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# COUNCIL for the ECONOMIC STATUS of WOMEN

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NEWSLETTER #1

NOVEMBER 1976

This is the first in a series of monthly newsletters to be issued by the Council on the Economic Status of Women. The newsletter will carry information on Council activities, summaries of research undertaken by the Council, news from commissions in other states, and a calendar of activities of women's organizations.

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## **public hearing**

A second public hearing on women in state government employment will be held Thursday, December 9, at 4:00 p.m. in Room 123 of the State Capitol. Those wishing to testify should notify Nina Rothchild at 296-8590.

COUNCIL ESTABLISHED  
BY LEGISLATURE  
IN 1976

In 1976 the Minnesota State Legislature established the Council on the Economic Status of Women. The legislation creating the Council states that its role is to "study all matters relating to the economic status of women in Minnesota, including matters of credit, family support and inheritance laws relating to economic security of the homemaker, educational opportunities, career counseling, contributions of women to Minnesota's per capita and family income and state revenues, job and promotion opportunities, and laws and business practices constituting barriers to the full participation of women in the economy."

In addition, the Council shall also study "the adequacy of programs, services and facilities relating to families in Minnesota including single-parent families and members beyond the nuclear or immediate family."

The concept of a council is not new in Minnesota. Thirteen years earlier, Governor Karl Rolvaag established a Governor's Commission on the Status of Women by executive order. This Commission was charged with making studies of employment conditions, civil and political rights, education, and home and community services.

After a year of research, the Commission's report was presented to Governor Rolvaag on November 1, 1964. At that time, Viola Hymes, chair of the Commission, recommended its continuance. In the letter accompanying the report, she stated her reasons for this recommendation: "It can continue to study and recommend changes in administrative policy and legislation; it can serve as a catalyst in gathering and disseminating ideas and information necessary to the full public understanding of women's changing role, and it can serve to stimulate thought and discussion."

Instead of continuing the Commission as it was, a Woman's Division was established within the Minnesota Human Rights Department and a Woman's Advisory Committee to the Woman's Division was formed. This Committee has now been replaced by the Council on the Economic Status of Women.



COUNCIL MEMBERS  
APPOINTED

Eighteen members serve on the Council: five senators appointed by the Committee on Committees, five House members appointed by the Speaker, and eight public members appointed by the Governor. Legislative appointments are:

<u>Senate</u>	<u>House</u>
Jerome Hughes, St. Paul	Linda Berglin, Minneapolis
Nancy Brataas, Rochester	Stanley Enebo, Minneapolis
Steve Keefe, Minneapolis	Mary Forsythe, Edina
Al Kowalczyk, Brooklyn Park	Phyllis Kahn, Minneapolis
John Milton, White Bear Lake	Russell Stanton, Arco

## GOVERNOR MAKES APPOINTMENTS

Council members appointed by Governor Wendell Anderson are:

Jane Preston, 2145 Lakeview Ave White Bear Lake, retiring program planning & development consultant to Vocational-Technical Education Division of State Department of Education.

JoAnn Kronick, 224 Second Ave. South St. Paul, president of Amalgamated Meat Cutters & Butcher Workmen of North America Local P-4

Virginia Erhard, 4140 Flag Ave, New Hope, treasurer-elect of the Weavers Guild of Minnesota.

Verna Lunz, Fairmont, farm wife.

Sandra Melberg, 7519 Tempo Terrace, Minneapolis, vice president, Minneapolis Chapter, National Secretaries Association.

Lurline Baker, Duluth, job development specialist with the St. Louis County Probation Department.

Anne Siren Vireg, former language teacher at Fergus Falls Community College.

Carol Ryan, 909 Osceola Ave, St. Paul, member of Community Planning Council.

At its first meeting in June, the Council elected Linda Berglin chair and Sandra Melberg vice-chair. An executive committee was formed consisting of the chair, vice-chair and members Enebo, Hughes, Preston and Erhard.

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## COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON NOVEMBER 12

The full Council held its third meeting on Friday, November 12, in Room 123 of the State Capitol. Previous meetings had been held in June and September during which the Council had organized itself and had employed an executive secretary.

At the November meeting, the Council heard the report of the executive secretary, approved the budget, reviewed a feasibility study and set overall outlines for a work program, and appointed committees.

The next Council meeting will be held Thursday, December 9, in Room 123 of the State Capitol. Committee meetings will be held at 3:00 P.M. and a second public hearing on the status of women in state employment will be held beginning at 4:00.

