee, BPW), 5 October 1956.

women's wages and of ways of coping with these factors," no action was taken during these years.[52] Issues related to women, their wages, and their rights remained a low priority in the Department's mandate.

Statements from the Department of Labour about the equal pay law showed remarkable consistency; the equal pay law "served a useful purpose as a statement of public policy."[53] From Gregg's first statement in the House, the government acknowledged the limitations of interpretation and enforcement in the law. Yet, as explained by Labour Minister Minister Starr in 1958, anti-discrimination laws were primarily educational, and the purpose was to "eliminate discrimination through educational methods if this is at all possible." The government would enact "legal machinery to punish the offender," Starr argued, only when such educational methods failed.[54] In correspondence and statements, Royce echoed the official position of her Department. Enquiries about equal pay always elicited the same reply: the law served a "useful purpose" as a "statement of public policy" or as a statement of "official endorsement of the principle of equal pay."[55] While such statements suggest official conformity, especially

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[52] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1906, File #38-6-6-4, Minutes of the Seminar on the Work of the Women's Bureau, 5 May 1960. It is clear no subsequent action was taken because Royce stated in her notes to successor Jessica Findley in January 1967 that a "factual basis" was still lacking for assessing questions related to equal pay. NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #13, Memo from Marion Royce to Jessica Findley, Re: Legislative Concerns of the Women's Bureau, 19 January 1967.

[53] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-2-2, pt.1, Paper by Edith Lorentsen entitled "Trends in Legislation Affecting Women's Work" presented to 1960 Seminar of the Women's Bureau, 28 April 1960, 9.

[54] Starr, "Job Justice", 35.

[55] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #13, Talk by Marion Royce to OFL Convention on "The Work of the Women's Bureau", 6 November 1960; Department of Labour

given Royce's opposition to the law previously, it must be noted that Royce did believe there was potential educational benefit from human rights laws.

Overall, the Bureau was silent on the issue of equal pay in the years from 1956 to 1961. While Royce always responded to direct enquiries (as she answered all letters), she did not initiate discussion of the issue. In February 1955, before the Department rejected the recommendations of the equal pay committee, a summary of the Bureau's activities spoke with enthusiasm about the Bureau's role in the equal pay question. Subsequent summaries made brief or no mention of the legislation or of activity related to equal pay.[56] Statements which Royce did make repeated the official argument of the law's educative value, but contained few subsequent comments. However, government records suggest the Bureau attempted to initiate a follow-up study of the legislation. In October 1958, Royce proposed to the Director of Economics and Research that a study be conducted on equal pay within federal jurisdiction.[57] This proposal occurred at a time when the Bureau was *already* preparing a pamphlet on equal pay laws. The pamphlet under preparation, however, included no new data or analysis of the issues surrounding equal pay; it was simply an overview of existing Canadian laws and the positions of international bodies and labour organizations.[58] Clearly, Royce perceived this

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Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1904, File #38-11-4-5, Letter from Marion Royce to John L. Mainwaring (Canadian Embassy, Belgium), 2 November 1960.

[56] See summaries of the Bureau's activities found in, NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-2-2, pt.1.

[57] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1905, File #38-6-2-6 pt.3, Memo from Marion Royce to W.R. Dymond (Director, Economics and Research), 9 October 1958.

[58] Canada, Department of Labour (Women's Bureau), *Equal Pay for Equal Work,* 1959.

work as insufficient and sought to undertake a research project which would probe questions about the effectiveness of the laws and about the extent and nature of women's wage disparity. Her efforts to initiate research failed as evidenced by the lack of subsequent research by the Department or the Bureau. Failure to initiate interest in the subject of wage inequity would remain a problem for Royce in the following years.

Despite the lack of subsequent research and discussion of the equal pay issue, Royce had a clear understanding of the limitations of equal pay for equal work laws. The existing federal and provincial laws were so narrow in applicability and enforcement provisions that they affected the wages of few Canadian wage earning women. As worded and interpreted, all the laws applied only to identical jobs in the same establishment in which a woman was being paid less than a man. This significantly reduced the number of women to whom the law could be applied since few Canadian women and men did the same jobs, a fact well known to the Bureau at the time.[59] In cases where the law could be applied, Royce and other critics perceived a problem with the need to compare jobs to determine content. The practice of job classification was not widespread in the 1950s, except in unionized environments. Furthermore, as Royce argued, it was not difficult for an employer to "tailor" a job to differentiate its content from another position. The practice of "re-classifying" jobs to avoid compliance with the law, she speculated, was widespread, a fact born out by subsequent

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[59] In fact, Royce noted the problem of job segregation as an impediment if a strict equal pay for equal work definition was used in a 1950 pamphlet she wrote for the World's YWCA before her appointment to the Bureau. Marion Royce, *Women's Work - What is it Worth? A Discussion Pamphlet on Equal Pay for Equal Work and Related Questions* (World's YWCA, 1950). Doris Lewis Rare Book Room, University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario.

testimony to the Royal Commission on the Status of Women (RCSW).[60] Even if employers did not intend to thwart the law, the meaning of "same" or "identical" was problematic. As Royce noted in a letter, the practice in most Canadian jurisdictions was to interpret narrowly; any minor difference in job content was used to argue against the law's applicability.[61] Royce could only speculate about the extent to which employers and commissioners hired to hear complaints acted to thwart the intent of the laws. In a study of the Ontario equal pay act, however, Shirley Tillotson has shown that Royce's suspicions were valid. Employers in Ontario actively sought to differentiate the women's jobs from men's, supported in part by a very narrow definition of equal work within the Ontario Labour Department.[62] Indirectly then, equal pay for equal work laws reinforced gender segregation and women's wage inequity.

A greater obstacle for the few women to whom the law applied was the complaints procedure. The federal law, like those in the provinces, did not provide for enforcement through inspection by Labour Department officials. For the law to come into effect, an aggrieved employee had to lodge a complaint. While many of the equal pay laws in Canada had clauses prohibiting dismissal of an employee acting under the law, the effect of the complaints procedure was to further limit utilization of the law. As Royce explained on a

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[60] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-4-11-4, Letter from Marion Royce to Nora J. Rowe, 5 October 1956; Letter from Marion Royce to Challis Hooper, 13 June 1957.

[61] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1904, File #38-11-4-5, Letter from Marion Royce to John Mainwaring, 2 November 1960.

[62] Tillotson 1991, 544-557. Jane Ursel similarly finds "very lenient enforcement" of the law in Ontario over an eighteen year period from 1951 to1969. Jane Ursel, *Private Lives, Public Policy. 100 Years of State Intervention in the Family* (Toronto: Women's Press, 1992), 248.

number of occasions, "the fact is that, on the whole, women's position in employment is not sufficiently assured to give them a sense of security in taking aggressive action on their own behalf."[63]

In addition to recognizing weaknesses in the existing legislation, Royce understood that the principle of equal pay for equal work would not address the larger problem of wage disparity. Although Royce perceived value in educational laws, she had a cursory understanding of the structural causes of women's low wages. In writings and speeches, Royce pointed to three interrelated causes to explain women's low wages - the concentration and segregation of female labour, the decreased "value" ascribed to women's paid work, and women's primary responsibility for home and family.[64] Several of the conferences held by the Women's Bureau examined job segregation and concentration as a principal factor. A summary of the 1963 conference noted the participants perceived " a sense of unreality to existing equal pay laws" because of the ineffectiveness of the laws. Consequently, "there was little disposition" among the participants to discuss them.[65] These participants, along with

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[63] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1904, File #38-11-4-5, Letter from Marion Royce to John Mainwaring, 2 November 1960.

[64] Since the 1970s, scholarly opinion has attributed the male-female earnings gap to these three main causes. "Pure discrimination," referring to the intentional payment of lower wages to one person doing the same job as another, accounts for only a small percentage of the wage gap.
See, for example, D.M. Shapiro & M. Stelcner, "The Persistence of the Male-Female Earnings Gap in Canada, 1970-1980: The Impact of Equal Pay Laws and Language Policies", *Canadian Public Policy*, 13 (December 1987), 466; Pat Armstrong & Hugh Armstrong, *The Double Ghetto: Canadian Women and Their Segregated Work*, rev. ed. (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1984), 41-46.

[65] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1905, File #38-6-6-3, Memo from Marion Royce to G.V. Haythorne regarding the Meeting with trade unionists, 11 March 1963.

Royce, believed that low wages stemmed from job segregation and concentration. As well, the low "value" attributed by society to the jobs done by women added an additional downward pressure on wages. The reasons for this devaluation of women's jobs was not evident or at least not discussed. As well, Royce spoke frequently about the negative impact of women's responsibility for home and family on their occupational position. In 1957, she argued that there was a need to distinguish the issue of equality of opportunity from equal pay because "women's work inevitably is affected by their special role in society."[66] However, Royce's analysis of the causes of wage disparity did not include a critique of the gendered division of labour in society. Consequently, there was no suggestion of altering the structure of work and wage negotiation to accomodate women's experience. The concept of pay equity was still many years in the future. The solutions proposed by Royce stemmed from a relative equality of opportunity framework which recognized a need for some special provisions to aid women to compete equally with men. Frequently, Royce pointed to job training and improved education as the means to overcome these problems and improve women's wage position.[67] Yet, recognition of these sources of wage inequity meant that Royce knew that the equal pay for equal work legislation would not raise the general level of women's wages.

Aware of these limitations, Royce spoke little of the equal pay law in the years from 1956 to 1961. If Royce held a "watching brief" over the legislation during these years, it was from the sidelines. In a letter on the new equal pay legislation, written only five days after its

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[66] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-4-11-4, Letter from Marion Royce to Miss Challis Hooper, 13 June 1957.

[67] See Chapter Three.

enactment, Royce revealed her belief that the new law did not mean the end of the the struggle for "equal" pay. "It will take time and effort," she concluded, "to ensure one day that women's work is valued equitably."[68]

Fighting for Equal Pay Again: 1961-1968

Around 1961, the Women's Bureau's stance on the equal pay bill changed dramatically, shifting from a period of sustained quiet into one of interest, activity, and mounting criticism. This is not surprising. As discussed previously, the Bureau went through a transition in the early 1960s from research to policy advocacy on a number of issues.[69] In the case of equal pay, however, the Bureau was not able to access or develop a body of research and analysis on the equal pay question. Although Royce had strong ideas about the effectiveness and purpose of equal pay laws before 1960, the Bureau lacked new information and analysis of Canada's equal pay laws from which to base its work. The impetus to action for the Women's Bureau in 1961 came instead from a number of political factors, beginning with the fight for an equal pay law in the United States (US).

In 1961, Esther Peterson assumed the position of Director of the US Women's Bureau. Under her leadership, the US Bureau was at the centre of the burgeoning women's rights movement. Through the provision of resources, it contributed to the development of a

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[68] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-4-11-4, Letter from Marion Royce to Nora J. Rowe, 5 October 1956.

[69] Royce states this transition in focus for the Bureau in a 1962 speech. NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 2, File #28, Talk by Marion Royce included in the Report of the CBC Conference on the "Real World of Women", September 1962. This point was argued in Chapter Three.

coordinated network for the movement and the construction of issues such as equal pay. Ultimately, the US Bureau was crucial in the realization of the US equal pay act in 1963.[70]

The Canadian Bureau was drawn into the US fight for equal pay, which reignited its interest in the situation in Canada. Since 1954, the Canadian and US Bureaus had maintained an active correspondence, exchanging information and publications on issues of common interest. As the US Bureau began its campaign for equal pay in 1961, it wrote to the Canadian Bureau requesting information on the operation of similar laws in Canada. The reply by Royce's assistant, Agnes Beckett, asserted the official position of the law as a "statement of public policy," but was also forthright and critical of the law's provisions. Since the Bureau lacked data and analysis of this issue, Beckett's letter emphasized the question of applicability for which there was some material. What was clear, even without a major data collection, was the small number of complaints under the existing legislation, a situation which led Beckett to conclude there was "growing concern regarding the application of the principle of equal pay" in Canada.[71] The equal pay laws, with their limited applicability to wage earning women and problematic complaints procedure, were simply not being utilized. Over the next few years, the issues of applicability and enforcement would become the major critiques and points of action for the Bureau.

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[70] Dorothy McBride Stetson, "The Oldest Women's Policy Agency. The Women's Bureau in the United States", in *Comparative State Feminism*, eds. Dorothy McBride Stetson & Amy Mazur (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 1995), 256, 262.

[71] These comments apply to federal and provincial laws. In 1961, there had been no complaints under the federal law. NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1907, File #38-8-5-2, Letter from Agnes Beckett (Assistant to Marion Royce) to Pat Conroy (Labour Counsellor, U.S. Embassy), 20 February 1961.

Involvement in the US fight prompted some collection of material within the limited means of the Bureau. In the autumn of 1961, Royce was invited to Washington to take part in preliminary discussion of an equal pay bill. In preparation, she sent a questionnaire to all the provincial Labour departments with equal pay laws. The results, though limited in the conclusions that could be drawn, clearly pointed to inactivity under the laws, primarily due to the problems of applicability and enforcement. Few complaints or enquiries had occurred in any of the provinces. When complaints did occur, the resolution favoured employers as often as employees because of a rigid interpretation of the meaning of "same" or "identical."[72] The Deputy Minister of Labour for Alberta suggested equal pay was ineffective because it required an aggrieved employee to complain and workers were reluctant to do so. According to the reply from Saskatchewan, activity under the law was "almost non-existent" because pure discrimination between male and female workers doing the same work had been addressed through previous legislation. Wage inequity, however, was undoubtedly widespread. In the final comments, the Saskatchewan Deputy Minister of Labour noted:

> I am certain that there are vast areas of discrimination both within establishments and between establishments, between whole classes or groups of employees engaged in what has traditionally been considered to be exclusively male or female work. For example the discrimination between the rate of the trained nurse and that of untrained male labourer.[73]

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[72] Manitoba, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and Saskatchewan had experienced one complaint or none, and few enquiries since the laws were enacted. Alberta had had three complaints; in Ontario and British Columbia, complaints were more common, but not numerous.

[73] The Saskatchewan reply noted the existence of minimum wage laws which set minimums regardless of gender and argued these types of laws indirectly addressed the pure wage discrimination to which equal pay laws were directed. The replies from all the provincial Labour Departments to the questionnaire are found in NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG

Royce used the results of this tentative survey during the US hearings on equal pay. In correspondence to participants in the hearings, she stressed the poor enforcement provisions in the Canadian laws, as well as, the lack of applicability to most wage earning women. Already aware of the limitations of the acts, the results from the survey solidified her concerns. The Canadian laws, she concluded, "leave room for much more work in the whole field of women's economic status."[74]

Spurred on by this first enquiry and by involvement in the US debate, the Bureau actively sought to initiate debate and a study on the equal pay question in Canada. The Bureau's annual conferences from 1963 onwards included equal pay as one of the topics for discussion. Royce's reliance on these conferences to provide expertise for analysis and as a spur to education and outside lobbying was understandable given the Department's continuing disinterest in the equal pay question. At the time of the provincial survey, Royce requested staff aid from Economics and Research to conduct an enquiry into "the effect-if-any-of the federal equal pay legislation."[75] As before, Economics and Research denied the request on the premise that other projects had priority. In a memo to her successor in January 1967, Royce emphasized an "urgent need" for study of equal pay legislation. A "factual basis" for assessing

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27, Vol. 1903, File #38-4-11-2. Replies from Ontario and British Columbia were not found in this file but a history of complaints under Ontario's equal pay act is found in Tillotson 1991, 544-555.

[74] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1907, File #38-3-11-4, Letter from Marion Royce to Edith Greene (U.S. Congresswoman, Oregon), 2 April 1962; File #38-8-5-1, Letter from Marion Royce to Esther Peterson (Director, U.S. Women's Bureau), 12 December 1961 and 27 December 1961.

[75] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1904, File #38-11-1, Memo from Marion Royce to W.R. Dymond (Director, Economics and Research), 27 September 1961.

the laws was lacking, she noted, just as it had been in her first comments on this subject in 1955.[76] The lack of indepth study on the laws was an impediment to proving a need for revision. Nonetheless, political events within Canada would push the issue into debate and eventually action. The lack of analysis, however, would restrict the Bureau's understanding of the possibilities for revision.

By the early 1960s, the federal government was moving towards creation of a labour standards act. Most workers continued to fall under provincial legislative jurisdiction in labour matters, but ideas about the role of the federal Labour department in this area were changing. Supporters of a national labour code wanted the federal government to establish minimum standards in the areas of hours, vacations, and wages. At the time, federal standards legislation applied only to vacations with pay. A number of private members' bills were put before the House of Commons in the early 1960s relating to standards such as minimum wages. In the course of debate, members of the House argued that the federal Labour department should provide "leadership" to the provinces, and that this leadership should extend beyond industrial disputes to ensuring fair and equitable treatment for workers.[77] As the federal government's power increased in the postwar period, supporters of a national labour code argued the central government must establish a national "model" for the provinces (even if only a small number of workers in federal industries would be directly affected). Officials within the Labour Department supported the idea of a labour code. The Department faced a reorganization which

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[76] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #13, Memo from Marion Royce to Jessica Findley regarding "Legislative Concerns of the Women's Bureau", 19 January 1967.

[77] For example, see, Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 13 April 1962, 2973; 19 October 1962, 740; 8 November 1963, 4591.

would shift its manpower functions to the new Manpower and Immigration Department. Consequently, Labour officials welcomed any new responsibilities in their jurisdiction.[78] Following the 1963 election, the new Liberal government under Lester Pearson began to develop a labour code as promised during the election. In June 1963, the government created a committee in the Labour department to study the matter; the members were instructed to work quickly due to the rising pressure from private members' bills in the House.[79]

The debate over a national labour code offered the Bureau an additional impetus to act on the equal pay question, as well as, a potential solution to the weakness of the law. Most commentators agreed a code should include legislation relating to hours of work, minimum wages, annual vacations with pay, and statutory holidays with pay. More contentious was the question of whether to include the federal equal pay law and the FEPA in the code. In 1963, the Deputy Minister of Labour, G.V. Haythorne, asked Royce to comment on the proposed code. Initially, she was unsure about whether the latter two "human rights" measures properly belonged in standards legislation; the purpose of rights laws, she argued, was fulfilled more by educational measures. Yet, she had the example of the US equal pay law to provide some understanding.[80] Signed into law in June 1963, the US act provided for equal pay for equal

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[78] The restructuring of the federal departments began in early 1961, although the division of the Labour Department (with manpower functions shifted to the new Department of Manpower and Immigration) did not occur until January 1966.

[79] Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 8 November 1963, 4593-4594, 4604-4605. NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-4-11-1, Memo from G.V. Haythorne to Committee Members, regarding proposed Labour Standards Act, 28 June 1963.

[80] Royce did argue in favour of inclusion of equal pay in the new Standards Act in her reply to Haythorne although she expressed reservations due to a belief that educational measures were necessary to serve the purpose of the equal pay law. NAC, Department of Labour Papers,

work as an amendment to the US Fair Labor Standards Act. Gradually Royce began to view inclusion of equal pay in standards legislation as an important strength because it placed the legislation under existing inspection and enforcement mechanisms. Despite some uncertainty in June, only one month later, Royce wrote to Esther Peterson arguing that an "important step" had been achieved by the US Bureau by having "the principle [of equal pay] accepted within the frame of reference of labour standards in general and removing it from dependence upon presentation of individual grievances."[81] Inclusion in the proposed code in Canada, Royce recognized, might not enlarge its applicability to individual women, but it would improve the enforcement of the measure by placing it under the same inspection provisions which ensured employer compliance with other laws.

