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المجلس الكندي للنساء المسلمات

CANADIAN COUNCIL OF MUSLIM WOMEN
LE CONSEIL CANADIEN DES FEMMES MUSULMANES

IN THE NAME OF GOD

The Canadian Council of Muslim Women is a national non-profit organization established to assist Muslim women in participating effectively in Canadian Society and to promote mutual understanding between Canadian Muslim women and women of other faiths.



Editorially Speaking

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FAMILY SOLIDARITY

The major crisis facing Canada today affects the home. Statistics on domestic violence, family breakdowns, run away youth and the neglected and lonely elderly are appalling. Continuing high unemployment, inflation, the fragmented Canadian dollar, high interest rates - the Canadian economy in general - have taken their toll. Drugs, alcoholism, a permissive life style, unbalanced budgets, incompatibility and culture shock have weakened the family as an institution. The social disease is widespread and threatens all of us. Muslim Canadians are also vulnerable and the signs are there to see for anyone who cares. The number of separations and divorces in Muslim families are on the increase. Many young people are dropping out of school as well as out of parental homes. We have elderly Muslims, especially old women, who are just surviving. Many more families are living under tensions, with no one to turn to. The traditional support systems of an extended family, spiritual leaders and the Muslim Community are almost nonexistent.

As Muslims, it is not difficult for us to see that the root cause of this social breakdown is the spiritual and moral bankruptcy of the family. Allah, the Almighty God, tells us in the Quran that the creation of spouses is one of His blessings. He enjoins total fidelity, mutual respect and compassion between the members of the family. A Muslim home has been traditionally distinguished by an overriding commitment to the interests and dignity of the family. The Prophet Muhammad, peace be on him, loved and respected his wives and children. The Prophet's family had very limited economic resources. They were simply poor. But their home environment was extremely rich: spiritually, morally and psychologically. They lived a simple, debt free life, a life of high moral standards, conjugal harmony and family solidarity. Greed, wastefulness and extremes of any kind did not appeal to them. They had faith in God, lived within their

limited means, and shared their joys and sorrows together.

Things are not so simple today but they are still manageable if we really care. Muslim women, along with Muslim men, carry great responsibility in raising and maintaining the family. We may hold full or part time jobs, but our main fulfillment comes from maintaining a peaceful home, whose foundation is IMAN (faith in God) and where Islamic values are practiced. Regular observance of prayers and other principles of Islam, Quranic study, joint readings of the life of the Prophet, his family and companions, generate a strong spiritual and psychological climate in which long term family goals take precedence over immediate personal interests of individuals. A loving home is built on a moral mission and self discipline. Its parameters are good management of time and other resources, mutual consultations, shared decisions, and mutually agreed priorities. The family which prizes dignity lives within its means. It seems that for us, as a cultural minority, there is also a greater need to build close and active relationships with extended family or with other Muslim families through regular joint prayers, recreation and educational pursuits. Within the family, it is vital that we pray, share meals and spend some time together, at least once each day, and more often on weekends, even if it means giving up other engagements.

Most of us are concerned about the future of children. Children are not born as troubled teenagers. They often become so when the home fails them. Give your child a good Islamic name, raise him or her in an atmosphere of caring and sharing, without being wasteful, or miserly. Enrich the child's thinking with our Islamic heritage and educate the young person to live in a pluralistic society with confidence, dignity and mutual respect for others. Help them develop a moral vision, a healthy self concept and trust in their judgment. Imam Ali Bin Abu Talib once said, "Do not compel your children to adopt your manners. They belong to a different generation from yours".

At the community level, we feel that there is an urgent need to establish confidential, competent and Islamically oriented counseling services which are endorsed by the Muslim community. These services should be well publicized, professionally managed, and should charge a fee. They should offer help in ethnic languages along with English/French. Their essential feature should be a commitment to, and a good knowledge and understanding of, the spirit of the Shariah (Islamic legal value system). These counseling services should provide help in selected areas including marital enrichment, financial management and credit options, legal concerns, career planning, job stress management, schooling of children, dealing with aging parents, alcohol and drug problems, separation, divorce and custody, and help available through government and private agencies. A volunteer board of concerned and experienced community members should supervise the services which are run by a professional. Generally financial assistance for such an undertaking is available from federal and provincial governments (social services - settlement services).

Raising children and keeping a happy home has never been easy. It is even more demanding today. But it deserves all that we have. May Allah guide us and bless us with peace and dignity in this life and in the hereafter.

MATERNITY BENEFITS

Under existing provisions, every Canadian worker who takes time off work to have a baby or to adopt one is entitled to receive unemployment benefits from the Unemployment Insurance Fund for 17 weeks. This time off is essential to recover from confinement and to make other necessary adjustments so that the new baby is well looked after. It is the minimum which a grateful society can do to help the mother and the family.

Now the Finance Minister of Canada is talking of removing maternity benefits from the Unemployment Insurance Fund. Mr. Wilson must have some other plan to replace the scheme. But so far we are in the dark. However one thing is clear in our minds: Maternity benefits are more than justified on medical and social grounds. They are an essential part of women's rights. They are not charitable handouts. Any method of replacing them must be dignified, equitable and simple. We urge our readers to call their M.P., and to write to Mr. Wilson, so that adequate maternity benefits become an entitlement.