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## EXECUTIVE SECRETARY SELECTED

After a search and interview process conducted throughout the summer, the Council has selected Nina Rothchild as its executive secretary. Rothchild's background includes teaching at Metropolitan State University, serving six years on the school board in Mahtomedi, chairing the Sex Bias Advisory Committee to the State Board of Education, and serving as a consultant on women's issues to human relations programs.

A resident of Mahtomedi, Rothchild is the author of *Sexism in Schools: A Handbook for Action*, a homemaker, and the mother of three college-age children.

COUNCIL SETS  
WORK PROGRAM

A general outline of its first year of work was set by the Council at its November meeting. At each monthly meeting of the full Council, a public hearing will be held on a major topic of study. The status of women in state government employment is the first general topic; future hearings will be held on career counseling and vocational training for women, particularly for those who re-enter the work force, and on property and inheritance laws, particularly as they relate to the economic security of the homemaker.

The Council has tentatively planned to hold a major conference on the family in 1977. Another conference in which the Council will participate is a Minnesota state-wide conference sponsored and funded by the national International Women's Year Commission. Representative Linda Berglin and Nina Rothchild have both been named to the planning committee for this conference.

Rather than issue a single comprehensive report after its first year of study, the Council will issue a series of six reports through the year on topics of major interest. The first of these reports will be a statistical chartbook on Minnesota women, and the second will be a report on the status of women in state employment. Others will be: Women as Homemakers, including property and inheritance laws; Educational Opportunities, including vocational training and career counseling; the Family, stresses and services; and a summary report which will include information from previous reports and other studies, a look to the future, recommendations, and model legislation.

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COUNCIL OFFICE  
NOW OPEN

Office space for the Council has now been established in Room 124D of the State Capitol Building. As a fringe benefit to this space, a small but growing resource center of information about women is being developed. The collection includes reports from state and federal agencies, information from other state commissions on the status of women, and bibliographies and other listings.

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CALENDAR TO BE  
PUBLISHED

So that Council members can keep informed and attend meetings of interest to them, a calendar listing meetings, conferences, and special events relating to women in Minnesota will be compiled by the Council office and published monthly in its newsletter.

State-wide organizations are encouraged to list their activities with the Council office and to check with the office when scheduling their events to avoid conflicts. The first calendar will be published in December's newsletter. Call 296-8590 to have your organization's meetings listed.

SOURCEBOOK BEING  
COMPILED

As part of its report to the legislature, the Council is compiling a basic sourcebook of statistics on women in Minnesota. At the present time, information on Minnesota women is both sparse and scattered, and little comprehensive data are available past the 1970 census. The sourcebook will therefore attempt to pull together information from various state and federal agencies from private studies, and to make estimates based on state and federal statistics.

Completion of the report is scheduled for early in the 1977 session, and copies will be available at that time to legislators, state agencies, and the public.

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COMMITTEES  
NAMED

In order to facilitate the work of the Council, two committees have been formed:

Employment/Education

Family/Homemakers

- S. Melberg
- L. Berglin
- S. Enebo
- M. Forsythe
- S. Keefe
- A. Kowalczyk
- J. Kronick
- A. Levig
- J. Preston
- C. Ryan

- L. Berglin
- L. Baker
- N. Brataas
- V. Erhard
- J. Hughes
- P. Kahn
- V. Lunz
- J. Milton
- R. Stanton

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REPORT ON  
PUBLIC HEARING

On the afternoon of November 12, a standing-room-only crowd attended the Council's first hearing on the status of women in state employment. The hearing received wide media coverage, and excerpts from an article by Ann Baker are reprinted here with permission of the St. Paul Dispatch:

Women state employees added their complaints Friday to this week's controversy over their job rights.

A welfare supervisor with five years experience said her \$980-a-month salary is half that paid to a male supervisor in her division. "We're the underdogs of state employment," said a senior clerk in the Transportation Department. A secretary said she and her colleagues "are constantly battling" discriminatory treatment from their male superiors, that they are not eligible for special achievement awards and that their cost-of-living raises are granted on a flat rate rather than the percentage increase awarded professional employees.

REPORT ON  
PUBLIC HEARING  
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Secretaries do not want "to be taken to lunch on National Secretaries Day or be named State Capitol Charmer," said Bonnie Watkins, secretary with the Welfare Department. "We want recognition, status and money, like everybody else."