Royce's initial reservations about inclusion of equal pay in the standards bill stemmed primarily from uncertainty about whether *labour standards* and *human rights* were separate matters. While the equal pay law and the FEPA could be viewed as regulatory laws regarding conditions of labour, the concept of defending human rights was much more controversial than establishing maximum hours of work or minimum wages. When asked to comment on the proposal to include equal pay in the standards code, Royce took the opportunity to argue that an educational law really needs "the support of a vigorous program of education" to achieve its

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RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-4-11-1, Reply from Marion Royce to G.V. Haythorne, regarding the proposed Labour Standards Act, 5 July 1963.

[81] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-4-11-1, Letter from Marion Royce to Esther Peterson, 26 July 1963.

objectives.[82] After all, this was the reason she had used to argue for a public enquiry ten years earlier. The belief that human rights and labour standards were separate and the uncertainty of where to place an equal pay law existed in the provinces as well. In 1962 Ontario repealed its equal pay law and incorporated its terms into the new Code of Human Rights; Nova Scotia followed suit in 1963. Since the ineffectiveness of the laws was evident by 1963, it made sense to focus on the educational purpose of the laws. Consequently, Royce also argued for amendment of the FEPA to include the word "sex" during discussions about equal pay revision within the Department. Similarly, the women's groups had followed up on their equal pay "victory" in 1956, by sustained lobbying for amendment of the FEPA as the next step in their women's rights campaign.

Gradually, the Bureau's efforts to improve the equal pay bill focused on inclusion within the standards code. The educative value of the existing laws was questionable, thus, attachment of the law to the principle of standards made sense. Inclusion in the standards code would address the problem of enforcement which would be a direct improvement. Furthermore, even though federal labour laws remained primarily models, strengthened enforcement of the equal pay law would provide a better "statement" of the government's commitment to the notion of women's equality. The Canada Labour Standards Act which came into effect on 1 July 1965 omitted equal pay, focusing only on regulations relating to hours of work, minimum wages, annual vacations, and statutory holidays. Further revision to include an

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[82] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-4-11-1, Reply from Marion Royce to G.V. Haythorne, regarding the proposed Labour Standards Act, 5 July 1963.

equal pay clause became a major legislative goal of the Bureau over the next two years.[83]

Debate on the equal pay bill after 1963 also centred on the question of the bill's restrictive application. The sense of victory experienced by the women's groups in 1956 did not signal an end to their interest in the matter. In a public statement in 1956, the BPW President stated, "while a bill carries the words 'identical or substantially identical' or any other words that give a loophole, it is far short of a perfect Equal Pay Bill."[84] A resolution at the BPW conference in July recommended the federal equal pay law use the word "equivalent," meaning "work of equal value," rather than "identical."[85] Many proponents of the equal pay principle, by the 1950s and 1960s, argued for revision of existing laws to require equal pay for *comparable* work (the term "equal value" was often used). The comparable work standard, proponents argued, would enlarge the basis of comparability within work places to include jobs which were not necessarily identical or even the same, but which required similar levels of skill, effort, responsibility, and working conditions. Through this revision, they hoped to address the inapplicability of the law which stemmed from the segregation of male and female work and the lower social value attributed to women's work.[86] When asked in 1963 to

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[83] Royce listed inclusion of equal pay in the Canada Labour Standards Act as one of the primary legislative goals of the Bureau in 1967. NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #13, Memo from Marion Royce to Jessica Findlay, regarding "Legislative concerns of the Women's Bureau", 19 January 1967.

[84] Maude Baylay, quoted in, Elizabeth Forbes, *With Enthusiasm and Faith. History of the Canadian Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs* (Canadian Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs,1977), 77.

[85] *Labour Gazette* (1956), 1001.

[86] Carl J. Cuneo, *Pay Equity. The Labour-Feminist Challenge* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1990), 17-19; Gillian Creese, "Power and Pay: The Union and Equal Pay at B.C.

comment on inclusion of the existing equal pay law in the new standards code, Royce took the opportunity to recommend the substitution of "comparable" for "identical or substantially identical" in the wording of the Act. She reminded the Deputy Minister that this had been a repeated recommendation by the women's organizations over the previous years.[87] This pressure from the women's groups coincided with the example of the US which defined equal work in its 1963 act as that requiring "equal skill, effort, and responsibility and which are performed under similar working conditions."

On this issue of revising the equal pay law, however, Royce and the women's groups did not maintain a common front. In February 1966, the Department responded to the pressure from the women's groups by calling a review of the wording of the act. Royce, Edith Lorentsen of the Legislation Branch, and the Departmental Solicitor were asked to discuss the changes proposed by the BPW to the wording of the equal pay act.[88] Despite support for this revision in 1963, Royce had changed her position by 1966 and, along with the other two, appears to have recommended *against* changing the wording. In a subsequent memo to the Deputy Minister in January 1967, Royce argued: "To change the wording to 'comparable' might direct fresh attention to the legislation but I doubt whether it would make any difference to its effectiveness." She continued by comparing the Saskatchewan and British Columbia equal pay acts; the first, which read "comparable," had been applied rigidly, while the latter, with the

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Electric/Hydro", *Labour/Le Travail*, 32 (Fall 1993), 227.

[87] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-4-11-1, Reply from Marion Royce to G.V. Haythorne, regarding the proposed Labour Standards Act, 5 July 1963.

[88] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-4-11-2, Memo from G.V. Haythorne to Marion Royce, Edith Lorentsen and W.B. Davis, 24 February 1966.

wording "same work," had been applied with much greater flexibility of interpretation.[89] These comments mirrored an earlier assessment of the acts completed by Royce in which she attributed the greater level of activity and enforcement of the equal pay principle in British Columbia to the vigilance of Fraudena Eaton who sat on the complaints board.[90] To some extent, Royce's comments suggest she did not understand the distinction between simply inserting the term "comparable" into the law and amendment to reflect the US standard which provided for comparison on the basis of the four criteria. In the 1960s, as in the 1950s, the concepts and terminology of the equal pay debate were used interchangeably.[91] Still, Royce's opposition appears to have come from a focus on the *implementation* of the law. Without a real commitment to enforcement, the law would not work regardless of wording. As well, Royce doubted whether the proposed revisions would address the underlying causes of women's lower wages. In notes to her successor in 1967, Royce summarized her reservations about amending the wording of the law. "I am inclined to think that inactivity under the Act," she argued, "is not so much attributable to the wording of the clause as to psychological factors arising from the generally insecure position of women in the labour force."[92] Nonetheless, the lack of common action in support of revision stalled the process of change. The department

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[89] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-4-11-1, Memo from Marion Royce to G.V. Haythorne, 31 January 1967.

[90] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1904, File #38-11-4-5, Letter from Marion Royce to John Mainwaring (Canadian Embassy, Belgium), 2 November 1960.

[91] Flanagan 1987, 435-436; Cuneo 1990, 17.

[92] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #13, Memo from Marion Royce to Jessica Findley re. "Legislative Concerns of the Women's Bureau", 19 January 1967.

was responsive in 1966 to discussion and some revision of the equal pay law. The Minister of Labour, according to Royce's speculation, seemed to have "made a definite commitment" to change the wording.[93] The Bureau's failure to support the demands of the women's groups resulted in inactivity; the issue of revision was placed on hold and a potential opportunity for change lost.

Revision of the equal pay law would not rest for long, however, because additional factors were pushing the government towards reconsideration. One factor was the underlying tension created by Canada's failure to ratify the ILO Convention 100. The women's groups had long pointed to the ILO convention on equal pay to argue, first, for a Canadian law and, then, for revisions. By the early 1960s, Royce began to support this campaign to have Canada ratify Convention 100. Her support stemmed from the belief that ratification would force review and revision of the existing acts by the provincial and federal governments. In correspondence to G.V. Haythorne (promoted to Deputy Minister by 1966), Royce repeatedly stressed the importance of ratifying Convention 100 since "it would necessitate testing the legislation in all jurisdictions against the international standard" and "would involve commitment to active promotion of the principle."[94] To this end, Royce enjoined participants at a conference to push for ratification as a "task well worthy of women who are really interested in the issue [of equal pay]."[95] By 1966, this strategy had the potential to work because of the designation of 1968 as

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[93] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-4-11-1, Memo from Marion Royce to G.V. Haythorne, 31 January 1967.

[94] Ibid.

[95] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 2, File #28, Proceedings of the CBC Conference on "The Real World of Women", 6-9 September 1962, 78.

international human rights year. The Labour Department was eager to display a commitment to human rights and began to review, in cooperation with the provinces, several of the ILO conventions, including 100, to determine if ratification was possible. Within this political context, the terms of Convention 100 directly influenced the Department's treatment of the equal pay issue. When a committee was formed in 1968 to review the equal pay legislation, committee members used ILO reports on equal pay and argued the need to comply with Convention 100.[96] While Canada was certainly not obligated to ratify the convention, the climate of opinion in the late 1960s made the demands of the Bureau and the women's groups more potent.

Reorganization of the Labour Department in 1966 further influenced the evolution of the equal pay law. The movement of manpower functions to the new Manpower Department in January 1966 left Labour to focus on industrial relations, labour standards, industrial safety, and fair employment practices.[97] New functions, such as labour standards, acquired heightened importance. In 1968, Edith Lorentsen stressed the importance of the new area of labour standards in the future of the Department:

> It is not difficult for me to visualize an expanded role for the Department of Labour in securing "the just society". The whole program of minimum conditions of work with which my Branch has been so much concerned...is a

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[96] The Working Committee to Study Maternity Leave and Equal Pay was formed in July 1968 to examine and recommend legislative change in the areas of maternity leave and equal pay. NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 4159, File #722-4-2, Letter from Eileen Sufrin (Working Committee to Study Maternity Leave and Equal Pay) to John Mainwaring (International Labour Affairs Branch), 13 November 1968; Recommendations of the Working Committee to Study Maternity Leave and Equal Pay, "Legislative Guidelines. Equal Pay."

[97] *Labour Gazette* (1967), 438.

fundamental effort for any nation aiming at a Just Society.[98]

For the Bureau, the reorganization similarly forced a change in priorities. As noted in Chapter Three, the Bureau lost its mandate over counselling and occupational training.[99] Equally problematic for the Bureau was an internal reorganization which divided the Department into three divisions. The Bureau was placed in "labour standards and benefits" rather than "research and development," a decision which diminished the Bureau's primary association with the research functions of the Department.[100] As a result of these changes, the Bureau faced the difficult problem of redefining its mandate within this reorganized Department. In response, the Bureau began to emphasize issues within the areas of "legislation, labour standards and working conditions," one of which was the equal pay legislation.[101] The inclusion of the equal pay legislation in the standards code appealed to the Bureau not only because it would strengthen the enforcement of the law but also because it had the potential to place responsibility for the legislation within the Bureau's jurisdiction. During the early stages of reorganizing the Department, Haythorne contemplated giving the Bureau responsibility for the

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[98] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 4156, File #722-3-6, Memo from Edith Lorentsen (Legislative Branch) to G.V. Haythorne, 16 October 1968.

[99] See Chapter Three.

[100] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-2-2, pt.1, Memo from Marion Royce to G.V. Haythorne, 22 March 1966.

[101] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1905, File #38-6-2-7-2, Letter from Marion Royce to H.L. Snodgrass (National Employment Committee), 24 August 1966. Sylva Gelber (Director, Women's Bureau from October 1968) also speaks of these changes in the Bureau's orientation in, Vol. 4152, File #720-3-5, Letter from Sylva Gelber to Miss Augusta Clawson (U.S. Department of Labour), 20 February 1969.

administration of the equal pay law.[102] While the Bureau did not acquire this operational role, the impact of the 1966 reorganization was to magnify the importance of the standards code within the Department and to ignite renewed interest in the equal pay law as a potential revision within the code.

The creation of the RCSW in 1966 placed additional onus on the Labour Department to examine its equal pay act. Initially, the Department delayed action on women's issues with the pretense of waiting for the Commission's report. In general, though, the knowledge that the Commission would undoubtedly review, critique, and recommend action on many outstanding women's issues provided an important stimulus to departmental action.[103] Within the Women's Bureau, the appointment of the RCSW was met with optimism. Royce believed the commission process would provide the public "soul-searching" necessary to change attitudes and to stimulate research and analysis of many important women's issues.[104] The Department was certain the RCSW would recommend action on the two outstanding issues of maternity leave and equal pay. In response, it established a "working party committee" in July 1968 with a clear mandate to review these issues and recommend legislative measures. When Sylva

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[102] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-4-11-2, Memo from G.V. Haythorne to G.G. Blackburn, 21 September 1967.

[103] On a number of occasions, Department officials or government members in the House of Commons argued a need to await the recommendations of the RCSW before acting or commenting on several outstanding issues, including equal pay and maternity leave. For example, see, NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1904, File #38-11-6-3, Memo from G.V. Haythorne to Heads of Branches of Department of Labour, 18 April 1967.

[104] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 4154, File #720-2E-14 pt.1, Letter from Marion Royce to J.P. Francis (Director, Research Branch, Department of Manpower and Immigration), 31 January 1967; Vol. 4153, File #722-2O-3, Letter from Marion Royce (Ontario Institute for Studies in Education) to Sylva Gelber (Director, Women's Bureau), 21 July 1970.

Gelber, the new Director of the Women's Bureau, joined the committee in October 1968, the Chair informed her the committee was set up "having in mind legislative action in the near future." By April 1969, Gelber confidently stated in a letter that Canada was in the process of revising its equal pay act.[105] While Royce was no longer head of the Bureau by the time of these final deliberations, the inevitability of review and revision was clear before she left.

By 1968, the debate over equal pay had coalesced around the two main demands of the Bureau and the women's groups. The working party committe noted in its report that it was unable to draw conclusions from the existing federal law because "not a single complaint" had been laid in its thirteen years of existence! Ironically, the report vindicated the repeated concerns expressed by Royce about the complete lack of study or follow-up on the equal pay situation. Nonetheless, the recommendations of the working party committee focused primarily on the issues of wording and enforcement. First, it recommended the change in wording demanded by the women's groups. The new statute would ban discrimination on the basis of sex, "for comparable jobs in the same establishment, which require comparable skill, effort and resposibility, and which are performed under similar working conditions." This definition would allow, the report argued, a broader and more flexible interpretation while also extending coverage to more female workers. Second, the committee recommended that the administrative and enforcement provisions existing under the Standards Code be extended to

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[105] The committee was designated the "Working Party Committee on Maternity Leave and Equal Pay." The development of maternity leave legislation is discussed in Chapter Five. NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1904, File #38-11-3-4, Memo from J.P. Dépres (Assistant Deputy Minister of Labour) to Sylva Gelber, 21 October 1968; Vol. 4152, File #720-3-5, Letter from Sylva Gelber to Patrick D. Conroy, Labour Counsellor, Canadian Embassy in US, 14 April 1969.

the equal pay law. This would place responsbility for enforcement of the law with the Labour Standards Branch and its inspectors rather than relying on individual complaint.[106] In 1970, the final report of the RCSW recommended the same changes.[107]

Conclusion

The struggles over equal pay from 1950 to 1970 are important because equal pay legislation was the principal human rights legislation directed specifically at women. For the women's groups, particularly the BPW, equal pay was the symbol of their struggle for equal treatment and access for women in the public sphere. They demanded, and received in 1956, a law which acted as "statement" against sex discrimination and in support of women's right to equal treatment. Even in 1956, however, most participants in the debate recognized the limited applicability and effectiveness of the law. As Milton Gregg stated twenty years later, the law was a "do-good" measure, a testament to the idea of equal rights for all, but with no impact on real wage levels. At the Bureau, Marion Royce tried to redirect debate about equal pay to the larger question of the *causes* of wage disparity. The educational value of the 1956 law was soon in doubt due to the ineffectiveness and inapplicability of the law. However, the efforts of the Bureau to initiate research or an enquiry into the causes of women's lower wages failed. The focus of the women's groups and the government turned to how to improve the existing statute. Influenced by changes in the equal pay concept in the US and the ILO, the women's groups lobbied for revision of the wording of the law to require equal pay for people in

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[106] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 4159, File #722-4-2 pt.2, Report of the working party committee on equal pay, "Legislative Guidelines" , December 1969.

[107] RCSW, *Report*, 76-77.

"comparable" jobs. By mid 1960, the Bureau also began to examine the means to strengthen the existing statute. Within the Labour Department, the growing importance of labour standards provided the means to strengthen the enforcement provisions. The Bureau argued that equal pay needed to be treated as a labour standard rather than a human rights law. While the equal pay law would still not apply to most wage earning women, it would, Royce believed, be a stronger "statement of public policy" if the principle was backed up by strong enforcement. Over the twenty year period, these various objectives and discourses affected the development of the equal pay issue. The women's groups and the Bureau managed to shape the meaning of equal pay although they were constrained by the social and political priorities of the Labour Department and by an inability to work cooperatively to direct the policy process. Still, the 1971 amendments to equal pay represented a greater acceptance of the principle of equality between men and women than had the 1956 law. The end result, however, was that the equal pay issue never moved beyond its early conception as a statement of equal rights. As Sue Findlay writes regarding the RCSW's recommendations for equal pay, the appeal to rights as a framework for understanding meant "a more structural critique of the relations of production and their gendered nature or an exploration of what they could learn about wage-setting practices" was avoided.[108] Clearly, Royce struggled with the concept of sex discrimination as the cause of wage disparity and questioned the value of human rights laws. She even pointed to job segregation, the devaluation of women's work, and women's place in the family as factors in their lower wages. Yet, Royce continued to believe that social attitudes and

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[108] Sue Findlay, "Institutionalizing Feminist Politics: Learning from the Struggles for Equal Pay in Ontario", in *Women and the Canadian Welfare State*, eds. Patricia M. Evans & Gerda R. Wekerle (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 316.

traditions underlay these problems and were the basis of women's inequality. Thus, she did believe equal pay was a rights issue but she argued that legislation was an ineffective means to address wage inequality. A change in the wording to "comparable," Royce argued, would have little impact on the level of women's wages because the people enforcing the law and employers remained unconvinced of the principle. In part, she was right. The 1971 equal pay law had little impact on the level of women's wages. Nonetheless, the process of development during these years was part of the gradual evolution towards focusing on the content of jobs as the means for establishing wage rates, an important intermediary step in the progression towards "equal value" or "pay equity."

In 1971, the federal government amended the equal pay act in accordance with the recommendations of the working party committee and the RCSW. The 1956 equal pay act was repealed and replaced by provisions in the Canada Labour (Standards) Code. The new standards required equal pay for jobs within the same establishment with "comparable skill, effort and responsibility...and working conditions." Inspection and enforcement was provided through the existing procedures. The changes to the Act received little publicity. *Chatelaine* magazine, ever vigilant to ensure the recommendations of the RCSW were addressed, did not devote an article to the equal pay question. The potency of equal pay as the preeminent symbol of women's equality (particularly in employment), which had placed it at the forefront of the lobbying efforts of the BPW in the 1950s, had largely evaporated by 1970. It had became a matter of "simple justice" as Fairclough had argued, an issue so evident it no longer elicited debate.

