

REGENT PARK

COMMUNITY NEWS

Volume 5 Number 3

February 18, 1976..

INFLATION

OUT OF CONTROL

Yes, it's true inflation is out of control.

In the last 3 years, the price of food has increased 63.5%. The cost of new housing in Ottawa has risen 71.9%. According to the consumer price index, there has been a 33.6% increase in the cost of living over the past 3 years.

BUT ARE WAGE & PRICE CONTROLS A GOOD SOLUTION?

GOVERNMENT & BUSINESS say "it's time we all tightened our belts". But WE know whose belts are already too tight.

*The 20% of the population with the lowest income gets only 3% of all the money circulating in the economy.

*The 20% of the population with the highest incomes get 45% of all the money.

To freeze wages at this point with financial resources so unequally distributed means to freeze us into an inequitable and unfair situation.

Our first objective must be to get money more equally distributed.

While this naturally involves the settling of controls on upper wage earners it also means that we must demand a larger and fairer share than we now have.

That there can be no fixed minimum rent. The 15% of income figure must be applied in all cases.

And where the cost of building and administering the unit (the recovery rate of the unit) falls below the 15%, then the tenant should be only required to pay that amount.

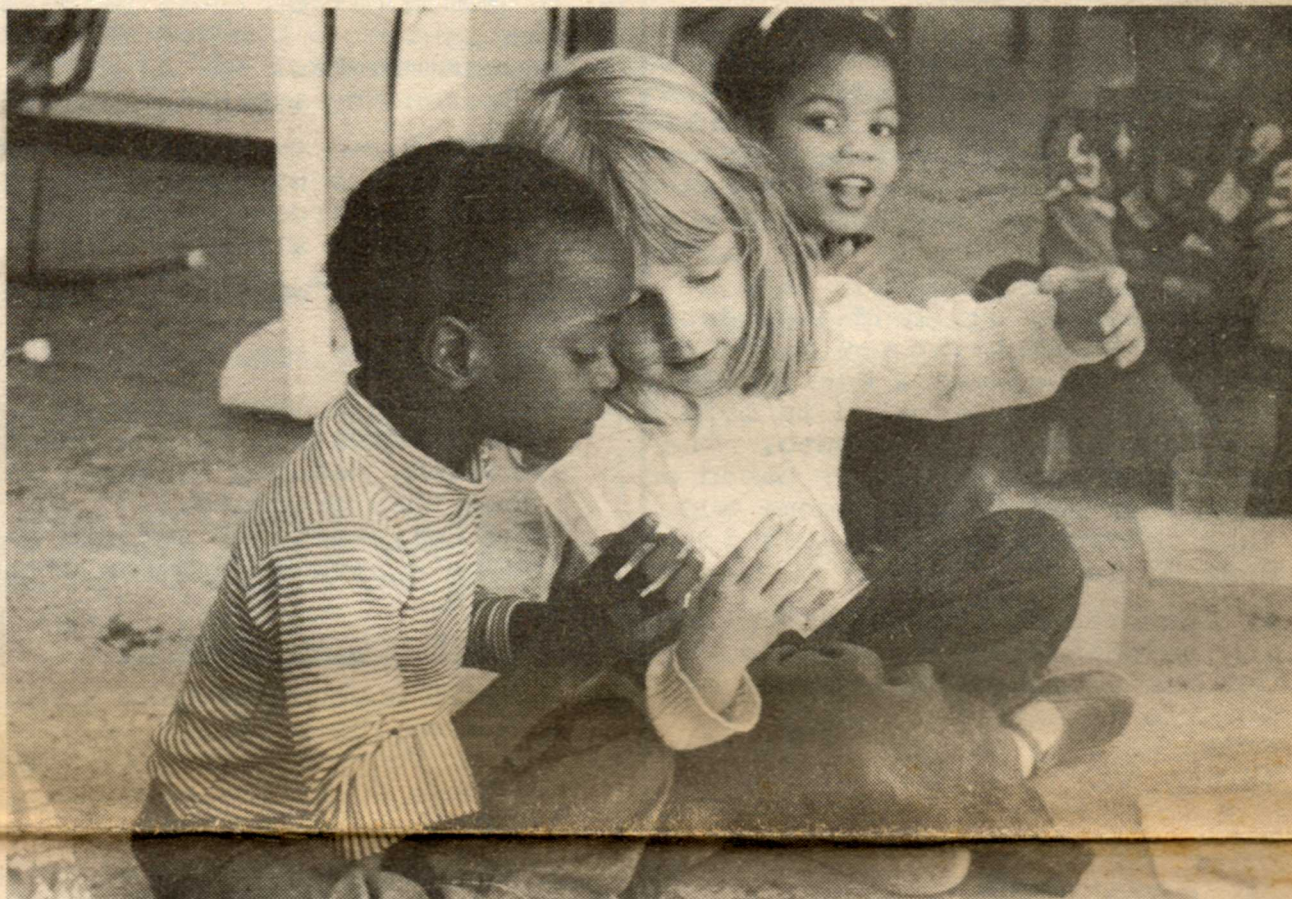
That the special needs of large families must be taken into account through monthly deduction of \$10. per child with \$15. applying to high school-aged children.