Those three were among six members of the group Women in State Employment (WISE) who testified Friday before the Minnesota Council on the Economic Status of Women. They said many others would have liked to be there but feared reprisals.

That is a common fear among female state employees, said Mary Bremer, information officer in the Department of Economic Development. She said there is little redress available to them and that they "would be crazy to use" the state's grievance procedure because of the danger of being "blackballed by your agency and the state." WISE members' testimony followed descriptions of the state's official equal opportunity efforts for employees by two men who direct them.

James Fritze and Stan Gardner made their remarks carefully. The mood in the room was tense because a report issued Monday had accused state authorities of doing far less work to equalize jobs for women than for black men.

Fritze, assistant commissioner in the state Department of Personnel said state jobs are offered on a basis of "open competition with equal opportunity for all." He said it is up to the legislature to decide whether it wants to change that to a policy of "proportional representation."

He said the state does not "put" women into the low-paid clerical jobs, rather that "many more young ladies choose to prepare for that line of work." Stan Gardner, state director of equal opportunity said he hoped the commission would consider "not only the problems women are having, but also minorities and the handicapped."

Charlotte Striebel, chief author of the critical report issued by the Twin Cities Chapter, National Organization for Women (NOW), defended the statistical methods she used.

"We do not say there is too much affirmative action for minorities but that there is too little for women."

She said the issue she tried to raise was "Why are clerical workers paid so much less than highway maintenance men?" Both jobs demand comparable levels of training, she said.

Five years later at the top of her pay range the average woman is making less than the average man at entry," said Diana Danielson, a senior personnel aide in the Transportation Department. She has analyzed the hiring and promotion practices in her department from January to August. Men earn an average \$931 a month, she said, and women \$588. In the six months she surveyed, 80 men and 33 women were promoted.

She said, "The question is: Why should men be paid a great deal more money for the work they do than women for the work they do?"

In order to set priorities for its work program, Council members have completed a questionnaire listing possible areas of study. A copy of the questionnaire is reprinted here, and legislators and the public are encouraged to let their interests be known by filling it out and returning it to the Council office.

# Questionnaire

	PRIORITY				
	Low			High	
	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Statistical profile of Minnesota</u> Women: demographics, marital status, education, employment, income, etc.					
<u>Women as students</u>					
A. Career training and counseling	1	2	3	4	5
B. Vo-tech students	1	2	3	4	5
C. Graduate/professional	1	2	3	4	5
D. Scholarship aid	1	2	3	4	5
E. Older women as returning students	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Women as Homemakers</u>					
A. Laws relating to economic security of homemakers	1	2	3	4	5
B. Displaced homemakers	1	2	3	4	5
C. Divorced women/child support	1	2	3	4	5
D. Special problems of rural and farm women	1	2	3	4	5
E. Women as volunteers	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Employed Women</u>					
A. Women in state government employment	1	2	3	4	5
B. Women in the private sector	1	2	3	4	5
C. Faculty women	1	2	3	4	5
D. Women in unions	1	2	3	4	5
E. Fringe benefits	1	2	3	4	5
F. Unemployment	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Women in Public Life</u>					
A. Role in political parties	1	2	3	4	5
B. Analysis of elective offices	1	2	3	4	5
C. Analysis of appointments	1	2	3	4	5

	PRIORITY				
	Low			High	
	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Women and the Law</u>					
A. Summary of laws which discriminate by sex	1	2	3	4	5
B. Women and criminal justice	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Women and Money</u>					
A. Credit and insurance practices	1	2	3	4	5
B. Women in business/small business	1	2	3	4	5
C. How tax structure affects women	1	2	3	4	5
<u>Women and Social Services</u>					
A. Health services	1	2	3	4	5
B. Child care services	1	2	3	4	5
C. Institutionalized women	1	2	3	4	5
D. Welfare system	1	2	3	4	5
<u>The Family</u>					
A. Statistical analysis of families	1	2	3	4	5
B. Survey of family services	1	2	3	4	5
C. Survey of children's services	1	2	3	4	5
D. Laws and public policy affecting families	1	2	3	4	5
<u>A look to the future: population trends, projections on marriage, divorce, birth rates, economics, etc.</u>	1	2	3	4	5
Other: _____	1	2	3	4	5

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Return to: Council on the Economic Status of Women, Rm. 124D,  
State Capitol, St. Paul, 55155.