CHAPTER FIVE

"The social answer": The Struggle for Maternity Protection and Child Care

In 1954, the major concern that structured the Bureau's work was the continuing employment of married women. Few Canadians probably recognized the extent to which in only ten years, the problems facing married women in the labour force would be overshadowed by those of women with children or pregnant women. Most Canadians were complacent with the knowledge that the majority of wage earning women left the labour force once children began to arrive. Yet, the obvious connection between the empoyment of married women and the possibility that these women might choose to remain working even when they had children was addressed in the Bureau's first study, *Married Women Working for Pay* (1958). Although women with children constituted a small percentage of the labour force in 1957, the study examined how these women attempted to balance the demands of child care with working outside of the home. By the early 1960s, as the Bureau began to pursue policy objectives such as revision to the equal pay act, the problems of wage earning mothers were coming to the forefront of discussion. In response, the Bureau began to study and develop policies for maternity protection (a term encompassing maternity leave legislation and maternity benefits) and for expanded child care facilities.[1]

The issues of child care and maternity protection were conceptually problematic for

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[1] The expression "child care" will be used rather than "day care" to refer to all provisions arranged for the care of children while mothers are unavailable. In the literature of the time, "day care" was used more frequently but its present connotation refers primarily to care for pre-schoolers in out-of-home facilities during day time work hours. When necessary, distinctions will be made between the different types of care facilities envisioned when necessary.

Marion Royce. The discourse of rights and of equal opportunity which had provided the ideological understanding and justification for measures like equal pay and vocational training was inadequate to deal with the questions that arose from the employment of mothers. Royce was uncomfortable with the notion of special provisions for wage earning women because she associated them with the discriminatory "protective" legislation of the pre-war period. Yet, Royce firmly believed that society needed to find a way to reconcile the dual responsbilities of women for home and children with paid work. For wage earning mothers to achieve this balance, certain measures, provided through legislation and the social service system, were needed. The contradiction between the principle of equal opportunity and the provision of "female only" services required some alteration in rights based ideology. Gradually, the Bureau developed an argument for greater societal responsibility for maternity and child care but in a manner which did not challenge women's primary responsibility for children.

Compounding this problem, the Bureau also had to structure its arguments in support of these policy measures within the discourse of the state. While the Department of Labour was increasingly supportive of both policy goals throughout the 1960s, economic priorities, including labour supply issues, and the division of jurisdictions between departments structured its response to policy questions. Increasingly, the Bureau had to focus on the issues of economic need and the health of women and children to justify its policy demands. By late 1960, the Bureau achieved mixed success. The formative work done by the Bureau within the Department played an important role in establishing the parameters of subsequent legislation providing for maternity leave and benefits and for a very limited state sponsored child care program. The programs which were established, however, were limited by their configuration

within the ideology of the Bureau and the state. The struggle for women's *equality* as workers was diminished as the Bureau and the Labour Department sought to deal with the *needs* of mothers and children.

From Working Wives to Working Mothers - Changing Attitudes to Working Women

Public awareness and discussion of wage earning mothers rose from a trickle in 1954 to a torrent by 1968. Many scholars note a transition from the "working girl" to the "working mother" over the twentieth century. The transition occurred in public attitudes as well as in the actual labour force participation of women. In the 1950s, a "grudging acceptance" developed for married women's right to participate in paid employment; by the late 1960s, Canadians also accepted employment for mothers of school-age or grown children. For married women with *young children*, however, "deep concern...even hostility" dominated debate, as Canadians became increasingly opposed to mothers of young children working outside of the home.[2] As several studies have shown, the notion that young children should be cared for only by their mothers (and thus, that women with young children should not work) was "powerfully strengthened in the postwar period by psychoanalytic themes of 'maternal deprivation.'" Most of the opposition to paid employment for mothers centred around the harmful effects to children. Wage earning mothers were charged with neglect and selfishness. As Mona Gleason shows, psychological discourse responded by constructing traditional gender roles as "normal."

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[2] Lynn Y. Weiner, *From Working Girl to Working Mother. The Female Labour Force in the United States, 1820-1980* (Chapel Hill & London: The University of North Carolina, 1985), 8, 98-99, 118; Joan Sangster, *Earning Respect. The Lives of Working Women in Small-Town Ontario, 1920-1960* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 233.

This discourse reinforced the notion that women should be full-time homemakers and suggested home life was challenging and fulfilling. As a result, work outside the home was presented as a cause of mental health problems, juvenile delinquency, and rising divorce rates.[3] In part because of the popularity of psychology and the social sciences in the postwar period, these ideas found expression in the popular press. While commentators in the popular press did not agree on the consequences for marital relations (or the husband's emotional security) of a wage earning wife, there seemed little doubt of a real potential for permanent psychological harm to children. The result was that few commentators supported the wage earning mother, either by recourse to the defense of economic "need" or by a declaration of women's right to work. As Joan Sangster notes, the arguments used to examine this question centred around the consequences for children, husbands, and family stability. "The focus, in other words, was, first, on family welfare; second, on women's needs; and, least often, on women's rights."[4]

The Bureau similarly went through a transition in focus from the married woman worker to the working mother. In the 1950s, the Bureau's focus was on the married woman in the labour force. While clearly an advocate for all wage earning women, Marion Royce perceived (as did many contemporaries) the increasing participation of *married* women to be a

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[3] Alena Heitlinger, *Women's Equality, Demography and Public Policies. A Comparative Perspective* (London: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1993), 222; Mona Gleason, "Growing Up to be 'Normal': Psychology Constructs Proper Gender Roles in Post-World War II Canada, 1945-60", in *Family Matters: Papers in Post-Confederation Canadian Family History*, eds. Lori Chambers & Edgar-André Montigny (Toronto: Canadian Scholar's Press, 1998), 40-42; Katherine Arnup, *Education for Motherhood: Advice for Mothers in Twentieth-Century Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 149-152.

[4] Joan Sangster, "Doing Two Jobs: The Wage Earning Mother, 1945-70", in *A Diversity of Women. Ontario, 1945-1980*, ed. Joy Parr (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 104.

new and revolutionary phenomenon demanding attention. Yet, Royce also recognized that women with children and pregnant women might soon form a significant component of the labour force, bringing with them different and potentially more challenging problems. In her first public speech as Director in 1954, Royce conceded that while the "community rightly assumes that the first duty of the wife and mother is to her family," nonetheless, "it is a matter of vital social concern to discover whether women can carry the double responsibility of a job outside with the adequate care of childen especially when they are small."[5] Consequently, in the Bureau's first study of married women in the labour force, the authors argued that it was necessary to delve into the question of the impact on the "home" when mothers worked. The study included some examination of the child care provisions arranged by the mothers and the mother's reasons for working outside of the home.[6] In this early investigative period, however, Royce did not have specific ideas about the needs of wage earning mothers. Discussions about child care usually sought to determine the existence and availability of child care services, a question for which there was no information at the time. There was no specific demand for expansion or regulation of child care facilities.[7] Even more notable was the complete omission

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[5] National Archives of Canada (NAC), Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-2-2 pt.1, Text of broadcast on CBC radio's "Canada at Work" program on the Women's Bureau, November 1954.

[6] This argument was made in the report of the study and in subsequent speeches by Royce on the importance of the study: Canada, Department of Labour (Women's Bureau), *Married Women Working for Pay in Eight Canadian Cities*, 1958, 51-52; NAC, Marion Royce Papers (MR Papers), MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #13, Talk by Marion Royce to the Convention of the Ontario Federation of Labour, 6 November 1960.

[7] The demand at this time was primarily for study to determine the need and existence of facilities for child care. For example, see the summary of the Canadian Conference on Social Work in, Canada, Department of Labour, *Labour Gazette* (1956), 1127.

of the question of maternity leave legislation within early discussions about married women in the labour force. Still, the 1957 study did argue that society needed to help women to find a balance between their work and family responsibilities, an argument which it applied to mothers as well as married women. The difficult question, however, was what type of assistance was necessary to help mothers achieve this balance. The liberal notion of individual rights and equality did not provide an ideological framework for dealing with the "differences" between men and women as a result of women's primary responsibility for child bearing and rearing.

The discourse of human rights in the postwar period simply did not provide an ideological basis for legislation directed solely at *women*. During its first years of operation, the Bureau confidently asserted the married woman's right to work and to work on the basis of equality of opportunity. Like other women's rights advocates, Royce resented differential treatment in employment policy for married woman. Marital status was a factor affecting both men and women and should not adversely impact on women's ability to compete. But the reality that female workers faced additional obstacles due to the physical, emotional, and familial demands occasioned by childbearing seriously challenged a notion of equality premised on "abstract individualism," an ideology focused on the individual rather than the collective and premised on a classless, genderless, ageless, and colourless individual. Recent feminist arguments have managed to justify special provisions for women within the equality of opportunity framework. Arguing that women face additional obstacles to equal competition because of their primary responsibility for childrearing (and domestic work), feminists have asserted that special provisions, such as state-supported child care facilities and maternity

benefits, are necessary to place women at an equal starting point with men. As Alena Heitlinger explains, this "relative" equality of opportunity framework includes preferential policies directed specifically to women as a separate group. These "corrective" provisions are intended to be "inclusionary," rather than "exclusionary" as protective legislation for women was in the pre-war period. "Their aim is to alter the specific discriminatory treatment that women are receiving, thus removing a previous bar to an activity and in this way bring women to the same level as men."[8] At times, Royce suggested this interpretation, by arguing that special provisions for wage earning women would facilitate women's equality. In support of child care and maternity leave policies in 1965, Royce argued they were necessary "to enable the working woman with family responsibilities to work on an basis of equality with those who are less burdened by family cares." Yet, the ideological framework that informed Royce's concept of women's equality was based on the "eighteenth-century liberal conception of the independent and autonomous self" that argued women and men were fundamentally the same. This liberal theory has provided a clear basis for arguing women's right to access to the male dominated public sphere, but has been problematic when applied to "differences," whether biological or cultural, between men and women. Ultimately, the postwar concept of equality of opportunity required only that women be treated the same as men; women were compared to a male norm and the differences of women were ignored. Women's childbearing functions, then, were not included in the conceptualization of women's equal access to all societal rights. Thus, the traditional notion of equality of opporunity did not allow for the treatment of women

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[8] Alena Heitlinger, *Women's Equality, Demography and Public Policies. A Comparative Perspective* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993), 33-34.

as a separate group.[9]

Informed by this traditional concept of equality of opportunity, Royce and many contemporaries were apprehensive about special legislative provisions for women because they associated them with the "protective" labour laws of the pre-war period. "Protective" laws since the nineteenth century had placed special restrictions on women's labour force participation, usually with the justification that they were protection for women's health and morality. Premised on the notion that women's role in society was as mothers and wives, not as labourers, the laws were intended to ensure women's childbearing health for the future.[10] By the 1950s and 1960s, many of these laws were being rescinded or extended to male workers. Articles and speeches from the Bureau argued this process was positive because protective laws were an impediment to women's equal access in the labour market.[11] Royce's concern lest special provisions like maternity leave become protective laws was expressed in correspondence with Grace McInnis (Member of Parliament, Vancouver-Kingsway) in 1966. Speaking of special provisions for women in the federal civil services, Royce concluded with the warning:

> As I am sure you realize, proposals for special provisions for women workers need to be weighed very carefully in order to ensure that in the long run they do

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[9] Heitlinger 1993, 27-28; Zillah Eistenstein, *The Radical Future of Liberal Feminism* (New York: Longman, 1981), 4; Lucinda Finley, "Transcending Equality Theory: A Way Out of the Maternity and Workplace Debate", *Columbia Law Review*, 86, 6 (October 1986), 1149, 1152.

[10] On the subject of "protective" labour laws, see, Jane Ursel, *Private Lives, Public Policy. 100 Years of State Intervention in the Family* (Toronto: Women's Press, 1992), 93-94, 136, 234-235; Margaret McCallum, "Keeping Women in Their Place: The Minimum Wage in Canada, 1910-1925", *Labour/Le Travail* (Spring 1986), 29-56.

[11] Heitlinger 1993, 169-170; *Labour Gazette* (1960), 672-673.

not become a handicap in that they tend to create a privileged class within the labour force.[12]

Still, the reality of women's childbearing function and permanent attachment to the labour force necessitated some compromise between the dichotomy of rights and protection.

As Royce became increasingly committed to the goals of maternity protection and expanded child care services, her speeches began to combine the concepts of rights and protection to justify these services. In a 1964 speech, she concluded that wage earning women "have a right to a status that protects them not only as wage earners but that also recognizes their particular needs as women."[13] The inclusion of the term "protection" in the discourse of maternity leave and child care belies an important distinction that was being made between the demand for these services and the laws of the pre-war period. In a speech outlining the trends in labour laws since the Second World War, Royce noted the shift from "protection of women as a separate category" to the "promotion of greater equality of opportunity and treatment." However, she argued, women, *like all workers,* still require protection from dangers and health risks.[14] Consequently, special provisions for women were justified in order to "safeguard the health of women workers and their children." Legislative provisions like maternity protection and child care were, therefore, understood as health and safety measures. Their purpose was not to restrict women's labour force participation in favour of their role as mothers (or potential

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[12] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1908, File #38-9-9, Letter from Marion Royce to Grace McInnis, 2 June 1966.

[13] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #8, Speech by Marion Royce to the B.C. Vocational Education Association, Vancouver, 2 December 1964.

[14] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 2, File #5, Notes for a speech on "the I.L.O. and women", Dated 1961.

mothers), but rather to safeguard their health (or that of the children) during brief periods of pregnancy and childbirth. For the Bureau, special provisions could be justified if they were directed towards health issues. In this sense, they did not create a special class of workers but still recognized the dual roles faced by many wage earning mothers. As Royce argued in 1965, "policies and services are needed to assist [women] in combining the two roles...to ensure their position in employment...as well as to safeguard the health and welfare of themselves and their families."[15]

This reorientation from women's rights to protection of health was most notable on the issue of maternity leave legislation. The concept of maternity leave, when separated from the question of paying benefits to replace lost wages conflicted less with the notion of equality of opportunity than the issue of child care. Clearly, if women were to be able to compete equally with men, they needed to be guaranteed the right to take time off around childbirth and then to return to the same job at the same level of seniority. Yet, the problem remained that maternity leave was a provision which would apply *only* to women. The solution for the Bureau was to construe pregnancy and childbirth as a health issue, involving both the health of the mother and the child. Thus, Royce defended maternity leave legislation as a measure "to safeguard the health of women workers and their children before and after childbirth."[16] Such statements often included women's "right to return to employment" following the leave, but the notion that

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[15] Canada, Department of Labour (Women's Bureau), *Report of a Consultation on the Employment of Women with Family Responsibilities*, 1965, i.

[16] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 2, File #28, Speech by Marion Royce included in the proceedings of the CBC Conference on "The Real World of Women", 6-9 September 1962, 77.

the legislation should address a workplace health issue rather than a "women's issue" assumed dominance. Consequently, participants at the Bureau's 1965 conference concluded a study was needed of "the health needs, both physical and mental, that should be taken into consideration in establishing policy and practice in respect of maternity leave."[17] The reconfiguration of maternity leave as a health issue rather than one of women's rights in employment overcame the stigma associated with "protection." It would, however, have significant impacts on the structure of the subsequent legislation.

The issue of whether women should receive benefits during maternity leave was ideologically much more contentious. In the early 1960s, discussion of benefits was sporadic, reflecting Royce's uncertainty about the purposes and justifiability of such a measure. When the issue did arise, it was often within the context of the more radical notion of paying women to care for their young children. In 1963, the female trade unionists who attended the Bureau's conference argued for "maternal allowances or special maternity insurance which would make it economically possible for mothers of young children to remain at home."[18] While it is not clear whether this measure was envisioned for all mothers of young children, it is clear that the women perceived a payment in lieu of wages that would allow women to stay at home and care for their children for a period longer than the six weeks following birth commonly associated

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[17] *Employment of Women with Family Responsibilities* 1965, 22, 36. Joan Sangster notes that when maternity leave legislation was first discussed in the 1960s, "male medical experts" were consulted about the health risks for pregnant wage earning women. Sangster, "Doing Two Jobs" 1995, 112-113.

[18] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1905, File #38-6-6-3, Memo from Marion Royce to G.V. Haythorne regarding the meeting with female trade unionists, 11 March 1963.

with maternity leave. Royce similarly suggested, during a discussion of maternity benefits, the possibility of supplementing family allowance payments to allow a woman to remain "a reasonable time with her child."[19] Undoubtedly, the "mothercare ideology" of the postwar period influenced these early thoughts on maternity benefits. Paying mothers to care for their own children might discourage labour force participation and therefore reinforce women's attachment to the home.[20] However, receiving wages for child care attributes value to the private nurturing work done by women and offers mothers greater economic independence. Consequently, the idea of benefits as wages for child care was potentially liberating for women.

Over time, though, this vague concept of maternity benefits as payment for mothers shifted to the more mainstream notion of income support based on need. One premise underlying the welfare state ideal in postwar Canada was the idea that the government should provide income support (through social security measures) to maintain a basic standard of living for all Canadians.[21] Increasing support for maternity leave within the Bureau coincided with the recognition that many wage earning women would reject taking a leave or perceive it as a problem because of the lost wages which would accompany the leave. Some wage earning

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[19] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 2, File #28, Speech by Marion Royce included in the Proceedings of the CBC Conference on "The Real World of Women", 6-9 September 1962, 77.

[20] Heitlinger 1993, 222; Pat Armstrong & Hugh Armstrong, "Taking Women Into Account. Redefining and Intensifying Employment in Canada", in *Feminization of the Labour Force. Paradoxes and Promises*, eds. Jane Jenson et al. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988), 69.

[21] Annalee Gölz, "Family Matters. The Canadian Family and the State in the Postwar Period", *Left History* 1, 2 (Fall 1993), 9.

women tried through "subterfuge" to qualify for Unemployment Insurance benefits during periods when they were unable to work due to childbirth. Gradually, Royce began to emphasize financial "need" to justify a maternity benefits program based. In 1966, she noted that maternity leave provisions were problematic if not accompanied by some "social provision" for lost wages. Many families simply could not afford to lose the wife's wages, especially during a period of increased costs for health and other needs.[22] For maternity leave legislation to "safeguard" women's health, it had to be accompanied by benefits. Gradually, the idea of maternity benefits was reconstrued into the discourses of financial need and social security. Benefits became an income support measure. The problem addressed by this representation was financial need; women's rights as workers and the need to readjust the gendered division of labour in society was gradually omitted from the discourse of maternity benefits.

Increasingly, the Bureau pointed to the economic reasons for mothers working outside of the home. As the dominant justification for mother's employment, "need" had important ramifications for how issues like day care were treated. Throughout this period, the Bureau always defended the married woman's right to work. While studies suggested many married women worked for the extra money, the Bureau was quick to note that women had the right to work if they chose and that employment was important for women's equality because of the

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[22] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1908, File #38-9-9, Letter from Marion Royce to Grace McInnis, 2 June 1966; RG 27, Vol. 1904, File #38-11-6-3, "Notes Relating to a project for maternity protection legislation in the Federal Jurisdiction" prepared by the Women's Bureau, November 1966.

value attributed to wage earning in society.[23] Societal discomfort with the employment of women with children (particularly young children) made it difficult to emphasize rights to justify their employment. Without an ideological base to question the gendered division of labour, the Bureau assumed, like the larger society, that home and children were a woman's concern. The importance of women's wages to the family's standard of living, as revealed first in *Married Women Working for Pay*, provided the Bureau with a defense for mothers' employment. A summary of the study declared that one of the "main findings" of the survey was that married women, especially those with children, worked primarily for economic reasons.[24] This article and subsequent statements by the Bureau avoided defining economic "need" when referring to the wages of mothers. It was not clear if their wages kept the family from poverty or provided supplemental income for "extras" like appliances and cars. Still, the concept of "need" became a prominent theme when discussing the employment of mothers. In 1964, Royce argued that women's work outside the home was permanent and inevitable, in part because "their contribution to the maintenance of the family has become a necessity."[25] In discussion of mothers in the paid labour force, the concept of "need" included the "need" of the economy for their labour. In the above 1964 speech, Royce reminded her audience that women's work was inevitable because it was "essential to the life of the community and the nation." Implicit in such statements was the notion that wage earning mothers were a

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[23] See Chapter Two.