That the special needs of single parents families also be recognized. Because most such families must rely on an inadequate income from social assistance or poor wages from a job outside the home, they need additional financial assistance. Without the possibility of relying on a second income, single parents require a deduction of \$1,800. from their income before the rent is calculated.

WHAT NOW?

Since this proposal was put forward, several things have happened. We have distributed a pamphlet which explains the new rent scale, we have had some local

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Victims!

FOTAS STAND

The Federation of Ontario Tenants Association (FOTA) our provincial wide organization for public housing tenants held its founding convention in July. There was much discussion at that time of the present method of determining the amount of rent that tenants now pay in public housing. It was generally felt that the present system was unfair and needed, the organization developed a proposal for a new rent scale. We feel....

That public housing communities are our homes, not some temporary stopover. To make it a positive alternative for low-income families, we need greater rent relief, security of tenure and freedom to improve our financial situations without penalty.

Basically we are demanding....

That rent be calculated as 15% of the household head's gross income across the board. To this we add the further consideration that special allowances must be made for the families with particular needs.

We are saying....

That while many people say that we

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The FOTA Rent Scale

1. Two year rent freeze lease.
2. Rent based on the income of the head of household only. The income of a working spouse or child would not be used for calculation of rent.
3. \$1,800 deduction from income for single parents.
4. \$10. per child monthly deduction and \$15. per high school age child.
5. No maximum earnings for senior citizen housing.
6. Rent to be 15% of head of household's income, less appropriate deductions.
7. Rent to include cost of all utilities.
8. Elimination of a fixed minimum rent.
9. Maximum rent to be the full recovery rate of the unit i.e. the cost of the unit plus administration costs.
10. Elimination of special rent calculations for senior citizens and recipients of General Welfare Assistance or Family Benefits.
11. Rents of striking heads of households to be reduced during the period of time they are on strike.

INFLATION AND RENT

In public housing rents go up. It means that if we get the money we need to pay for food and clothing, we end up paying more rent. Its a trap unless we do something about it.

One way to do it is to get lower rents so that we have more money left over to spend on food and clothing.

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Ontario Housing Corporation and the Rent Scale.

Ontario Housing Corporation is an Ontario government under the Ministry of Housing. OHC runs Public Housing in Ontario either directly, or indirectly through local Housing Authorities. They are our landlords.

How does OHC, our landlord, determine the rents we pay in Public Housing? They use a Rent Scale which was first created in 1974 for Regent Park in Toronto. The amount of rent we pay is based on what they say is our income and this rent-to-income formula is the Rent Scale.

At the present time OHC is planning to change the Rent Scale. OHC has asked the Federation of Ontario Tenants Association (FOTA) what it thought of the following OHC proposal:

OHC---Proposed Rent Scale

1. 2 year lease
2. \$1,300 deductions for single parents or working spouse.
3. Increase to \$105. monthly the wages of a working child or family member in calculation of family income.
4. Eliminate the \$2. per child monthly deduction from rent.
5. Rent to be 25% of gross family income.
6. Rent to include the cost of all utilities.
7. Eliminate the minimum rent.
8. Maximum rent to be the prevailing "market value" of the unit in your community.