[24] *Labour Gazette* (1958), 148.

[25] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #8, Speech by Marion Royce to the B.C. Vocational Education Association, 2 December 1964.

permanent part of the labour force, a fact conditioned by their own circumstances and by the demands of the economy.

The emphasis on "need" was a component of a larger argument that urged society to accept and develop community responses to the problems occasioned by the employment of mothers. A common theme in Royce's speeches was the "ambivalence" of attitude or outlook in society. Society continued to view women's place as in the home, yet the reality was that more and more women were entering the labour force. The result of this ambivalence, according to Royce, was that it stifled individual and societal response to the questions posed by women's employment. What was needed was for society to accept the inevitability of women's labour force participation, including that of mothers, so that society could move forward to develop social responses to the issues which arose.[26] Women were paid workers, wives, and homemakers, a situation which presented a "dilemma." The solution, according to Royce, included a "social answer as well as an individual one":

> The social answer must begin from recognition of the fact that women have become an integral part of the labour force and accepting community responsibility for the supporting services that are needed to enable them to fulfill their various responsibilities effectively.[27]

The social response Royce envisioned was state-supported, community-based child care services (along with maternity leave and benefits). Royce's statements did not challenge the fundamental responsibility of mothers for the care of their children and homes. The

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[26] Ibid; Vol. 2, File #28, Speech by Marion Royce in the Proceedings of theCBC Conference on "The Real World of Women", 6-9 September 1962, 73.

[27] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 1, File #5, Speech by Marion Royce to the Soroptimist Club of Peterborough, 25 November 1964, 10.

"individual" response referred to in the above speech included the strategies employed by women to balance their work and home roles (such as lowering cleaning standards or working part-time and evening hours). Royce viewed these strategies as equally important to the resolution of the "dilemma" posed by mothers' employment. Still, by the early 1960s, she was emphatic in her assertion that the "resourcefulness" of women was not enough. The community cannot, she argued, "escape its share of responsibility":

> For women to be able to work outside the home, either as members of the labour force in its technical sense or as volunteers in the community, there must be adequate provision for the care of children...[28]

The concept of social responsibility for the provision of some services to families, while congruent with the concept of a welfare state, was an important ideological step in arguing for child care services. It did not challenge the gendered division of labour in the home. Nonetheless, state-supported child care was a demand that recognized the disproportionate burden placed on mothers (and families with young children) in participating in the public life outside of the home.

Still, the Bureau argued for child care services using a combination of ideas which conflicted with its larger commitment to women's equality within the labour force. Once again, economic "need" was utilized to justify the employment of mothers, rather than self-fulfillment or equal rights. Royce viewed acceptance of mother's employment as crucial to allow society to move forward towards responding to the strains (real and imagined). "Need" was a concept that fit within the discourse of welfare and social responsibility for a basic

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[28] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 1 File #5, Speech by Marion Royce entitled "The Role of Women Today", October 1960, 12.

minimum standard of living. As such, it provided the rationale for invoking state responsibility for providing a program to address this "need." The problem with an emphasis on economic need, however, is that it undermines the notion of women's right to paid employment if they choose. As Katherine Teghtsoonian argues, arguments stressing economic need may "attach a sense of urgency to the demand for government support" but they also have the "unfortunate effect of undermining the legitimacy of women's claim to equal access to jobs by suggesting that their right to paid employment is qualified and deserving of policy support only under particular circumstances." Implicit in these arguments, also, is the idea that mothers should not work if they do not have to and that the participation of mothers in the labour force is "contingent, or contingently acceptable as is the government expenditure on child care services." Even arguments that emphasize the benefits to the economy, through increased production, greater efficiency, or the demand for female labour, imply a "contingent acceptability" to women's paid work and the policy demands it occasions.[29] While the concept of *social* responsbility for child care was crucial to placing this issue on the policy agenda, the emphasis on "need" restricted the eventual policy options available and the ability of the Bureau to argue for child care services within the jurisdiction of the Department of Labour.

Related to the concept of "need" as a justification for improved child care facilities was the notion of "protection." "Protection," in this case, referred primarily to protection of children, not of mothers. Recourse to the ideology of "protection" in the child care debates was

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[29] Katherine Teghtsoonian, "Work and/or Motherhood: The Ideological Construction of Women's Options in Canadian Child Care Policy Debates", *Canadian Journal of Women and the Law*, 8, 2 (1995), 429-431; Katherine Teghtsoonian, "Promises, Promises: 'Choices for Women' in Canadian and American Child Care Policy Debates", *Feminist Studies*, 22, 1 (Spring 1996), 134-135.

a natural offshoot of society's concern about the potential neglect of the children of wage earning mothers. The Bureau's early interest in the question of child care stemmed from a decision to assess the public debate by examining the impact of mother's employment on children. In 1960, Royce spoke of the social climate surrounding the issue. "Married women who are working outside their home," she noted,"are charged with neglect of their households, especially their children; they are frequently rated as cause number one of rising juvenile delinguency."[30] Lacking any real information on the situation, the Bureau decided to undertake the study *Married Women Working for Pay*. The study's conclusions constituted the first public declaration by the Bureau that there was a need for more and improved child care facilities. The justification for child care, though, emphasized protecting children. Despite the fact that the women in the survey had expressed satisfaction with the care of their children, the Bureau pointed to the study's results to argue the "growing urgency" to assess child care facilities, because "society" could not afford to have its children neglected. Royce criticized the prescriptions of many commentators that mothers simply should not work. Community sponsored child care, Royce argued, had to be seen as a necessary social response rather than as an inducement to employment for mothers. The issue, she argued in 1964, was not the employment of mothers but how to "protect the children." Child protection was a logical focus as the question of child care facilities arose; the preoccupation of society with the centrality of mothers to child welfare could not be ignored. As Alena Heitlinger argues, the "ideology of maternal deprivation" meant that "public debates about childcare services focused only on the

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[30] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #13, Speech by Marion Royce to the Ontario Federation of Labour Conference, 6 November 1960.

needs of children; little was heard of the employment needs of the mother."[31] It was an important line of argument because it re-oriented the debate from whether or not mothers should work to a defense of child care as a social responsibility. Still, it meant a shift away from the Bureau's primary focus on women's equality as workers to a discourse focused on children and protecting the weak.

Perhaps cognizant of the negative stereotypes inherent in the notion of child care as protection, Royce often turned to emphasizing the positive attributes of state-supported child care. These ideas originated from a defense of the wage earning mother from charges of neglect. Like many outspoken career women, Royce often utilized the ideas of social and medical experts to justify outside interests for married women. "Over-protection," Royce reminded her audience in 1960, was as equally "harmful" to children as neglect. As well, women who volunteered or worked outside of the home had a wider range of experiences to bring into family life. The wage earning mother, therefore, could be a better mother.[32] In defense of child care facilities, Royce would frequently invoke the image, not of the neglectful mother, but of the loving mother primarily concerned for her children's benefit. State regulation of child care was necessary so the wage earning mother could have the "inner assurance" that her children were safe and in good care "during her absence from home." This approach narrowed the question to quality of care rather than whether children should be separated from their mothers. Participants at the 1965 conference argued that children

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[31] Heitlinger 1993, 222.

[32] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 1, File #5, Speech by Marion Royce entitled "The Role of Women Today", 1 October 1960, 6.

receiving "good" child care developed equally as well and even had some advantages to children who remained exclusively with their mothers. The benefits of good child care were economic as well. The working mother with "inner assurance" was able to "give her mind to her work," increasing efficiency and productivity.[33] For those unconvinced of the need to protect children, state involvement in the provision and regulation of child care had other benefits which justified greater societal responsibility.

Over the ten years from 1955 to 1965, the Bureau worked to move the issues of child care and maternity leave on to the social policy agenda, despite widespread public disapproval of mothers working outside of the home. As early as 1955, Royce voiced the astounding notion that the employment of mothers would eventually require "new adjustments in the division of labour between men and women both within the family and in society as a whole."[34] In subsequent speeches, however, the gendered division of labour which assigned women primary responsibility for children and homecare was accepted. The crux of the Bureau's arguments was the need for new services and programs, supplied by all levels of government, to aid women to *combine* home and family. Through programs such as maternity protection and expanded child care facilities, Royce believed society could aid the family to balance the changes of the modern world. Ultimately, though, there was no suggestion that the gendered and hierarchical division of labour in the family was the source of the burden faced by women,

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[33] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 2, File #28, Proceedings of CBC Conference on "The Real World of Women", 6-9 September 1962, 75; *Employment of Women With Family Responsibilities* 1965, 18.

[34] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 1, File #5, Speech by Marion Royce entitled "What Now?", 19 August 1955, 9.

nor that it should be fundamentally restructured. The ideas emanating from the Bureau were in essence shaped by the "universe of political discourse" in which it operated. Its liberal feminist commitment to equality of opportunity was easily adapted within the postwar discourse of state welfare. State provision for child care and maternity protection was a necessary intervention in family life to facilitate overall societal well-being. Yet, the privacy and gendered nature of family life remained intact in the post war period, strengthened in part by experts who insisted on the primacy of "mothercare" for the healthy development of children and society.[35] These ideas effectively defined acceptable parameters for understanding women's dual responsibility for paid work and family, thereby structuring the meaning of child care and maternity protection. As the Bureau began to actively lobby in support of policy for child care and maternity protection, the options available were further structured and limited by the priorities of the Labour Department, the bureaucratic structure, and by the limited commitment within government for dealing with the problems of women with children. By 1965, the government was committed to acting in some form on the issues of child care and maternity protection, but its actions were circumscribed by the combination of these factors.

Activities of the Bureau in support of Child Care and Maternity Protection Policies

In the period previous to 1965, the Department of Labour was even less interested in the needs of wage earning mothers than in issues related to married women in the labour force. Departmental policies in this period were premised on economic priorities and directed

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[35] Jane Jenson employs the concept of the "universe of political discourse". See: Jane Jenson, "Gender and Reproduction, or Babies and the State", *Studies in Political Economy,* 20 (Summer 1986): 9-46. Heitlinger 1993, 222.

primarily to increasing the labour force participation of women. These policies, however, made no distinction between women with or without children. This fact explains the assertion made by Edith Lorentsen in 1960 that the government had not taken "any direct action to encourage or discourage participation of women in paid employment." As a senior member of the Legislative branch, Lorentsen's assertion appears strange given the existence of the equal pay law and the removal of several discriminatory provisions. However, Lorentsen was speaking of "those women who have a choice," leading her to specifically mention the absence of legislation affecting child care and maternity protection.[36]

Part of the problem stemmed from the ongoing tendancy to view women with children as reserve members of the work force. As the "marriage bar" disintegrated during the 1950s, due to greater social acceptance of married women as workers, the "pregnancy" bar remained absolute.[37] The tendency to view women with children (and married women because of their potential to become mothers) as reserve workers remained. Royce spoke in 1962 of the negative consequences in policy formation when a woman was viewed as a "contingency" worker rather than as an "effective continuing member of the labour force."[38] Her awareness of this issue was furthered by her experiences within the Department. In 1960, the Director of Economics and Research, W. R. Dymond, argued that the Department should devote more of

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[36] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-2-2 pt.1, Paper on "Trends in Legislation affecting Women's Work", Presented by Edith Lorentsen to the 1960 Seminar on the Women's Bureau, 5 May 1960, 9.

[37] Sangster, "Doing Two Jobs" 1995, 111.

[38] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 2, File #28, Proceedings of the CBC Conference on "The Real World of Women", 6-9 September 1962.

its efforts to women with "career interest" than to mothers since the former constituted a bigger "contribution to the nation's work."[39] Such statements revealed the "ambivalence of outlook" of which Royce often spoke. Government and employers, she pointed out, failed to introduce policies like maternity leave to benefit the wage earning mother because of societal opposition or a belief that such matters were private, yet they were faced with the reality that business and industry depended on the labour of such women.[40]

As the 1960s progressed, however, the Department of Labour became more concerned to address the problems faced by wage earning mothers. When Royce chose the theme "working women with family responsibilities" for the theme of the 1965 conference, both the Deputy Minister and the Assistant Deputy Minister spoke approvingly, noting the theme was "timely" and relevant to departmental considerations regarding future legislation.[41] As in the case of equal pay, the Department's increasing receptivity to legislation resulted partly from a changing social climate. Public debate about the problems of wage earning mothers was increasing. The moral leadership of the International Labour Organization (ILO) provided some impetus for federal action in the areas of maternity protection and day care. The government was under no obligation to conform to ILO standards, but many officials in the

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[39] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1906, File #38-6-6-4, Paper on the "Work of the Economics and Research Branch in the Area of Women's Employment" by W.R. Dymond, Presented to 1960 Seminar of the Women's Bureau, 5 May 1960, 7.

[40] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 2, File #28, Proceedings of the CBC Conference on "The Real World of Women", 6-9 September 1962, 75; *Labour Gazette* (1967), 351.

[41] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1906, File #38-6-6-6 pt.1, Memo from W.R. Dymond (Assistant Deputy Minister) to Marion Royce, 12 January 1965; Handwritten reply to Marion Royce on original memo sent by Royce to G.V. Haythorne outlining proposal for 1965 conference, 8 Janurary 1965.

Department believed Canada should be able to "justify" any decisions to deviate from those standards.[42] The major reason for legislative action within the Department, however, was the increasing importance of wage earning women with children to the labour force. Royce frequently utilized the language of labour supply, production, and efficiency to justify maternity protection and child care policies. Arguments for state-supported child care combined the notion of child welfare with economic production. For example, in 1964, Royce noted that child care services "have economic as well as social justification."[43] Through utilizing the priorities of the Department, a demand like child care, which so obviously challenged the dominant norms of society and the concept of the privacy of family life, could be "re-shaped" into "familiar and non-challenging" language which reflected the priorities of the state. As Susan Prentice argues, "in the language of social policy, childcare is 'needed' because of mothers' labour force participation."[44] By "re-shaping" child care demands to fit departmental priorities, the Bureau facilitated the movement of the issue onto the Department's agenda. However, the Department's interest was congruent on proof that child care affected women's labour force participation.

By the 1960s, the Bureau perceived a clear role for the federal government in the provision of child care services in Canada. As in the case of occupational training programs,

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[42] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 4159, File #722-4-2, Letter from John Mainwaring to Mr. H.J. Waisglas (Director General, Research and Development), 3 February 1969.

[43] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #8, Speech by Marion Royce to the B.C. Vocational Education Association, 2 December 1964, 10.

[44] Susan Prentice, "The 'Mainstreaming' of Daycare", *Resources for Feminist Research*, 17 (September 1988), 61.

the constitutional division of powers placed child care under provincial jurisdiction and the limited services which were available in Canada were operated by the provinces and municipalities.[45] The Bureau, however, could look to the war years during which the federal government facilitated the development of local and provincial child care facilities to aid the entry of mothers into the labour force. For the postwar period, the Bureau envisioned a similar role of leadership, primarily through regulation and financial aid.[46] Regulation of child care services became a central theme of Royce's speeches. Premised on the belief that the primary issue in the child care debate was quality rather than advisability, Royce argued for the establishment of standards regulating the programs, facilities, and staffing of child care services. Regulation fit within the idea of the federal government as a "leader"' in ensuring minimum and equitable standards and services throughout the country. Royce also wanted the federal government to facilitate the expansion of services. Convinced that the existing services were inadequate to meet the need, Royce argued repeatedly for an expansion of government-supported child care services. All three levels of government would have to be involved; for the federal government, the implication was that involvement would be through the provision of financial support attached to standards. Yet, the legislative and administrative means for

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[45] For an examination of child care policy and services in Canada before 1966, see: Susan Prentice, "Workers, Mothers, Reds: Toronto's Postwar Daycare Fight", *Studies in Political Economy*, 30 (Autumn 1989): 115-141; Maureen Baker, *Canadian Family Policies. Cross National Comparisons* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 196-201; Vappu K. Tyyskä, "The Women's Movement and the Welfare State: Child Care Policy in Canada and Finland, 1960-1990", Ph.D. Thesis, University of Toronto, 1993, 36-39.

[46] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 2, File #28, Proceedings of the CBC Conference on "The Real World of Women", 6-9 September 1962, 75; Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1908, File #38-9-9, Letter from Marion Royce to Grace McInnis (M.P. Vancouver-Kingsway), 2 June 1966.

achieving these objectives were not clearly outlined in the Bureau's policy proposals.

By contrast, the Bureau was very specific and adamant in its assertion that the first step to development of a child care policy was further research. This was an understandable position given the primacy of research to the Bureau's functions; it also reflected a very real lack of information about the issues surrounding wage earning mothers and child care. As Royce noted in a 1962 speech, "one of the very real obstacles to tackling the problem" of child care was a lack of information about rudimentary issues like the number of wage earning mothers and the ages of their children.[47] To this end, the Bureau devoted its efforts to stimulating research and discussion on these questions. The 1965 conference of the Bureau, directed towards the "employment of women with family responsibilities," included child care and maternity protection among the major topics. Still, Royce believed a study was needed to assess the availability and form of existing facilities and to determine their adequacy for meeting demand in Canada. Arguing for a survey of child care facilities in 1962, she suggested the method for achieving this end. Family and child welfare agencies, she argued, could be utilized to conduct the survey or at least used in a consultative role.[48] In this assessment, Royce was not alone. At the 1965 conference, Freda Manson of the Ontario Welfare Council stressed the importance of a survey to determine "need," and suggested using the "appropriate social agencies" as the "the best source of information."[49]

The Bureau was successful in convincing the government to study child care. In

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[47] Ibid., Proceedings of the CBC Conference on "The Real World of Women", 75.

[48] Ibid., 75.

[49] *Employment of Women With Family Responsibilities"* 1965, 17.

August 1965, the National Employment Committee (NEC) passed a resolution in support of the Canadian Welfare Council (CWC) undertaking a study of the availability and adequacy of child care facilities for wage earning mothers. Subsequently, the CWC submitted a proposal for the study, which the NEC approved with a recommendation that the Department of Labour fund the survey.[50] Initial support within the Department went beyond simply supporting the research project. In comments to Royce, the Deputy Minister suggested the important issue was the question of the adequacy of existing facilities and the potential involvement of government in expanding child care. The survey of the CWC was divided into two parts: the first part was to assess existing facilities; the second was to determine the need or adequacy of these facilities to meet demand. Referring to this division, the Deputy Minister, G.V. Haythorne, argued:

> The most important question, I would think, is <u>how</u> can we attack the problem of determining outstanding needs and of developing adequate facilities for meeting them. <u>These</u> latter questions need attention <u>now</u> not in 2 years time! {emphasis his}[51]

Royce concurred, agreeing there was a need for "immediate action." In previous speeches, it was clear that Royce perceived the survey as a precursor to establishing more facilities through government initiative. "We need careful surveys of the existing need in individual

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[50] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-11-6-41, Draft Proposal prepared by the Canadian Welfare Council for Department of Labour regarding Studies of Day Care for Children, 1 December 1965.