WOMEN GET CREDIT UNION

Canada's first women's Credit Union opened Thursday Nov. 20, 1975. It is located at 615 Yonge Street, Suite 401. The Credit Union is open Thursdays 10 AM. to 10 PM. A Credit Union is a group of people with a common bond who save their money together and from these pooled savings make low-cost loans to another. A credit is in essence a financial co-operative based on the principles of service rather than profit and on democratic control--(One vote per member regardless of number of shares held.) A credit Union seeks to offer the best return on savings and the lowest cost for borrowing. The Toronto Women's Credit Union is non-profit, member owned and member controlled. Deposits are safe, loans and savings are insured.

GOV'T CUT BACKS

POVERTY AND WOMEN

Imposing poverty is what these cutbacks are all about, and a woman on her own is assured a place among the poorest!

* 2/3 of all women below the age of 25 have annual incomes of less than \$5,000.

* 85% of single-parent families are mother-led.

* Almost 50% of mother-led families had an income of less than \$4,000. 23% of single father-led families had less than \$4,000.

* A male head of family has a 9.3% chance of living below the poverty line. A female head of family has a 40.1% chance.

CUTBACKS IN SOCIAL SERVICES IN ONTARIO (use these figures as a model to find out what's happening in your area.)

I. DAYCARE. The government cutbacks are forcing an increasing number of women out of their paid jobs and into total economic dependence on a man.

The government has:

- Frozen any expansion in the number of daycare centres after March 31.
- Threatened to double the subsidized fee from 25¢ to 50¢ daily.
- Frozen the number of subsidized children.
- In effect reduced the operating budget of subsidized daycare centres by allowing only a 5.5% increase this year.

DAYCARE ALLIANCE WOMEN'S ALLIANCE.....PHONE 925-1154.

II. UNIVERSITIES. The Henderson Committee has recommended:

- A tuition increase of 65% over the next three years.
- The elimination of the grant portion of the Government Assistance Program, meaning students will be saddled with even huger debts when they graduate.
- The University of Toronto has already attempted to cut back the Women's Studies Program without success, and will probably try again.

III. OTHER SOCIAL SERVICES.

The Ontario Government has:

- Frozen the building of nursing and old age homes meaning more work for women looking after the elderly.
- Frozen staff and services in hospitals in 1976, meaning more work for hospital workers, 70% of whom are women.

In Metro Toronto, threatened cutbacks in social services include:

- A 50% cut in shelter allowance for welfare recipients.
- The end to supplementary benefits to Family Benefits and Old Age Security recipients, which paid for eyeglasses, dentures, hearing aids etc....
- Reduction of staff and services in old age homes.
- Freeze on spending for visiting nurses and homemakers.

All of which mean MORE WORK FOR WOMEN.

"In this struggle, we must accomplish nothing less than a wrenching adjustment of our expectations."

--Pierre Trudeau, Oct. 13, 1975.

"We are getting tired of always sacrificing ourselves for somebody else's good or profit. We want to stop inflation where it hurts most--in our pocketbooks. We want the increase in our Baby Bonus and we want wages for all our work as women."

--Sallie Shun, Dec. 24, 1975.

from a letter to the Toronto Globe and Mail.

A women's Credit Union started because women, as a group are poorer than men. Women are paid less and have less access to funds. Credit granting institutions discriminate against women who, as a result obtain fewer loans and build poor credit rating.

An example of this is that a woman often still needs the co-signature of a man before she can obtain credit or a loan.

The Women's Credit Union does not deny credit because of sex, race, class, religion, marital status, or age. Any women in Metro Toronto can join.

A women's credit union will provide an alternative to the current discriminatory system and will be more responsive to women's needs.

The Credit Union's main priority is to lend money to women who need it. All income is considered income, including welfare, mother's allowance, disability, old age pensions etc. Personal loans for emergency situations and personal needs are given top priority.

Educational loans for women who want training for jobs and organizational loans for women who want

to establish their own self-sustaining food, craft, trades, housing co-operatives are also given priority.

Ms. Laura Sabia, Chairwoman of Status of Women Council is presently working towards the opening of the first Canadian Women's Bank.

For more information on Toronto Women's Credit Union call 960-0322.

FACTS.....FACTS.....FACTS.....FACTS.....

"Everyone has a little bit of suffering to do"

--Jean Luc Pepin, Dec. 5, 1975.

"Do not get discouraged if the consumer price index maintains a two-digit momentum for several months to come."

--Beryl Plumptre, Oct. 11, 1975.