[51] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-11-6-41, Copy of resolution from National Employment Committee meeting with handwritten comments by G.V. Haythorne to Marion Royce, 25 November 1965; Reply from Marion Royce to G.V. Haythorne, 30 November 1965.

communities," she argued in 1962, "to ensure that adequate facilities be made available."[52] The Deputy Minister, it appears, also saw potential for government action in creating child care facilities as a result of the initial studies.

After this positive start, commitment to the child care issue within the Labour Department gradually diminished. To oversee and work with the CWC, an interdepartmental advisory committee was established, composed of representatives from Labour, Health and Welfare, and Manpower. Concern about the cost of this extensive survey, however, led to approval for a smaller, more limited study. Funding was granted to the CWC to assess only the existing facilities for child care in Canada; the more important question of the *adequacy* of these facilities was put aside for a later date because it constituted the more expensive component.[53] Convinced of the urgency and importance of the second question, the Bureau developed a means for assessing, on a much more limited scale, the question of need. Drawing on existing resources to avoid the issue of cost, the Bureau arranged to have a supplementary questionnaire attached to the monthly Labour Force Survey conducted by the Department. The questionnaire examined the child care arrangements made by wage earning mothers and the problems encountered. Acting as head of the group that developed the questionnaire and coordinated its implementation, Royce struggled to re-orient the Department's focus to the question of whether more child care facilities were needed so that the government could develop a response. In a letter outlining the reasons for the supplementary questionnaire,

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[52] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 2, File #28, Proceedings of the CBC Conference on "The Real World of Women", 75.

[53] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-11-6-41, Minutes of Meeting of Interdepartmental Committee to discuss draft proposal, 9 December 1965.

Royce argued additional data was needed to complement the study of the CWC to determine the adequacy of facilities, "as a starting point for further community action that will require financial assistance from all three levels of government."[54]

These lofty goals for the study were not realized. The lack of commitment to the child care issue within the Department ultimately affected the outcome of the survey. Royce intended to have the results, after analysis by Eileen Sufrin in Economics and Research, published as a separate report of the Women's Bureau by the end of 1967. Due to several delays (which were typical), the final version of the report was not ready until 1970, after Royce's retirement. In its final form, the report did not assess the adequacy of existing services or the problems experienced by wage earning mothers in the search for good child care. Primarily factual, it listed statistics such as the ages of children, the hours worked, and the earnings of mothers.[55] Earlier versions of the report, however, had included some analysis of the question of adequacy. For example, an August 1969 edition spoke of "different categories of care arrangements which might be needed" based on the ages of children and their different care requirements. The text included the assertion that existing child care facilities were "totally inadequate." It suggested a need for more day nurseries as well as programs for older children like school lunches and "supervised after-school activities."[56] Heavily criticized by the

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[54] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1904, File #38-11-6-4-2, Letter from Marion Royce to W.I. Moore (Special Surveys Division, Dominion Bureau of Statistics), 1 December 1966.

[55] Canada, Department of Labour (Women's Bureau), *Working Mothers and their Child-Care Arrangements*, 1970.

[56] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 4166, File #722-4-13, Draft copy of "Report on Child Care Arrangements of Working Mothers", Dated August 1969.

interdepartmental committee overseeing the CWC study and by Department officials such as Sylva Gelber (new Director of the Bureau), the early reports were severely edited and the analytical material removed.[57] While the basis of the criticism is not clear from correspondence, the end result was a report which failed to delve into any of the issues of adequacy deemed so important by Royce. In the end, both the CWC study and the supplementary report of the Bureau simply studied the types of child care arrangements wage earning mothers were using.

The "ambivalence" of attitude to which Royce so frequently spoke played an important part in de-limiting the terms of study of the child care question. Despite a lack of evidence, Royce was convinced at an early date that there was a need for more child care facilities, as evidenced by treatment of the issue in *Married Women Working for Pay*. Other women shared this belief. By 1970, *Chatelaine* magazine was adamant in its assertion there was an "urgent and apparent" need for expanded child care although it noted a lack of information on the Canadian situation.[58] Demand for expanded and state-supported child care required an acceptance of the permanency of mothers' employment. For the majority of Canadians, lingering beliefs continued to assert the superiority of maternal care for children and the privacy of child care as a family issue. Conflict often resulted from awareness of social change coupled with lingering traditional values. The conflict was evident in a 1964 survey at the

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[57] Some of the comments questioned the methodology used (and thus the conclusions as well), but the reasons why the study was opposed by the interdepartmental committee and by Gelber are not clear. NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 4166, File #722-4-13 pt.1, Letter from Sylva Gelber to J.P. Després (Assistant Deputy Minister), 17 September 1969.

[58] For example, see, Mollie Gillen, "Why You Still Can't Get Day Care", *Chatelaine* (March 1970), 78.

Canadian National Exhibition (CNE) in which 54 percent of respondents stated they favoured community supported, low-cost child care but 63 percent said they would not use such care if it were available. These results mirrored those of the Bureau's 1957 study in which respondents argued a need for more child care facilities but not for themselves. According to the authors of the CNE survey, "personal conflict existed in the matter of a mother's responsibility for looking after her own children."[59] Social ambivalence resulting from this conflict of values stifled and limited debate on the problems of mothers' employment. As the Bureau's 1965 conference concluded:

> We shall never get anywhere with this problem of day care until we resolve our conflicting attitudes to the working mother...Reluctance to accept the need for day nurseries is the real obstacle to action. We do not accept the fact that substantial numbers of mothers of young children are employed.[60]

In the face of widespread disapproval or unease about mothers working outside of the home, the Labour Department was unlikely to pursue a national child care policy.

Child care policy was also hampered by its association with charity, a stigma which was reinforced by the inclusion of day care funding under the Canada Assistance Plan (CAP) in 1966. Traditionally provision of child care in Canada was for the children of the disadvantaged or poor.[61] Canadian social values accepted employment for poor or single mothers who needed to support their families; child care for the children of these women was viewed as a necessary

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[59] *Employment of Women with Family Responsibilities* 1965, 7.

[60] *Employment of Women With Family Responsibilities* 1965, 17.

[61] Ceta Ramkhalawansingh, "Women during the Great War", in *Women at Work: Ontario 1850-1930*, eds. Janice Acton, Penny Goldsmith & Bonnie Shepard (Toronto: Canadian Women's Educational Press, 1974), 290-293; Baker 1995, 196-201.

social evil. In the postwar period, the association of state-supported child care with charity for the children of the poor or for children with special needs continued. The concept of "need" as it pertained to child care was most commonly associated with the socio-economic "need" of the disadvantaged; the idea of a nation-wide state-supported child care system as a social "need" benefitting society in general found little support. These attitudes help to explain the apparently contradictory views expressed in the survey results noted above during which respondents supported child care while declaring they personally would not use such a service.[62]

The association of state-supported child care with charity and poverty was embodied in the CAP of 1966. One of the cornerstones of Canada's welfare state, CAP provided for federal support of social assistance and welfare services through a cost sharing formula of 50%-50% with the provinces; after 1966, it became the primary means of government support for child care facilities. The requirement of means testing for eligibility to the services covered under CAP institutionalized child care in Canada as a welfare service provided only to those demonstrating socio-economic "need." For the majority of Canadians, including the growing middle class, the provision of child care remained a private matter negotiated on the free market.[63] While CAP did facilitate an expansion of child care spaces after 1966, most commentators argue the placement of child care under welfare has severely limited the terms of debate and state policy in the following years. Following the tabling of the Report of the Royal

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[62] Similarly, Joan Sangster finds in her study of working women in Peterborough that the women claimed they would not have used child care facilities if they had been available because of the association with welfare. Sangster, *Earning Respect* 1995, 242.

[63] Heitlinger 1993, 225; Sangster, "Doing Two Jobs" 1995, 118-120.

Commission on the Status of Women (RCSW), the demand for universal state supported child care became a primary goal of the burgeoning women's movement. This demand required a reconceptualization of employment for mothers as a social right and of child care as a societal responsibility, while challenging the gendered division of labour and the lore of "mothercare." However, the discourse of welfare continued to dominate the child care policy debates within government, ultimately perpetuating negative beliefs about wage-earning mothers and limiting the development of services and policies to aid their work outside the home.[64]

Within the government, the process of defining an issue to determine jurisdictional responsibility also severely limited the terms of debate and policy options for child care. Despite ideological support for the CWC study, the Labour Department debated participation within the interdepartmental committee overseeing the study to determine if the subject matter was relevant to departmental priorities. In addressing the question of Labour's involvement, officials from various departments invoked the language and concepts of labour supply, productivity, and efficiency to justify participation. In the initial proposals, the NEC and the CWC referred to the lower labour force participation rates of mothers and noted the Labour Department's concern to facilitate the entry of women into the labour force and reduce

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[64] Sangster, "Doing Two Jobs" 1995, 118-120. For a discussion of the child care movement and state policy on child care after 1970, see, Freda L. Paltiel, "State Initiatives: Impetus and Effects", in *Women and the Canadian State*, eds. Caroline Andrew & Sanda Rodgers (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1997), 31-35; Lois Harder, "The Trouble with Democracy. Child Care Reform in Ontario and the Politics of Participation", in *And Still We Rise. Feminist Political Mobilizing in Contemporary Canada*, ed. Linda Carty (Toronto: Women's Press, 1993), 243-257; Rianne Mahon, "'Both Wage Earner and Mother': Women's Organizing and Childcare Policy in Sweden and Canada", in *Women's Organizing and Public Policy in Canada and Sweden*, eds. Linda Briskin & Mona Eliasson (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999), 238-279; Heitlinger 1993, 222-239; Tyyskä 1993.

absenteeism.[65] G.V. Haythorne stressed the importance of labour supply issues for ensuring ongoing departmental interest in child care policy. Referring to the results of the survey, Haythorne argued:

> If it should be the case that it is of marginal impact on their participation, then the reason for day care facilities would rest on their desirability from welfare and social points of view, rather than from the point of view of the necessity in terms of expanding the employment of women in the labour force.[66]

Clearly, should the study reveal little correlation between improved child care facilities and greater participation and efficiency among wage earning mothers, the Department would no longer be able to justify involvement in policy development. Royce understood the contingency of departmental involvement in child care as evidenced by her frequent use of arguments stressing the positive impacts on women's labour force participation. While configuring issues like child care within the dominant discourse of the department increased the likelihood of its adoption, it diminished the likelihood of child care being conceptualized as an equality issue. Since the 1960s, labour supply issues have been a dominant theme in child care debates within government. While these issues are undoubtedly connected in important ways, the linking of women's equality with other social and economic priorities conveys "a subtle denigration of the inherent value of women's equality."[67] Recognition of child care, and

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[65] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-11-6-41, Draft Proposal prepared by the Canadian Welfare Council for the Department of Labour regarding Studies of Day Care for Children, 1 December 1965.

[66] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-11-6-41, Memo from W.R. Dymond (Assistant Deputy Minister) to G.V. Haythorne (Deputy Minister), 3 December 1965.

[67] Teghtsoonian 1995, 431.

of a universal national program, as a crucial component to women's equality has been hindered by the need to find some alternatate economic "good" as justification for government action.

Jurisdictional boundaries further limited the involvement of the Department in child care policy. While Labour was willing to consider the child care question to the extent that it impacted on women's labour force participation, competing claims were steadily moving the issue into the jurisdiction of Health and Welfare. The composition of the interdepartmental committee and the funding questions surrounding the CWC survey illustrate the impact of bureaucratic structure on policy meaning. The interdepartmental committee which oversaw the CWC survey was composed of representatives from Labour, Manpower, and Health and Welfare, reflecting recognition that the issues involved overlapped the priorities and mandate of all three departments. Still, initial correspondence suggests that child care was perceived as an issue most relevant and of greatest concern to Labour; the proposals sought not only to convince Labour to participate in the survey but also to fund the project. However, as the details of government participation were worked out, Health and Welfare assumed the dominant role, including the provision of funding.[68] While budget squabbles are endemic to bureaucracies, the funding question reflected an evolving consensus that child care was primarily a "health and welfare" issue. Thus, Haythorne was fully supportive of a study of the child care issue, but sought to qualify the respective roles of each department, as well as the provinces and community agencies. In response to this issue, Royce argued that ultimately

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[68] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-11-6-41, Draft proposal prepared by the Canadian Welfare Council, 1 December 1965; Minutes of a meeting held to discuss the Draft Proposal, 9 December 1965; Minutes of the Interdepartmental Committee on a Study of Day Care, beginning 5 April 1966.

Health and Welfare should have a prominent role, particularly if the result of the study was the establishment of child care programs involving all three levels of government. As support, she pointed to the examples of the US and Ontario, both of which administered child care programs through their respective welfare departments. Furthermore, she recommended that further policy development should include social welfare agencies and experts on child development and health, including people from the departments of education and health.[69] While Royce clearly sought an important role for the Bureau in the early research stages of the child care question, her comments suggest she believed that the eventual development and operation of a child care program in Canada would fall to the Department of Health and Welfare. In this assumption, she was correct as evidenced by the inclusion of child care under CAP a year later, which did effectively transfer the issue into the jurisdiction of welfare. Following this change, Labour's involvement in the child care issue was minimal.

The issue of maternity protection was not as encumbered by jurisdictional issues as was child care. By the late 1960s, as child care policy moved out of Labour's sphere, the Department was moving steadily towards legislation ensuring both leave and benefits for pregnant women. The growing concern within society and the government over the issues facing wage earning mothers ensured that the question of maternity protection would come under consideration. Unlike child care, it was a much less contentious issue with a long history of debate beginning with the 1919 convention of the ILO. At the federal level, a precedent

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[69] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-11-6-41, Resolution by the NEC sub-committee on a survey of child care facilities with handwritten notes by G.V. Haythorne, 25 November 1965; Reply by Marion Royce to G.V. Haythorne, 30 November 1965.

existed for maternity leave. During the war years, the hiring of married women for the civil service had led to the introduction of provisions for maternity leave. Following the war, the regulations were continued and eventually amended and improved.[70] In 1962, these regulations were further strengthened when maternity leave was made a right for women in the civil service. The growing role of the federal government in the establishment of national labour standards provided further impetus for extending these provisions to women working in industries under federal jurisdiction. In late 1966, the Women's Bureau prepared for consideration by the Department a detailed report outlining the history of maternity leave provisions within Canada, which examined the major issues and included specific recommendations for federal legislation. The Deputy Minister forwarded the report with his comments to the Assistant Deputy Ministers; the comments did not question the inevitability of legislation but were concerned with the most expedient legislative means for introducing maternity leave.[71] There was little debate about whether this issue was within the mandate of Labour. In fact, when the NEC recommended a study be made of maternity protection for women to determine if federal legislation was necessary, the Minister of Manpower and Immigration passed the recommendation to Labour. Both Ministers agreed it was a matter

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[70] In 1958, the regulations provided leave without pay for two months before the birth and six months after, a standard which exceeded the ILO's recommendation of twelve weeks (most to be taken after the birth).

[71] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1904, File #38-11-6-3, "Notes relating to a project for maternity protection legislation in the Federal Jurisdiction" prepared by the Women's Bureau, November 1966; Memo from G.V. Haythorne to Marion Royce regarding the above "Notes", 3 January 1967.

appropriately addressed in the latter department.[72] By April 1967, the Deputy Minister wrote to the heads of all branches. Noting the increasing pressure within the House of Commons in support of maternity leave and the likelihood that the RCSW would support the measure, he argued that legislation was inevitable.[73] Unencumbered by jurisdictional issues, the Department was comfortably moving towards legislation by mid 1967, with only the questions of legislative form and content to determine.

Throughout this period, the Bureau not only lobbied in support of federal initiative in the area of maternity leave but also sought to influence the form and content of the eventual legislation. Comments by Royce in 1962 suggest she wondered why the government had not already provided for maternity leave given the long history of debate including at the level of the ILO. Noting the lack of federal and provincial legislation except for weak provisions in BC and Alberta, she asserted that Canada had been "curiously dilatory about the matter of maternity protection."[74] As in the case of equal pay and other forms of labour legislation, Royce believed a federal law was important although provincial measures were necessary to ensure coverage for all women. The importance of federal "leadership" to the provinces in labour matters was invoked as the main reason for the development of a federal maternity leave

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[72] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1904, File #38-11-6-3, Letter from Jean Marchand (Minister of Manpower and Immigration) to John R. Nicholson (Minister of Labour), 2 February 1967; Memo from G.V. Haythorne to J.P. Despres (Assistant Deputy Minister of Labour) and Jessica Findlay, 6 March 1967.

[73] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1904, File #38-11-6-3, Memo from G.V. Haythorne to Assistant Deputy Ministers, 18 April 1967.

[74] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol 2, File #28, Proceedings of the CBC Conference on "The Real World of Women", held 6-9 September 1962, 77.

law. Studies by the Bureau, including the 1967 survey by Sheila Woodsworth, revealed the inadequacy and variation of existing provisions under the provinces and collective agreements.[75] In her recommendations for maternity leave in 1966, Royce specifically referred to this inconsistency in national standards as justification for a federal law. "To maintain a position of leadership in the nation in the field of labour standards," she argued, "the Federal Government has particular responsibility to adopt legislative measures [for maternity leave] that will ensure a high standard of working conditions within its jurisdiction."[76] In line with this logic, Royce lobbied for the provision of maternity leave through an amendment to the standards code. The provisions recommended, conforming largely to those recommended by the ILO and found in other jurisdictions, included six weeks of prenatal leave followed by eight weeks postnatal leave, with protection from dismissal during this period and a guarantee of re-instatement to a job of equivalent responsibility and seniority. Although some argued a need for a separate legislative enactment, Royce believed these requirements were matters related to working conditions and workers' rights and fell appropriately under the concept of "standards."

This concept of maternity leave was challenged, however, as the Department debated the best means of enacting the legislation. In response to Royce's recommendations in 1966, Haythorne, while in agreement on the need for legislation, questioned whether the standards

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[75] Joan Sangster notes the inconsistent treatment accorded pregnant women previous to implementation of provincial and federal laws in the 1970s. Sangster, *Earning Respect* 1995, 239.

[76] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1904, File #38-11-6-3, "Notes relating to a project for maternity protection legislation in the Federal Jurisdiction" prepared by the Women's Bureau, November 1966, Section VII. This argument was also made at the 1965 Women's Bureau conference. See, *Employment of Women with Family Responsibilities* 1965, 38.

code was the appropriate means. Pointing to the recently passed Canada Labour (Safety) Code, he argued that existing sections of the safety code were "sufficient" to cover maternity protection. Expediency was emphasized; maternity leave provisions could easily be slotted into existing regulations in safety while inclusion in standards would require an amendment.[77] The sections noted related to "the age, the health and physical requirements and the qualifications of persons who may be employed in particular occupations." While Haythorne's comments emphasized ease of implementation, consensus also existed that maternity leave was an issue which could logically be configured as a "health and safety" issue. Gradually, department correspondence began to emphasize the "health and safety aspects of maternity protection" in discussions of legislative form.[78] Even Royce, who continued to argue maternity leave belonged in the standards code, perceived a relationship between maternity protection and "safety." In notes to her successor, she stressed the need for a study of the health and safety issues affecting wage earning women, including "pregnancy," "ability to work," and "maternity policies and benefits," issues which had "importance" because of the existence of the new safety code.[79] These comments suggest Royce sought to utilize the potential of the new code to achieve some of her research and legislative objectives. By slotting maternity leave into the Safety Code, the construction of this issue as a health matter rather than one of women's rights

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[77] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1904, File #38-11-6-3, Memo from G.V. Haythorne to Marion Royce, 3 January 1967.