"Look lady, don't expect the price of a can to stay where it is because we've brought in a freeze."

--Pierre Trudeau, Oct. 10, 1975.

GOVERNMENT CUTBACKS

In October, Trudeau brought in a program of wage controls. He followed this in December with an announcement concerning government budget cutbacks. The main targets of the cutbacks are the people with the least power--women, the elderly and youth.

*FAMILY ALLOWANCE. For a saving of \$221.3 million, the government is eliminating the 10.8% increase mothers were supposed to receive beginning January 1, 1976. This is the largest single saving in the government cutbacks program.

*UIC. Claimants with dependents who used to get 75% of the their earnings have been cut to 66 2/3%. People over 65 years of age are no longer eligible, at no loss of \$120 million to those claimants.

*OFY. Eliminated. A saving of \$36 million and 35,000 more youths without a wage this summer.

*CYC. Eliminated. A saving of \$6.1 million and 450 community workers wageless.

*LIP. Cutback by \$35 million and 80,000 more people unemployed.

The Native Indian Brotherhood has calculated that the above cutbacks will mean a loss to native people across Canada of over \$6 1/2 million. These cuts come at a time when the national unemployment rate is 7.3% and over 10% of women and 13% of youth (14-24 years) are unemployed.

However, the government is also "going after the rich". They have imposed a 10% surtax on those with incomes over \$30,000. There is a debate going on in Parliament whether this means that a married man with two children making \$35,000 will pay 19¢ or 35¢ more tax per week!

GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES

At the same time as the government is saving money on women, old people, and youth, it is increasing expenditures elsewhere. While the MPs and Senators have frozen their salaries for a year (which they weren't planning to increase anyway), they increase their tax-free allowances as scheduled.

The government also announced recently that they are spending \$1 billion on 18 airplanes for the Armed Forces, and increasing Defence spending from \$2.5 billion to \$5 billion in the coming fiscal year.

PAID LABOUR FORCE

With the cost of living increasing the way it is, more and more women are forced to take jobs outside their homes. Between 1964 and 1974, the number of women in the Canadian labour force grew by 88.6%. 43.1% of the women in the paid labour force are self-supporting. Despite this massive increase in the proportion of women in the paid labour force, women remain in the lowest-paid jobs--"women's jobs."

* In 1963, 61.8% of women in the paid labour force were in clerical, sales and service. By 1973, this percentage had increased to 63.1.

* And the difference between men's and women's wages is increasing. In 1971, the average man earned 44% more than the average woman. By 1973, it was 45.1% more. In Ontario in 1974, women waged workers earned \$1 billion less than if they were men.

Iris Jackman Helps All Regent Park.

Mrs. Jackman, supervisor of Regent Park Home-Help Services, for Senior Citizens, is busy at her task of visiting every senior citizen in Regent Park and has already been to call on 350 seniors in our community.

Every Thursday and Friday you will see her along the halls at 220 Oak Street, where Mrs. B. Varty (OHC) has made available a small table and chair where Iris can sit and rest a bit.

Iris is not connected with OHC but is a LIP worker, doing a fine job, explaining Home-Help Service.

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meetings to discuss it and we have circulated a petition to get the names of all supporters. When completed this will be used to pressure the provincial government to meet our demands.

ADULT RECREATION CENTRE NEWS

Mrs. Ruth Tettman has retired as co-ordinator of the Adult Recreation Centre owing to ill health. Ruth did an excellent job for the centre and will be welcomed back after a rest period.

At the board meeting held on Feb. 1st., Mr. U. Callender was selected as business office manager and Mr. Dick Boundy as co-ordinator to give of their time until our grant is resumed.

Our 6-team bowling league is enjoying a successful season.

We wish to remind some members who participated in the Family Picnic and Children's Christmas Party, that their \$2.00 membership fee is now due. Please contact the treasure Mrs. Violet Yedon.

Ladies are asked to help with the arts and crafts section to make the articles for the open house in May and the festival in June.

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ADULT RECREATION CENTRE
605 Whiteside Place

BAKE--WHAT--NOT
and RUMMAGE SALE

FEB. 20th. FRIDAY
1:00 P.M. to 4:00 P.M.