[78] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1904, File #38-11-6-3, Memo from G.V. Haythorne to Assistant Deputy Ministers, 18 April 1967.

[79] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #13, Memo from Marion Royce to Jessica Findlay regarding "Suggested further subjects of study", 19 January 1967.

was reinforced, even if expediency was the initial objective. As the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of women was to note a decade later, "pregnancy is still looked upon as an illness."[80]

The construction of maternity leave as a health and safety issue rather than one of women's rights as workers was reflected in the legislative proposals. At times, maternity leave provisions were presented as a necessary means to equalize women's status and position in the labour force by offsetting the inequality caused by women's sole responsibility for childbearing. Proponents of maternity leave emphasized the provisions guaranteeing women's right to return to an equivalent job and protection from dismissal during the period of leave. For the most part, though, the dominant emphasis was on maternity leave as protection for women as mothers and their children. The 1952 revisions to the ILO convention were remniscent of the early protective legislation which was in the process of being eradicated; pregnant and nursing women, it stated, should be protected from night work, overtime, and performing tasks involving vibrating machines, heavy weights, excessive standing, or balancing. Although motivated by the potential for real harm to a woman or her child by some industrial situations, the emphasis on women's health resulted in maternity leave provisions which were often restrictive and diminished women's control over their working position. A notable example was the regulations covering the leave period. In the 1966 recommendations, the Bureau argued for a compulsory period of leave unless shortening was approved by an "authority"; "approval" was to include a medical certificate and interview with an occupational health

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[80] Canada, Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, *Recommendations of the CACSW By Subject*, 1981, 58.

nurse, a personnel officer, or a supervisor.[81] Notably, employer representatives, such as the personnel officer, with no medical training were given more credence than the female employee to determine "the most salutary circumstances possible for mother and child." Royce obviously struggled with this aspect of the proposals. She noted that financial hardship which accompanied periods of leave without pay led many women to return to work early.[82] The emphasis on protecting health, particularly that of the innocent child, ultimately justified a mandatory leave which removed control from the working woman.[83]

Recognition of the hardship which could accompany a forced leave led the Bureau to lobby for maternity benefits to accompany the leave. Entitlement to wages during the period of leave and of societal responsibility for some of the costs of child bearing, however, did not enter the debate. The spectre of family poverty meant that economic "need" became the dominant justification for the development of a maternity benefits programs. In this construction, benefits were to be separate from the leave provisions and subsumed under the income maintenance system. Royce argued in her 1966 recommendations that "wage-related maternity benefits" would have to be considered "within a total program of income security." Pregnancy brought a loss of wages at a time of increased cost, particularly in the absence of

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[81] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1904, File #38-11-6-3, "Notes relating to a project for maternity protection legislation in the Federal Jurisdiction" prepared by the Women's Bureau, November 1966, Section VII.

[82] Ibid.

[83] Similarly, the Report of the RCSW presents conflicting arguments justifying maternity leave legislation. While arguing the need for such legislation to ensure women's "right to work" and "freedom of choice," the Commission recommended that postnatal leave be made compulsory. Canada, Royal Commission on the Status of Women, *Report*, 1970, 86-87.

health insurance. A period of maternity leave "would in some ways help both mother and child, if compulsory" but also "do considerable harm by preventing the mother from earning the money she needs for her family."[84] Similar arguments were made in the 1967 study of maternity protection laws. The author concluded with a strong appeal for benefits with the question: "Do we mistakenly assume that all women are supported by their husbands during the maternity period?"[85] All subsequent reports on the issue of maternity benefits placed the issue within this context of "need" and family hardship. Consequently, the search for a source of funds for a benefits programs turned to the developing social welfare programs. Before her retirement, Royce began preliminary discussions with Norman Cragg of Health and Welfare to search for a means to implement a benefits program within existing income security provisions.[86] As in the case of child care, "need" rather than workers' rights constructed the meaning of maternity benefits.

The consensus that benefits should be provided through the social welfare system led to a search for a means to implement the program. As in the case of the leave legislation, officials sought to slot the benefits program into existing provisions to avoid the difficulty and time of creating a new social program. In November 1966, Royce was unable to recommend a means for implementing a benefits program; she noted "inevitable complications and consequent

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[84] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1904, File #38-11-6-3, "Notes relating to a project for maternity protection legislation in the Federal Jurisdiction" prepared by the Women's Bureau, November 1966, Sections VI and VII.

[85] Canada, Department of Labour (Women's Bureau), *Maternity Protection for Women Workers* 1967, 39.

[86] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #13, Memo from Marion Royce to Jessica Findlay on "Legislative concerns of the Women's Bureau", 19 January 1967.

delays" because of the greater complexity of this issue.[87] Most commentators recognized that benefits would have to be supplied through the federal government, since neither the provinces nor employers agreed to the economic costs involved.[88] The conceptual distinction between benefits as a welfare matter and leave as a labour matter was furthered by the recognition that different administrative and jurisdictional provisions would be needed. Gradually, the focus turned to the Unemployment Insurance (UI) program. Referring to the upcoming review and revision of the UI Act, Royce raised the possibility of including maternity benefits within that program in January 1967. The Bureau's report on maternity protection in 1967 also argued for provision through UI because of the assumption that an alternative social insurance program would not be developed. Since the UI system had the administrative apparatus in place for processing claims, it seemed the logical choice. Also as Royce pointed out, many women, through "subterfuge," were already seeking income replacement through the UI system while on maternity leave.[89] Both arguments became the primary reasons for the eventual decision to

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[87] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1904, File #38-11-6-3, "Notes relating to a project for maternity protection legislation in the Federal Jurisdiction" prepared by the Women's Bureau, November 1966, Section VII.

[88] The ILO recommended that benefits be provided through a national social insurance fund and not through a charge on employers. Canada, because of its federal system, lacked a *federal* social insurance fund providing income maintenance to workers who had suffered a loss of wages due to illness, disability, etc. This type of fund was envisioned as the best form for inclusion of maternity benefits. See, NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 4159, File #722-4-2 pt.2, Report of the Working Party Committee on Maternity Leave entitled "Legislative Guidelines", December 1968, 8-9.

[89] NAC, MR Papers, MG 30C206, Vol. 3, File #13, Memo from Marion Royce to Jessica Findlay on "Legislative concerns of the Women's Bureau", 19 January 1967; *Maternity Protection for Women Workers* 1967, 39.

implement federal provision of maternity benefits through the UI system.[90] Federally, Canada lacked a comprehensive system of social insurance for loss of wages due to illness, disability, or other reasons. The programs in place were haphazard and, for the most part, provincially administered. Notably, neither the Bureau (nor subsequent commentators) suggested the creation of a new federal insurance program for maternity benefits. Perhaps it was the creation of a new program for which Royce perceived "inevitable complications and consequent delays." Undoubtedly, she perceived a greater chance of success in realizing the goal of maternity benefits if a means could be found to "slot" it into an existing program.

The bureaucratic imperatives which made the UI system a practical means to implement a maternity benefits program further limited the program in its applicability and conception. Reports of the Women's Bureau recommending utilization of the UI system did not mention any perceived limitations or problems. The Report of the RCSW noted the incompatibility between the principle of availability for work and maternity leave and that many women would be ineligible; however, it also argued the benefits of utilizing a system with administrative procedures in place.[91] The problem, according to Leslie Pal, is that maternity benefits has been grafted on to a system with which it is fundamentally incompatible.[92] The resultant legislation has created a benefits system which does not apply to all wage earning women because of its encasement within a system geared to labour market priorities stressing "attachment," a concept

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[90] Leslie A. Pal, "Maternity Benefits and Unemployment Insurance: A Question of Policy Design", *Canadian Public Policy* XII, 3 (September 1985), 553-554.

[91] RCSW, *Report*, 86.

[92] Pal 1985, 552.

that has failed to recognize women's different patterns of labour force participation. Even with revisions since 1971, the maternity benefits system in Canada continues to provide only limited coverage to Canadian wage earning women, a low level of income replacement, and a period of benefits inadequate to the demands of child care.[93] As Pal argues, the UI system is unable to provide a benefit system based on family support because it is geared towards economic priorities dictated by labour market demands. "Programs are more than mere delivery mechanisms, to which new features may be indiscriminately added."[94]

Conclusion

Royce retired from the Department in January 1967 with the knowledge that the government was committed to introducing maternity leave and benefits and that the Bureau had played an important role in shaping the policy outcome. The creation of the Working Party Committee to Study Maternity Leave in mid 1968 signalled the Department's resolve to finally develop legislation, although in this matter, as in others, the Department would wait for the Report of the RCSW.[95] Nonethelss, the work of the Working Party Committee (and of the

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[93] As of January 2001, women are entitled to one year of maternity benefits provided through the Employment Insurance system. Although this change is a significant improvement over the previous provision of twenty-seven weeks, income replacement remains at approximately 55 percent. Maternity leave provisions, provided through provincial legislation, have not yet been changed to provide an equivalent period of guaranteed leave.

[94] Pal 1985, 552, 559.

[95] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 4159, File #722-4-2, Memo from Phil Cohen (Chairman, Working Party Committee to Study Maternity Leave) to Members, 8 July 1968; Vol. 1904, File #38-11-3-4, Memo from J.P. Despres (Assistant Deputy Minister) to Sylva Gelber, 21 October 1968; Vol. 1904, File #38-11-6-3, Memo from G.V. Haythorne to J.P. Despres and Jessica Findlay, 6 March 1967.

RCSW) on this issue was informed by the reports developed in the Bureau under Royce. The Working Party Committee used the Bureau's 1966 recommendations and the 1967 study by Woodsworth which were "sound and required only the addition of later and current data."[96] Maternity leave was provided to federal employees by an amendment to the Standards act in 1971; at the same time, maternity benefits were implemented within the UI system. Royce was probably pleased to see the realization of these program goals for which the Bureau had worked.

The outcome of the child care debate was more equivocal. A limited provision for state support of child care was included in the CAP in 1966. However, the Department's interest diminished as reflected in the lack of support for research into substantive issues such as the adequacy of existing facilities. Before her retirement, Royce worked to ensure the completion of the Bureau's reports on maternity protection and child care facilities; with the first, she was successful but the latter study, mired in delays, was substantially incomplete in January 1967. The end product published three years later was a disappointing statistical compilation which added little to the child care debate. Although Royce did not perceive a direct role for Labour in the implementation of a federal child care program, she did believe the priorities of the Labour Department were connected to the child care question and thus believed that an important research role continued to exist. Even this role was lessened as evidenced by the meagre content of the child care survey.

The Bureau's 1967 study on maternity protection concluded with some thoughts about

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[96] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 4159, File #722-4-2 pt.1, Minutes of the Working Party Committee to Study Maternity Leave, 12 July 1968.

society's "ambivalence" towards wage earning mothers:

> Employer attitudes reflect our society's ambivalence towards working mothers. A man who as a citizen and as a father may believe firmly that mothers should not work, may find himself unable as an employer to run his establishment without them.
> Are we on the one hand depending on them [working mothers] to keep our offices and stores and hospitals in operation but on the other hand giving them too little help with their double responsibilities?[97]

Society, according to the Bureau, was still unable in 1967 to respond to the issues caused by mothers' employment because of a reluctance to accept both its existence and inevitability. By the 1970s, as women's issues entered into public debate and the women's movement surged forward, more attention would be directed towards the tensions and possible solutions occasioned by the increasing employment of mothers. Yet, as Freda Paltiel argues, the principle of child care as the responsibility of society as well as the family was radical in the early 1970s. For most Canadians, children were viewed as the responsibility of the family and not of society.[98] Given this "ambivalence," the Bureau's argument that society needed to develop programs and services to aid the wage earning mother to balance home and work responsibilities was radical for the time. Still, its inability to conceptualize "difference" within a traditional liberal feminist framework and to include special rights as a component of equality meant these issues were not argued within a discourse of women's rights as workers. As a unit of the Labour Department, the Bureau needed to emphasize the "labour" aspects of its demands. Consequently, policy concerns had to be "shaped" to fit within a departmental discourse focused on maximizing labour supply, production, and efficiency. As a result, child

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[97] *Maternity Protection for Women Workers* 1967, 33.

[98] Paltiel 1997, 32.

care and maternity protection were examined with regard to their impact on women's labour force participation and efficiency. The concept of greater societal responsibility for the physical and financial care of children as a precondition to women's equality was further negated in this process. The radical feminist challenge to the gendered division of labour in society had little long-term impact on the public debate about these issues after 1970. Neither child care nor maternity protection debates moved beyond the focus on the needs of the wage earning mother to one which encompassed the inequality faced by all women due to the gendered division of labour (and care) in society.[99] Accompanying the focus on labour force participation was the discourse of "protection" of women and children. Legislation was structured and justified in terms of its impact on the health of women and their children and on the financial well-being of the family. Support for a minimum standard of well-being in the postwar welfare state created the institutional justification for income maintenance policies. In this way, both child care and maternity benefits were "shaped" to fit within existing social welfare programs, a process furthered by the institutional imperatives which placed them under the jurisdiction of the new Department of Health and Welfare. By constructing day care and maternity benefits as issues of health and welfare, both moved further from the debate about women's rights as workers. To some extent, the construction of these issues in terms of women's health and of economic "need" was detrimental to the general struggle for women's equality as workers; by seeking to "safeguard" women's health or stabilize the family economy, acceptance of women's right to work was qualified and deemed deserving of support only

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[99] Prentice 1988; Teghtsoonian 1996; Pal 1985.

under extra circumstances.[100]

Still, it is important not to minimize the Bureau's accomplishments in initiating debate on the questions of child care and maternity protection and at moving them onto the government agenda. The debate and policy formation that occurred in the Bureau and the Department does suggest that women's issues and goals can be co-opted and re-shaped by their placement on the policy agenda. Still, the "ambivalence" of which Royce spoke suggests that the challenge in these early years was to engage society and government in a debate about the repercussions of mothers' employment. Thus, even as legislative initiatives were in process for maternity protection and child care studies were under way, the 1967 study concluded by reference to society's "ambivalence." Realizing that public attitudes still presented the major obstacle to the wage earning woman, the Bureau's study on maternity protection concluded with the suggestion:

> Perhaps we can think less about 'working mothers', with the old connotation of fearful neglect, latch keys and cold suppers. Perhaps we can think more about 'employed women with family responsibilities', with the new connotation of a brave effort to combine two jobs in a new way. This latter attitude could be the starting point to further much needed medical research into the problems involved, and for the development of social policies and amenities to the needs of a changed and changing society.[101]

These comments suggest that the Bureau realized that the process of responding to a changing Canadian society was only beginning.

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[100] Teghtsoonian 1995, 431.

[101] *Maternity Protection for Women Workers* 1967, 53.

CONCLUSION

"The illusive [sic] search for justice and fair play"

In January 1967, Marion Royce retired as Director, marking the end of the Bureau's formative years. Her retirement coincided with a number of other important changes which make 1967 a natural end point to this study of the first period of the Bureau's history.[1]

During 1966 and 1967, the mandate, bureaucratic location, and operations of the Women's Bureau changed as a result of departmental restructuring within the federal government. The Department of Labour underwent a major restructuring which divided it into three new divisions, each under the direction of a separate Assistant Deputy Minister. The Bureau was placed in Labour Standards and Benefits.[2] In part, the restructuring was a response to the 1966 creation of the Department of Manpower and Immigration, the result of which the Labour Department lost responsibility for manpower and training issues. In response to these structural changes, Marion Royce expressed fear about the future role and viability of the Women's Bureau because the changes separated the Bureau from the branches, personnel, and issues which had guided its work over the previous thirteen years. In 1966, the National

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[1] It appears that Royce did retire because she reached the age of 65 years (in January 1966) rather than resigning for some other reason. Discussion of her impending retirement was evident in correspondence throughout 1966, including an August 1966 letter which noted efforts to hire a replacement. National Archives of Canada (NAC), Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1905, File #38-6-2-7-2, Memo from G.V. Haythorne summarizing a discussion with Gerry Duclos (Department of Manpower and Immigration), 19 August 1966.

[2] The other two divisions were Research and Development and Labour Relations. The other branches included in Labour Standards and Benefits with the Women's Bureau were Labour Standards, Industrial Pensions and Annuities, and Accident Prevention and Compensation.

Employment Service, the Civilian Rehabilitation Branch, Technical and Vocational Training, and part of Economics and Research were all moved to Manpower. These branches, particularly the latter three, had facilitated the Bureau's research and policy advocacy. In the internal reorganization a year later, Economics and Research and the Legislative branch were placed in the division of Research and Development, separate from the Women's Bureau. In letters to the Deputy Minister, G.V. Haythorne, Royce argued the reorganizations were separating the Bureau from the branches and people most familiar with its work and with issues relevant to wage earning women. Over the previous thirteen years, integration between the Bureau and these branches most connected to its work had improved, even if it remained incomplete. Royce believed the Bureau's new Assistant Deputy Minister was "unlikely to have sufficient interest in or understanding of the problems involved in women's employment to provide effective guidance."[3] As well, her letters decried what she believed to be an unworkable and artificial separation of issues to match the bureaucratic structure. "Policy with respect to the potential economic role of women in Canada," she noted in 1966, "should, I feel, be studied in the broadest dimension. Only thus can we hope to evolve policies adequate to the rapidly changing role of women."[4] As a result of these changes, Royce feared the Bureau's mandate would be so restricted it could not properly study and develop policy proposals to address women's issues. "I am convinced," she wrote, "that not only the future of this Bureau

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[3] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-2-2 pt.1, Memo from Marion Royce to G.V. Haythorne, 22 March 1966.

[4] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1905, File #38-6-2-7-2, Letter from Marion Royce to H.L. Snodgrass (Executive Secretary, National Employment Commission), 24 August 1966.

is at stake but also the larger concern of dealing with the urgent questions arising from the rapidly increasing participation of women in the labour force."[5]

Nonetheless, other developments were positive for the long-term viability of the Bureau and its work in support of wage earning women. By the mid 1960s, the government was moving steadily towards some inclusion of "status of women" issues on its agenda. Issues affecting *wage earning* women particularly, such as maternity leave and equal pay, were under consideration by the Department of Labour, a process in which the Bureau was heavily involved. The appointment in 1966 of a Royal Commission on the Status of Women (RCSW) provided further impetus for the government to act in some manner to promote women's equality. The Bureau viewed the appointment of the RCSW with optimism. Although the Labour Department initially delayed action on issues such as maternity protection pending the recommendations of the Commission, the Bureau recognized that provision for maternity leave and benefits and for revision of the equal pay act was now inevitable. As well, Royce perceived an expanded research role for the Bureau to aid the Commission because it was the only government agency with expertise on the obstacles faced by women.[6]

Royce's retirement at the time of all of these changes compounded the uncertainty about the future role and viability of the Bureau. Doris Anderson reflected on this uncertainty in a November 1966 editorial, with the question, "Will twelve good years go down the drain?"

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[5] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1905, File #38-6-2-7-2, Letter from Marion Royce to G.V. Haythorne (Deputy Minister of Labour), 24 August 1966.

[6] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 4154, File #720-2E-14 pt.1, Letter from Marion Royce to J.P. Francis (Director, Research Branch, Manpower), 31 January 1967; RG 27, Vol. 4153, File #722-2O-3, Letter from Marion Royce (OISE) to Sylva Gelber (Director, Women's Bureau), 21 July 1970.

Small, understaffed, and underfunded, the Bureau depended on effective and dedicated leadership to accomplish its primary role of developing studies of the female labour force. Without a Director, Anderson concluded, "the whole program and twelve years of dedicated work seem to be slipping off into limbo."[7]

Postscript on the First Years of State Feminism in Canada

Despite the air of uncertainty that hung over the Bureau in 1967, Marion Royce could take pride in the Bureau's accomplishments during its first thirteen years of operation. In 1954, it was questionable whether the Bureau could even fulfill the minimum requirements of its mandate and generate studies of the female labour force. Although it was a research agency, the Bureau did not have the means to develop and analyze data. The government's primary reason for creating it was to appease an increasingly vocal equal pay campaign led by the Business and Professional Women's Clubs (BPW). With married women entering the labour force in significant numbers and labour shortages in many female job areas, the government decided a women's bureau, modelled on the one in the United States, would be an expedient means to alleviate criticism from the groups while generating some much needed information about wage earning women. In the early 1950s, the federal government had no concept of women as a separate category of paid worker facing discrimination and inequality. Consequently, it did not intend the Bureau to act as an advisory or policy development body nor to address the question of women's equality in research work. Despite these meagre

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[7] Doris Anderson, "Will twelve good years go down the drain?", *Chatelaine* (November 1966), 1.

beginnings, the Bureau did function as the first women's policy agency in the Canadian government. Under the leadership of Marion Royce, it produced an impressive body of research on the female labour force, while actively advocating and developing policies to promote women's equality. As a result, the Women's Bureau significantly influenced the conceptualization of women's problems as wage earners and the development of state policies to address those problems.

One question guiding this thesis has been the extent to which the Bureau provided a base within government for the representation of the ideas and demands of the women's groups. By definition, state feminism assumes that a women's policy agency represents the women's movement; thus, the goal of the agency is to pursue feminist demands through state mechanisms.[8] From the beginning, a stated function of the Bureau was to act as a liaison to the women's groups.[9] Although women's issues were not part of the government agenda in the period before 1970, the government did make occasional provision for representation of women's interests, through the appointment of female representatives on government committees and agencies and through annual meetings with the major women's groups to receive their policy proposals. After 1953, the Labour Department expected the Bureau to

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[8] Feminists in the 1970s argued that status of women agencies were responsible to the women's movement, rather than to parliament. Hester Eisenstein, *Inside Agitators. Australian Femocrats and the State* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1996), 86-100; Elizabeth van Acker, *Different Voices. Gender and Politics in Australia* (South Yarra: Macmillan Education, 1999), 122; Suzanne Franzway, Dianne Court, & R.W. Connell, *Staking a Claim. Feminism, Bureaucracy and the State* (Oxford: Polity Press, 1989), 143-149.

[9] In his announcement to the House of Commons of the Bureau's creation, Milton Gregg included liaison with the women's groups among one of the functions of the new bureau. Subsequent summaries of the Bureau's activities always included this function within the list of "purposes of the Bureau." Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 14 May 1953, 5420.

interact with women's groups and to voice the "women's" perspective on a number of issues. The women's groups similarly perceived the Bureau as a point of access to an often unresponsive government. Yet, the Bureau did not have an operational role and was restricted officially to the publication of information on wage earning women. Over the years, critics often suggested the Bureau was simply a "sop" to the women's groups, a means to placate an increasingly vocal women's movement with an impotent agency. Such comments were suggestive of later charges of "co-optation" levelled at femocrats and women's policy agencies.[10]

Clearly, however, the Women's Bureau did operate as a permanent site for the representation of women's issues, at least as they affected labour matters. In Australia after 1970, the women's movement actively sought to create a policy network involving women's policy agencies, the women's organizations, and femocrats in mainstream government positions, with a status of women agency at the centre acting as coordinator. In part, this approach reflected the growing critique of male process; feminists sought to emphasize cooperation rather than hierarchy in the organizations they created.[11] As well, the emphasis on cooperation stemmed from the long-term preference and strategy of organized women to utilize networks to achieve goals. In Canada, an excellent example of this strategy was the joint action of the BPW, the National Council of Women (NCW), Ellen Fairclough, and Milton

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[10] Doris Anderson notes some commentators perceived the Bureau as a "sop" to the women's groups. Anderson, "Will twelve years good years go down the drain?", 1. On "co-optation", see, Eisenstein 1996, xv-xvi, 68-74; Franzway et al. 1989, 140-141.

[11] Marian Sawer, *Femocrats and Ecorats. Women's Policy Machinery in Australia, Canada and New Zealand* (Geneva: UN Research Institute for Social Policy Development, 1996), 4-5; Eisenstein 1996, 23-25, 39-42.

Gregg's wife, Dorothy, to achieve the first equal pay act. As Director of the Bureau, Royce drew on this history and tried to develop a cooperative, inter-dependant relationship with women's groups to achieve mutual goals. She participated extensively in the conferences and meetings of the groups where priorities were set and programs developed for further work. Like the women's groups, the Bureau followed the work of international agencies, like the International Labour Organization (ILO), and used their declarations and information to develop and legitimize demands for women's rights. As well, Royce sought to overcome the Bureau's limitations by drawing on the size, organizational structure, and financial and personnel resources of the women's groups. Thus, the Bureau worked with the women's groups to achieve common policy objectives, for example in the development of research on issues like equal pay and vocational training for older women, and in the provision of some services, such as re-training programs for older women.

Still, the Bureau and the groups did not manage to act consistently and cooperatively together to achieve common goals. The optimism expressed by some feminists about the potential for achieving equality goals through a cooperative campaign of pressure from "outsiders" with bureaucratic support from "insiders" is not evident in this study.[12] Throughout the period under study, the Bureau and the women's groups did develop and maintain communication and common goals, but they did not develop a unified and conscious strategy for achieving these goals. The result was that the Bureau and the women's groups, as

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[12] Linda Geller-Schwartz cites the potential for achieving goals through this type of unified action, in, "An Array of Agencies. Feminism and State Institutions in Canada", in *Comparative State Feminism*, eds. Dorothy McBride Stetson & Amy Mazur (Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, 1995), 50.

evidenced by this study, did not always work in cooperation to force government action on common issues. Both parties shared support for issues like amending the Fair Employment Practices Act (FEPA) and the need for maternity leave legislation but their advocacy efforts were often conducted separately. In the case of equal pay, Royce's activities within the Department directly undermined the campaign of the women's groups in 1956 and again in 1966. The lack of cooperative action is most notable during key periods when the government was responsive to the demands of women.[13] In 1966, the impending RCSW and International Human Rights Year increased the likelihood of achieving women's equality demands; yet, there is no evidence of increased communication or joint activity between the Bureau and the groups.

Undoubtedly, the Bureau faced a number of obstacles similar to those experienced by later femocrats in trying to enunciate the goals of the "women's movement." For one, there was no one group which clearly spoke for all women.[14] Although the government did treat the NCW as the voice of women in the years before 1966, the NCW did not always share the Bureau's focus on issues related to wage earning women. The Council was often unable to lend strong support to specific issues because it was a federation composed of numerous and diverse affiliates. The women's groups in Canada lacked unified goals and were not organized to work consistently together. Thus, the three groups included in this study did not work together consistently to lobby for a women's bureau nor for an equal pay law, a factor which contributed

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[13] Sue Findlay and Hester Eisenstein both note that government was more responsive to women's demands during key periods, like International Women's Year. Sue Findlay, "Feminist Struggles with the Canadian State: 1966-1988", *Resources for Feminist Research* (Special Issue on "Feminist Perspectives on the Canadian State") 17, 3 (September 1988), 6; Eisenstein 1996, 25-26.

[14] This problem continues to be a factor in Canada and Australia. van Acker 1999, 122.

to the length of time it took to realize both goals. As well, the question of accountability for women's policy agencies was not an issue before the 1970s. Neither the women's groups nor the Bureau expected the Bureau to work solely as an agent of the women's movement.

The Bureau was, after all, a component of the bureaucracy. One of the central themes of this study has been the problems faced by women working within the state system to address equality issues. Femocrats entering the state in Australia in the 1970s faced numerous difficulties. The bureaucracy was primarily male, particularly at the higher levels. Most femocrats were appointed from outside the system, and thus, had little experience with the internal structure and workings of the bureaucracy.[15] Similarly, Royce was a lateral appointment. Few women in 1954 had worked their way up into the higher levels of the civil service.[16] Undoubtedly, the government had to hire externally to find a woman with the professional qualifications required for a branch director. Thus, Royce's associates within the Department were primarily male; the main exception was Edith Lorentsen in the Legislation Branch. Notably, the researchers and writers who worked on Bureau publications were primarily female, a reflection perhaps of Royce's belief that she needed staff with an awareness and sensitivity to women's issues and the problems facing wage earning women. Yet, the Bureau's lack of research staff and financial resources meant that Royce had to work actively with her male associates to achieve her objectives. In the early years, her efforts to achieve her goals within this male culture were frustrated by a lack of familiarity with the bureaucratic

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[15] Franzway et al. 1989, 138-139; Eisenstein 1996, 35-39.

[16] Heidi Jane Henkenhof, "Women in the Canadian Federal Civil Service During World War II", M.A. Thesis, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1994, 76.

process. Royce's handling of the equal pay issue in 1955 reveals a poor assessment of the ability of the equal pay committee to direct the policy outcome. Gradually, however, Royce learned how to achieve her goals within the bureaucracy. In 1963, after her request for assistance to prepare a new "fact book" was denied by Economics and Research, she went directly to the Assistant Deputy Minister, G.V. Haythorne. In the memo to Haythorne, Royce did not request intervention in the dispute with Economics and Research, but rather she inquired about possible sources of funding to hire a contract researcher. Through such indirect means, she overcame the problems of inadequate resources and resistance from other branches to produce the 1964 "fact book."

Many femocrats, in Canada and Australia, argued they experienced hostility from male bureaucrats, in part because their role was to represent and advocate on behalf of one group in society. Anne Summers first noted the "missionary" dilemma of femocrats; these women derived their expertise and position in the bureaucracy from their feminism but their male co-workers accused them of lacking impartiality and refused to work with them.[17] Royce did not enter the bureaucracy with the same stigma of being a "feminist" with a political agenda. She did, however, face marginalization because she sought to represent women's issues and to force the Department to treat them separately within labour issues. Many officials within the Department rejected the need for separate analysis of the problems of wage earning women. This rejection made it difficult for Royce to justify the Bureau's projects, acquire the assistance

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[17] Linda Geller-Schwartz, Director of the Women's Bureau from , argued she experienced internal bureaucratic opposition to any "internal advocacy" because it was against the ideal of the "neutral bureaucrat." Geller-Schwartz 1995, 49; Anne Summers, "Mandarins or Missionaries: Women in the Federal Bureaucracy", in *Australian Women*, ed. Norma Grieve & Alisa Burns (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1986), 59-67.

of other branches, and develop the integration necessary to promote policy objectives. Nonetheless, Royce did receive sustained support (at least in principle although not always with money attached) from G.V. Haythorne, who served first as the Assistant Deputy Minister than as the Deputy Minister during the period under study. As well, Royce's relationship with the other branches appears to have improved by the 1960s, in part because of increasing government responsiveness to women's issues. Consequently, she opposed the reorganization of 1967 because it placed the Bureau in a division separate from the people who, Royce believed, had "sufficient interest in or understanding of the problems involved in women's employment."[18]

The Bureau's efforts to integrate its work and ideas into the operation of the Department point to some additional issues. Scholarly assessments of state feminism are divided on the question of whether femocrats and women's policy agencies should be independent of the bureaucracy (and answer directly to the Prime Minister's Office) or should have a central location within a high-ranking ministry. Feminists in the early 1970s argued for independent agencies because they believed it would allow femocrats to develop their policy ideas within a feminist culture and free of the political and administrative control of a male-dominated bureaucracy.[19] Many femocrats, however, eventually concluded that women's policy agencies

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[18] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1903, File #38-2-2 pt.1, Memo from Marion Royce to G.V. Haythorne, 22 March 1966.

[19] In Canada, the RCSW argued for an independent body to coordinate status of women issues. Canada, Royal Commission on the Status of Women, *Report*, 1970, 391.

could have little direct impact on policy outside of the bureaucracy.[20] During the 1950s and 1960s, the Women's Bureau struggled to integrate women's concerns into the work of the Department. The Department of Labour was not a high-ranking ministry, but it acquired greater importance in the 1960s as the federal government began to build a "just society." The commitment to equal rights increased with the the designation of 1968 as International Human Rights Year and, in Canada, by the appointment of the RCSW. Equal opportunity in the labour market became a government priority, a factor which gave the Labour Department increased importance in the policy-making process of government. As labour standards and equality legislation became important components of the Department's agenda, the Women's Bureau assumed an important role in developing equity legislation because of its existing work and position as the sole advisor on women's issues.

Yet, the Bureau's position in a Department concerned with labour resource management placed limitations on its ability to define the concept of labour market equality. Through most of the 1950s and 1960s, women's rights were not a primary concern for the Department. Consequently, the Bureau had to justify its policy goals within the priorities and discourses of the Department.[21] Beginning in 1954, the Bureau's mandate and structure reflected the government's priorities. It was an agency created to compile information about the increasingly

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[20] Sawer 1996, 11-12; Sara Dowse, "The Women's Movement's Fandango with the State: The Movement's role in public policy since 1972", in *Women, Social Welfare and the State in Australia*, eds. Cora Baldock & Bettina Cass (Sydney: George Allen & Unwin, 1983), 212-214.

[21] Sue Findlay, "Institutionalizing Feminist Politics: Learning from the Struggles for Equal Pay in Ontario", in *Women and the Canadian Welfare State*, eds. Patricia M. Evans & Gerda R. Wekerle (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 321; Sandra Burt, "The Women's Movement: Working to Transform Public Life", in *Canadian Politics*, 2nd ed., eds. James P. Bickerton & Alain-G Gagnon (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 1994), 212.

important female labour force but with no direct operational or advisory powers. This thesis highlights the Bureau's efforts to justify and structure its proposals for research, programs, and policies within the discourse of labour management. The vocational publications and *Married Women Working for Pay* all received funding and research assistance from other branches because of their relevance to the Department's principal focus on labour resource management. Other departmental priorities also had an impact on the Bureau's work, including the need to appease the women's groups, to address discriminatory work place practices, and to provide leadership in the development of labour "standards."

Problems internal to the Department and the bureaucracy also shaped the outcome of the Bureau's work.[22] The "austerity campaign" of the federal government in the mid 1960s fuelled the lack of cooperation between the Bureau and the Economics and Research branch because of insufficient research staff. In pursuit of its goals, the Bureau struggled to develop networks to access the resources of outside agencies, and utilized the research and declarations of international agencies. While not always sufficient - for example the Bureau never managed to complete a study on wage disparity in Canada - the outside groups and international agencies provided important analysis and "expertise" which the Bureau used to support its efforts to address issues like the vocational training needs of older women workers and the needs of wage earning mothers for maternity protection and child care programs.

Location in a bureaucracy also presents problems for women's policy agencies because of the cross-jurisdictional nature of women's issues. The allocation of responsibility for specific issues to separate departments and agencies often imposes limits to governmental

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[22] Franzway et al. 1989, 140.

conceptualization and action on problems.[23] Many of the issues the Bureau dealt with crossed jurisdictional boundaries; the most significant example was the case of child care. Like the issues of maternity leave and vocational training, the question of state support for child care received Labour Department consideration because child care had an impact on women's labour force participation. Yet, officials were unsure from the beginning whether the child care question fell under the jurisdiction of Labour or of Health and Welfare (or Manpower). An inter-departmental group worked to develop the child care survey in cooperation with the Canadian Welfare Council, but the question of which department held responsibility put limits on the breadth of analysis and funding of the study. Gradually, the Health and Welfare Department assumed responsibility for child care. The long-term impact was that state-supported child care maintained an association with "welfare" and "poverty" rather than with women's equality or with their needs as wage earners. Jurisdictional issues also plagued the Bureau's attempts to facilitate the development of vocational training programs. The issue crossed not only departmental boundaries but also the separation of powers between the three levels of government. Thus, Royce argued in 1966 that the artificial separation of issues imposed by the bureaucratic structure adversely affected the development of policy with respect to women.[24]

These factors also affected the representation of women's problems, in particular

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[23] Sonya Hardman, "Necessary Evils and Uncomfortable Bedfellows. Femocrats, the Women's Movement, and the Canadian State - A Case Study of the Women's Bureau, Human Resources Development Canada", M.A. Thesis, University of Waterloo, 1998, 52.

[24] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 1905, File #38-6-2-7-2, Letter from Marion Royce to H.L. Snodgrass (Executive Secretary NEC, Department of Manpower), 24 August 1966.

women's equality, by the Bureau, the Department, and the other participants. A principle issue explored in this thesis is the "institutionalization" or "mainstreaming" of women's issues as a result of engagement with the state. As Sue Findlay argues, "feminist politics has been shaped by practices that organize feminist work and link women's issues to strategies that make sense to the dominant groups - to state officials, professionals, union leaders, and so on."[25] The "practices" Findlay cites include the rules, regulations, and structures of government which directly affected the way in which the Bureau operated in relation to other branches in the Department and to external groups.

Related to the issue of "institutionalization" is the question of how issues are formed and altered in the process of engagement with the state. As Gillian Walker argues, the institutionalization of feminist politics is a result of the "layered web of negotiated discursive relations," which includes the struggles among femocrats, feminists outside the state system, experts from the social sciences and other professions, and government officials.[26] Women's "interests," therefore, are constructed within a political process characterized by "conflicting discourses" that structure the ideas of political actors. The equal pay legislation of 1956 is a good example of how issues are formed and shaped by "competing representations." Participants in the policy process used similar language, yet their understanding of the problem

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[25] Findlay 1997, 315.

[26] Gillian Walker, "The Conceptual Politics of Struggle: Wife Battering, The Women's Movement and the State", in *Feminism in Action. Studies in Political Economy*, eds. M. Patricia Connelly & Pat Armstrong (Toronto: Canadian Scholar's Press, 1992), 317; Rosemary Pringle & Sophie Watson, "'Women's Interests' and the Post-Structuralist State", in *Destabilizing Theory. Contemporary Feminist Debates*, eds. Michèle Barrett & Anne Phillips (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), 60, 68-69.

and their objective in forming the legislation varied widely. The women's groups believed discrimination was a primary obstacle to women's equal participation in the public sphere; the issue of women receiving lesser wages for the same work was so clearly unfair that the equal pay issue became the centrepiece of the campaign for equality. The Labour Department, although committed in principle to some action on human rights, was primarily concerned to appease the women's groups and the Opposition. For different reasons, both agreed to a law which they realized would have little impact on the real level of women's wages but would, in theory, be a public statement of abhorence of discrimination against women. Royce, as Chair of the equal pay committee, construed the problem to be wage disparity between men and women. While discrimination was one factor in wage disparity, Royce argued that neither wage disparity nor discrimination could be addressed through an equal pay for equal work law. Consequently, the equal pay committee recommended an enquiry into the causes of unequal wages; the purpose of an enquiry included public education against discrimination but the primary objective was to research the problem of wage disparity in more detail. Throughout the equal pay debate, all the participants spoke about "discrimination," "rights," and "education," but their understanding of the problem to be addressed varied, as reflected in the policy development process and the final form of the law.