HELP WANTED

1. Supervisor
1. Co-ordinator

For Teen Centre, 203 Sackville Green, Monday to Friday, 5:30 to 10:30 P.M. \$125.00 per week. Job ends June 26, 1976. Drop in and fill out an application at the office, at 44 Blevins Place.

F.O.T.A. RENT SCALE

At the F.O.T.A. conference in May 1975, the OHC proposal was rejected. It was decided by a unanimous vote of delegates that FOTA should tell OHC that it would support the following Rent Scale which would mean a real saving to tenants hard hit by inflation.

FOTA Con't from P. 1. Inflation

are privileged, that our rents are low, when we look at the statistics, we know this isn't the case. Most of us with earned incomes pay 25% of our income in rent and those of us on social assistance are paying a lesser proportion of our income in rent than the more affluent. We propose 15% for all families whether their incomes be derived from social assistance or paid jobs.

The RPCIA— Who is it?

The Executive Committee of the R.P.C.I.A. are the people responsible for the day-to-day administration of the Association. But, first of all let's see who they are:

Janet Ross is the president. She has lived in Regent Park for 16 years. She has been President since April, 1974, she has served on the Executive in other positions as well as being active in other community activities. Mrs. Ross also serves on the Executive of the Federation of Ontario Tenants Association and is a member of the National Welfare Council which advises the Federal Minister of Health and Welfare, Marc Lalonde.

The first Vice-President is Ozzie Smith. Mr. Smith has been a resident of the Park for 5 years. He's been on the Executive since 1973, first as Treasurer, before taking on his present position. He chairs the personnel Committee and is responsible for the administration in the office. He is also a local Toronto representative to the Federation of Ontario Tenants Association.

Marie Niven is the Second Vice President. She is a long time resident living here since 1958, and also has been active in various committees since living in the Park. Mrs. Niven is responsible for the publicity in the Association.

The Treasurer for the Association is Barbara Soules. She's lived in the Park for 5 years, and she was elected to her position in April, 1975. Mrs. Soules is responsible for overseeing accounts of the Association. This includes grant monies as well as monies that come regularly from fund raising events, memberships, donations, etc. She makes an annual report to the General Membership on all accounts. If any member has questions about the finances, they should be brought to her attention.

Olga Burnett is the Association Secretary. She attends Executive meetings and takes all minutes which become the official records of the Association. Members of the Association get copies of the General Membership; Board Members get Board minutes; and Executive members get Executive minutes. Any member of the R.P.C.I.A. can come in to the office and ask to see any of these minutes.

The Executive Committee meets every Wednesday night at 7:00 PM. in the office. It's one of the busiest in the Association. What goes on Wednesday nights? All mail coming in and going out is read. Cheques are signed by two of the three signing officers. Financial statements are prepared. Reports are heard on projects.



Planning is done to suggest programmes.

No Executive member receives any remuneration for their position except a \$10 per month honourarium for their expenses, passed by the Board of Directors.

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New Committees formed on Feb. 12, 1976 are as follows: The Newspaper Editorial Committee: Jim Drawbell, Editor & Staff, Clara Little, Chairperson, Marjorie Campbell, Iris Jackman.

Employment & Research Committee: Audrey McPherson, Chairperson, Elizabeth Cook, Linda Levely, and D. McKee in an advisor capacity.

No member of any committee receives any remuneration at all. This is all volunteer positions. All these committees have been passed by the Board of Directors of R.P.C.I.A. on Feb. 12, 1976.

Unit Reps OK!

Harold Jackman, Manager, Tenant-Management Programme reports that the unit reps are doing a good job. They have dealt with a

multitude of problems during the past month. The submitting of weekly reports is very satisfactory. Unit Reps are now serving on several committees of the RPCIA and are giving valuable assistance in the Food Co-op. Unit Rep meetings are well attended and interest and moral is high.

I am also pleased to announce that the following persons have agreed to serve as members of the Management Advisory Committee: Mary Bilan, Chairperson, William Deeley, Vice chairperson, Margaret Young, secretary, Mr. U. Callender, Mary Smith, and Mrs. Sheila Holmes -advisor. I spoke to Mr. McAusland about the new contract and he has informed me that the contract is now before the Management Board of the Cabinet of Ontario.

NEARLY NEW

605 Whiteside Pl. - Basement

Thursday Mornings

10:00 - 11:15 a.m.

Clothing and Household items

MAYCOURT CLUB