To understand the development of equity legislation, therefore, requires an examination of the evolution of the discourse of women's equality during this period. Beginning in 1954, the Bureau constructed the problems of wage earning women within the postwar discourse of human rights and equality of opportunity for all citizens. This approach facilitated the redefinition of the problems of wage earning women as issues of equality. Women's groups

and international agencies (as well as other equality-seeking movements) similarly contributed to this emerging definition of the "woman question" as a problem of equality.[27] Utilizing an equal opportunity framework, Marion Royce argued women's right to participate in the labour force regardless of marital status and to receive the same pay and opportunities for jobs and promotions. In 1954, Royce's statements constituted a significant challenge to the accepted gender order.[28] By the late 1950s, the research of the Bureau had revealed that wage earning women suffered from significant obstacles to equal opportunity in the labour force. The equal rights discourse informing the Bureau's work pointed to discrimination as the source of women's inadequate access and opportunity to participate. Consequently, the Bureau concentrated on educational solutions to alter negative public attitudes and stereotypes. The Bureau developed an impressive range of publications which challenged what Royce referred to as "social attitudes and traditions" and encouraged women to broaden their career goals and improve their overall level of education. Improved vocational training services, anti-discrimination laws, including equal pay, also formed an important part of the Bureau's research and policy development work during the 1950s and 1960s.

In the process of developing solutions to the perceived problems of wage earning women, however, the framework of equality of opportunity was not always adequate. The

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[27] Carol Lee Bacchi, *Women, Policy and Politics. The Construction of Policy Problems* (London: Sage Publications, 1999), 66.

[28] The women's groups similarly argued women's right to work in the immediate postwar years. Gail Cuthbert Brandt, "'Pigeon-Holed and Forgotten': The Work of the Subcommittee on the Post-War Problems of Women, 1943", *Histoire Sociale/Social History* 15, 29 (May 1982), 239-59; Alison Prentice et al., *Canadian Women. A History*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: Harcourt Brace & Co., 1996), 348, 352-354.

Bureau's research detailed the barriers to equal participation for women with household responsibilities and children. This information led the Bureau to advocate for programs or policies directed strictly towards women, in order to help them to balance their paid work with home and child care responsibilities. Consequently, she argued for women-centred training and counselling programs because of a recognition that women were not in an equal position to compete with men. In Australia, the first woman appointed as advisor to the Prime Minister, Elizabeth Reid, responded to criticism that she had "sold out" to the patriarchy by joining the government, by invoking the idea of the "threshold." She accepted the idea that women's equality required a fundamental restructuring to the social and economic order, but concluded that could only happen once women had been brought to "the threshold of financial and emotional independence." Improved child care, health services, and education, along with equitable work force opportunities, and protection from violence were needed before women could have the independence and "peace of mind" to make choices and challenge the existing system.[29] A similar argument, though not as developed, guided Royce's argument for women-centred adult education programs. Women needed training programs geared towards their distinctive labour force participation patterns and responsibility for the home if they were to acquire the level of education and training needed to compete equally.

In the case of maternity protection and child care, the Bureau similarly sought to aid the wage earning woman to balance her employment with home and family responsibilities; however, Royce did not fully utilize the concept of relative equality of opportunity to justify state-supported child care and maternity protection laws. Although Royce occasionally

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[29] Elizabeth Reid quoted in, Eisenstein 1966, 21-22.

suggested that the physical and financial care of children was a social (rather than strictly individual) responsibility, to fully develop this idea would have required some critique of the gendered division of care and labour. Royce and other defenders of women's rights in this period simply lacked the benefit of later feminist theory with its critique of the relations of production and their gendered nature.[30] Instead, the proposals for maternity protection and child care gradually formed within a discursive environment which included the imperatives of maximizing labour supply and production, state responsibility for the economic well-being of the citizen, and protection of the health and safety of women and children. The maternity protection and child care provisions that developed were special provisions intended to aid women to balance the demands of childrearing with paid employment. But, these measures had to be reconstructed within discourses which did not challenge the gender order, such as the nineteenth-century concept of "protecting" women's health and the postwar support for income maintenance programs. The Bureau's focus on women's equality in the labour force diminished as these policies moved through the "universe of political discourse."[31]

An important component of the evolving discourse of women's equality during the 1950s and 1960s was the gradual problematization of women's equality as a lack of access to the labour market. As Carol Lee Bacchi notes, this representation of the problem of women's equality was complete by the 1960s, and in the case of Canada was denoted by the creation of the RCSW. Bacchi argues that the equation of equality with labour force participation stems

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[30] Findlay 1997, 316;

[31] Jane Jenson, "Gender and Reproduction, or Babies and the State", in *Feminism in Action. Studies in Political Economy*, eds. M. Patricia Connelly & Pat Armstrong (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 1992), 215-216.

partly from the notion that "social honour and self-actualization" come from participation in the labour force.[32] Royce clearly voiced this argument to justify women's participation in the labour force. Adult "status" in society, she argued, derived from the honour accorded a job and the receipt of wages.

An examination of the Women's Bureau during the 1950s and 1960s is interesting because it reveals the gradual development of this representation of the problem of women's equality. As the first government agency specifically directed towards women's concerns, the placement of the Bureau in the Labour Department revealed that the government was interested in "the demands of women" only in relation to labour supply priorities.[33] However, from the beginning the issue of women's labour force participation converged with social anxiety about changing gender roles, and with the commitment to rights and to equality of opportunity that characterized postwar ideology. Many organized women, including Marion Royce, utilized the language and concepts of human rights and equal opportunity, to reveal the existence of women's inequality. Implicit in the human rights concept was the belief that discrimination was the underlying cause. Consequently, programs to facilitate equality focused on fighting discriminatory attitudes and stereotypes. The women's groups, in particular the BPW, embraced the campaign of socialist organizations and labour for equal pay for equal work. Although the demand for an equal pay law originated from the desire of socialist and labour men to protect male wage rates, the women's groups perceived potential in the issue to draw

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[32] Bacchi 1999, 66-67.

[33] Milton Gregg (Minister of Labour) argued in May 1953 that the creation of the Women's Bureau represented the government's recognition that the concerns of women "deserve attention." Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 14 May 1953, 5420.

attention to the discrimination faced by women.[34] Thus, the equal pay campaign drew an equation between women's equality and their labour force participation beginning in the early 1950s. At the Bureau, Royce sought to educate the Canadian public about women's problems as paid workers and to aid the wage earning woman. The policy recommendations and public education campaigns of the Bureau recognized the interconnected nature of women's many roles. The need to emphasize labour priorities to justify policy objectives meant that only those goals which promoted women's labour force participation or fit within the agenda of the Labour Department entered the policy agenda during these years. Issues like child care, problematic conceptually for its supporters and morally for its opponents, received less support in the 1960s because most Canadians did not readily accept the employment of mothers with young children. The movement of the child care issue into the area of health and welfare furthered minimized its value as a labour issue; it became a welfare rather than an equality issue with the provision of funding under the social assistance system. Since the 1970s, an increasingly vocal child care movement has reasserted the argument that women need access to child care in order to participate in the labour force; thus, a national state-supported child care system is crucial if women are to achieve equality.[35] As Bacchi notes, the language of women's equality often speaks of women as a "national resource to be tapped" and stresses the importance of financial

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[34] Pamela Sugiman, *Labour's Dilemma. The Gender Politics of Auto Workers in Canada, 1937-1979* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 27, 42-51.

[35] Patricia Evans, "Single Mothers and Ontario's Welfare Policy: Restructuring the Debate", in *Women and Canadian Public Policy*, ed. Janine Brodie (Toronto: Harcourt Brace & Co., 1996), 164-165; Katherine Teghtsoonian, "Work and/or Motherhood: The Ideological Construction of Women's Options in Canadian Child Care Policy Debates", *Canadian Journal of Women and the Law* 8, 2 (1995), 411-439.

independence for women.[36] Consequently, the major policy goals of the Bureau -equal pay and anti-discrimination laws, maternity leave and benefits, child care, and education - have all remained primary issues on the agenda of women's equality.

The history of the Women's Bureau during the 1950s and the 1960s is important also because it contributes to a body of study exploring the contradictory nature of the postwar period. The glorification of domesticity and motherhood so prevalent in the popular culture placed high standards of home and child care on women, at the same time that social and economic conditions were pulling women into the workforce.[37] Government welfare and labour policy reflected the conflict; both "assumed and reinforced women's attachment to the home" but at times these policies had the "contradictory effect" of drawing women into the labour force.[38] Beginning in 1954, this contradiction was at the base of the Bureau's work, both in public education and in policy development. Royce recognized the contradiction and frequently argued the need for society to accept the permanency of women's labour force participation and move forward to develop responses to deal with the problems. Public education campaigns were intended to assist in the social "soul-searching" which would lead to a new set of values on which social institutions could be based. Policy initiatives, including special provisions for women like maternity leave legislation, were necessary to help the wage

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[36] Bacchi 1999, 68.

[37] Joan Sangster, *Earning Respect. The Lives of Working Women in Small-Town Ontario, 1920-1960* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 243. See discussion on the historiography of the postwar period in the Introduction.

[38] Pat Armstrong & Hugh Armstrong, "Taking Women Into Account. Redefining and Intensifying Employment in Canada", in *Feminization of the Labour Force. Paradoxes and Promises*, eds. Jane Jenson et al. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988), 66.

earning woman to balance the contradiction inherent in her dual role. Regardless of the limitations of this approach to women's equality, this was an important argument for the period previous to 1970. The challenge for the Bureau was, first, to initiate some discussion of the situation faced by wage earning women, and second, to make women's concerns one component in the development of labour policy. Monique Begin's assessment of the Bureau's first years affirms its success at achieving these goals: "The Bureau, however small it was, at least anchored a pragmatic feminist viewpoint in the business of the state."[39] Most feminist scholars agree that women's issues had entered the government agenda by 1970. The Women's Bureau played an definitive role in the gradual acceptance of women and women's issues as matters of concern to government and in the inclusion of women's issues within the discourse of human rights and equality of opportunity. This study of the Bureau reveals this process of re-definition of the problem of women's employment as one of *inequality* and the development of important equity policies like equal pay, maternity protection, child care, and vocational training.

The Women's Bureau after 1967

Jessica Findlay replaced Marion Royce as Director of the Women's Bureau in February 1967, but left only one year later. After a further eight months, the Bureau passed to the

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[39] Monique Bégin, "The Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada: Twenty Years Later", in *Challenging Times. The Women's Movement in Canada and the United States*, eds. Constance Backhouse & David H. Flaherty (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992), 27.

effective leadership of Sylva Gelber in October 1968.[40] Gelber was similar to Marion Royce in many ways; she was highly-educated, well-travelled, and had had a long professional career which included experience with the International Labour Organization and the United Nations. Gelber's career included eighteen years experience as a public servant with the Department of Health and Welfare.

Gelber recognized the potential crisis facing the Bureau due to the diffusion and loss of responsibilities from the departmental reorganization. With the active support of G.V. Haythorne (Deputy Minister), she sought to redefine the role of the Bureau to be a central advisory body concerned with coordinating the work of all government agencies and personnel concerned with the problems of wage earning women. Although the proposed Bureau would still be focused on labour matters, the concept of a single coordinating body envisioned a major leadership role for the Bureau in policy related to women's "status."[41] Drawing on Royce's idea for a "consultative committee," the Department developed an interdepartmental committee on women's affairs in 1968 which included representatives from all the departments whose mandates included women's affairs. The committee, which was led by the Women's Bureau, was "a failure" according to Gelber and disbanded sometime before December 1969.[42]

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[40] Findlay resigned in February 1968. According to Sonya Hardman, Findlay "cited a critical staff shortage and the low status accorded the Women's Bureau" as her reasons for resigning. Hardman 1998, 65.

[41] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 4160, File #722-4-3, Letter from G.V. Haythorne to Mr. L.E. Couillard (Deputy Minister, Manpower and Immigration), 22 October 1968; Memo from Sylva Gelber to J.P. Déspres (Assistant Deputy Minister, Labour), 23 October 1968; Letter from Sylva Gelber to J.P. Déspres, 29 December 1969.

[42] The committee was to develop programs and initiate studies. It is not clear why the committee was disbanded but Gelber refers to it as a "failure" in correspondence in which she

Nonetheless, Gelber continued to define the Bureau as "the co-ordinating agency in the Government of Canada, concerned with the special problems of women."[43]

The outcome of the Report of the RCSW put an end to the Bureau's attempts to become the central government body concerned with women's issues.[44] Initially, the Bureau benefitted from the proceedings of the Commission. As expected by Royce, the Bureau assumed an important role in the Commission's deliberations through the provision of information and the preparation of research. But Royce's hope that the RCSW "might envisage a more comprehensive role for the Women's Bureau" did not occur.[45] The Commission's Report argued that the Bureau "was insufficiently autonomous from political and administrative control and that its mandate was too narrowly focused on employment."[46] Consequently, it recommended the creation of a "status of women council" independent of the bureaucracy and reporting directly to parliament. In the years following 1970, the government created a "confusing array of agencies" directed towards status of women issues. The goal of a central advisory body to develop policy for women remained elusive as the diverse variety of agencies

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complains about inclusion of the committee as one of the "highlights" of the Bureau's year.

[43] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 4152, File #720-3-5, Letter from Sylva Gelber to Miss Augusta H. Clawson (US Department of Labour), 20 February 1969.

[44] On the RCSW and its recommendations, see, Cerise Morris, "Determination and Thoroughness: The Movement for a Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada", *Atlantis*, 5 (1980), 1-21; Bégin 1992, 21-38.

[45] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 4153, File #720-2E-14 pt.1, Letter from Marion Royce (OISE) to Sylva Gelber, 21 July 1970.

[46] Geller-Schwartz 1995, 43; Canada, Royal Commission on the Status of Women, *Report*, 391.

led to a diffusion of functions and activities related to women.[47] As Marian Sawer notes, the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, which was setup as an independent advisory body on women's issues, was unable to affect policy development primarily because of its *independence* which removed it from the policy process.[48] The main criticism of the Bureau by the Commission had been its location in the bureaucracy, which made it accountable to the priorities and officials of the Department rather than to the women's movement.[49] The history of state feminism in Canada and Australia reveals the importance of location for women's policy agencies, yet it remains unclear whether integration of women's concerns into the operation of government can be achieved by either of these positions.

Despite these set backs, the 1970s were a good decade for the Women's Bureau. The Bureau began the decade with "a pretty fair budget," according to Gelber, of $120,000 and a larger staff which included a research liaison officer, a promotional officer, an education

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[47] In response to the RCSW, the government appointed a Minister responsible for the Status of Women in 1971. In 1973, the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women was formed as an independent body reporting to the Minister; the Women's Program in the Secretary of State was formed as a funding body. In 1976, Status of Women Canada was created as a separate department reporting to the Minister for the Status of Women. Sandra Burt, "Organized Women's Groups and the State", in *Policy Communities and Public Policy in Canada: A Structural Approach*, eds. William D. Coleman & Grace Skogstad (Mississaugua, Ontario: Copp Clark Pitman, 1990), 197; Sawer 1996, 12.

[48] Sawer 1996, 14.

[49] The structure and influence of women's policy agencies and of women's groups in Canada has changed significantly in the face of neo-conservatism in the 1990s. The federal government abolished the Women's Program in 1993 and the CACSW in 1995. Status of Women Canada remains, as does the Women's Bureau, now located in Human Resources Development Canada. Janine Brodie, *Politics on the Margins. Restructuring and the Canadian Women's Movement* (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 1995); Pat Armstrong & M. Patricia Connelly, eds., *Feminism, Political Economy and the State. Contested Terrain* (Toronto: Canadian Scholar's Press, 1999).

officer, and three support staff.[50] There was widespread support for women's issues, at the public level and within government.[51] Within this climate, women's policy bodies, including the Bureau, were able to achieve some notable policy successes.[52] The Women's Bureau did experience a re-definition and expansion of its role in the 1970s. As Sonya Hardman notes, the 1976 Federal Integration Policy resulted in the Bureau acquiring more responsibilities for policy development and administration, such as monitoring programs like equal pay and affirmative action and advising government on policy and legislation. As well, in 1979, the Bureau became a department branch, an increase in status that allowed the Director to report directly to the Deputy Minister rather than the Assistant Deputy Minister. The Bureau assumed a "stronger leadership role" in initiating and monitoring policy related to women in employment.[53] Clearly, Gelber believed the Bureau still had an important role to play, even following the report of the RCSW. In October 1970, she argued: "A Women's Bureau is necessary just so long as there's an abnormal social attitude toward the full acceptance of women. If ever we reach a point where this situation changes, why, then I agree -- I think at

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[50] Quoted in Mollie Gillen, "The Woman Who Knows About Women", *Chatelaine* (October 1970), 95. Note, the US Women's Bureau had a budget of over $800,000 and a staff of seventy-six in 1966. Doris Anderson, "Will twelve good years go down the drain?", 1.

[51] Sandra Burt, "Gender and Public Policy. Making Some Difference in Ottawa", in *Gender and Politics in Contemporary Canada*, ed. Francois-Pierre Gingras (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1995), 93.

[52] Canadian scholars and femocrats differ in their assessment of the success of state feminism in Canada, but in general, the 1970s were the best years, particularly during 1975, which was designated International Women's Year. Opposite views are expressed in Geller-Schwartz 1995, 40-58, and, Findlay1988, 5-9.

[53] Hardman 1998, 66-67.

that point a Women's Bureau should quietly bow out."[54]

The Women's Bureau still exists today, although now located in Human Resources Development Canada. Over the years, it has experienced significant changes in its mandate, funding, bureaucratic status and placement, and physical location.[55] Yet, it remains as one of the last sites of state feminism in Canada, a difficult position given the increasingly neo-conservative and anti-feminist discourse shaping government responses to women's issues today.[56]

Following Royce's retirement, commentators and peers acknowledged her importance to the success of the Women's Bureau from 1954 to 1967. Threatened with marginalization due to inadequate resources and government indifference, the Bureau's visibility and vocal advocacy on behalf of wage earning women required strong leadership. *Chatelaine* editor Doris Anderson recognized the importance of leadership in 1966 when she questioned the future viability of the Bureau due to Royce's retirement "Except for Marion Royce's personal dedication to her job," she concluded, "the Women's Bureau at Ottawa could easily have become an inexpensive and useless cipher."[57] In the years following 1967, Royce received

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[54] Gillen, "The Woman Who Knows About Women", 95.

[55] For a summary of the Bureau's history after 1967, see, Hardman 1998, 57-86; Catherine Briggs & Sandra Burt, "The Canadian Women's Bureau: Leading the Fight for Justice and Fair Play", for *Canada: Confederation to Present* (forthcoming).

[56] The focus of recent articles is on the repercussions and implications for achieving women's goals in an increasingly neo-conservative and anti-feminist government climate since the mid 1980s. For example, see, Brodie 1995; Sylvia Bashevkin, *Women on the Defensive. Living Through Conservative Times* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

[57] Anderson, "Will twelve good years go down the drain", 1.

recognition for her contribution to the cause of women's rights and to adult education. She was made an honourary life member of the NCW and of the Canadian Association of Adult Education and was awarded the Service Medal of the Order of Canada.[58] In 1971, Sylva Gelber aptly summarized Royce's experiences and her importance to the Women's Bureau:

> Perhaps I am in a better position than most to understand the forces against which you must have had to stand almost single-handed long before the question of the status of women came into the public arena. To have headed the Women's Bureau in the 50s and in the 60s must have been an uphill struggle and a frustrating exercise in the illusive [sic] search for justice and fair play.[59]

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[58] Canada, Labour Canada (Women's Bureau), *30th Anniversary Conference Proceedings*, 1984, 9; "Marion Royce", *Continuous Learning* 5 (September-October 1966), 220.

[59] NAC, Department of Labour Papers, RG 27, Vol. 4153, File #722-20-3, Letter from Sylva Gelber to Marion Royce (Research Associate, OISE), 20 December 1971.

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