THE ABELLA REPORT

In 1983, the federal government appointed Judge Abella to chair a Commission on Equality in Employment. The commission examined the employment practices of eleven crown corporations through meetings, submission and special studies. The result is a 270 page document, called the Report of the Commission on Equality in Employment.

It is an important report for all of us who are committed to the goal of "employment equality". The report stresses that voluntary measures are not enough. It recommends that all federal agencies must be legally obliged to adopt and implement an employment equity system. Key recommendations include the following.

1. Such a program should be preventive and all crown corporations should adopt it.
2. Employment equity committees should be made up of representatives from management, labour and affected groups.
3. Data should be collected under standardized categories on the participation rate of women, native people, designated visible minorities, etc.
4. Incorporation of the concept of equal pay for work of equal value.
5. Guidelines to assist in developing employment equity programs and enforcement mechanisms.

Talat Muinuddin

CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM LIAISON COMMITTEE

While in Toronto, Dr. Fahlman was invited by CMCC to attend the meeting on interfaith by the United Church of Canada. The meeting recognized the contribution of the Canadian Council of Muslim Women. The Committee will meet three times a year. Sister Lila has also received correspondence from the American Women in Faith.

On April 16, 1985, Salmas Sahin and Talat Muinuddin attended the quarterly meeting of the Christian-Muslim Liaison Committee at the Canadian Council of Churches' headquarters in Toronto.

The President's Message

Sisters in Islam, we thank Almighty Allah for the strength and the courage he has given us to accomplish so many things for our Muslim sisters.

We have the Canadian Council of Muslim Women with Chapters from Newfoundland to British Columbia. We have a National Newsletter, The Canadian Muslim Woman, the second issue of which will be published in April. We have not only increased the awareness of our Muslim sisters but we have reached out to other women around us. We have shared our workshops, our conferences and our faith, Islam, with our Canadian counterparts. We have set a model for our youth to work towards. We have disregarded sects by reaching out to all Muslim women.

Soon we will reach out, insha Allah, to our sisters throughout the world, to the Muslim Ummah. Thank you, Merciful Allah, for blessing our efforts. What we do, we do to Your Glory.

FAMILY VIOLENCE:

Edmonton Conference/Workshop

One of the topics of the spring conference/workshop of CCMW in Edmonton dealt with violence in the family. Violence comes in various forms; it can be vocal, physical, sexual or mental. Women and children are the victims. The long history of women as the chattel of a husband and children who were seldom seen and never heard, have contributed to our modern dilemma. As an awareness of women and their admittance to family violence, support structures are appearing across Canada. Assured of a safety zone or home, women and their children are coming forward to try to salvage a marriage or at least some single family structure wherein mother and children can function as a unit. The declining economy makes it even more difficult for women and children in their struggle for peace and security. Our speakers indicated that the incidence of battering of women and children, of sexual assaults on women and children and the incidence of incest is increasing dramatically in our society. Women need the courage to speak out, if the problem is to be affected; and the future is to be secured.

EDMONTON CHAPTER NEWS

The CCMW Edmonton Chapter met in November at the Canadian Islamic Center. The Chapter will operate on a Committee basis until 1985 when it will elect an executive. The discussions on short and long term goals were lively. Concerns were expressed as to the needs of our women and our youth: educational focus, literary contributions, political involvement, skills in Arabic, Quranic knowledge counseling services, seminars, stereo-typing, Eastern history, women in Islam.

In December the Chapter had a presentation by the Ismaeli sisters on preparing the body for burial, and a presentation on counseling services. A committee was struck to investigate the role of women on the Mosque executive and the use of the hall for functions.

MULTICULTURALISM

President Dr. Lila Fahlman attended the second tri-annual conference in Toronto Nov. 7-11, 1984 on Multicultural and Intercultural Education. Provincial Governments and school boards are beginning to work toward a policy on multiculturalism. Alberta is the first province with a Cultural Heritage Act (November, 1984). Teachers are generally unprepared to successfully teach children from minority religious ethnic communities. There is a need for in-depth understanding by teachers and other students, if these children are to experience success in Canadian Society.

CCMW FALL CONFERENCE: Toronto, October 6-7, 1984

The Fall Conference of Canadian Council of Muslim Women was held at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, Toronto, on October 6-7, 1984. The conference was attended by CCMW delegates from Vancouver, Edmonton, London, Niagara Falls, St. Catharines, Hamilton, Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal and St. John (Nfld.). Representatives of multicultural organizations also participated.

Three workshops were organized on the following themes:

- a) Family Violence in a Multicultural Society: Available Resources for Women. (Bev Salmon, Trudy Don, Ann Kurdiak, Dr. M. Mian, Fari Methani and Aysha Khan)
- b) Elderly Women in a Multicultural Society: Needs, Problems and Suggested Solutions. (Valerie Mah, Milada Disman, Stacey Michner and K. Mustapha)
- c) Pornography and Prostitution. (Dr. Laila Fahlman, Ceta Ramkhalawansingh, Dr. Hadia Shakeel, Joanne Fairheart, Deborah Marshal, Najet Hassan and Raffina Ali)

Dr. Mavis Burke, Chairperson, Ontario Advisory Council on Multiculturalism and Citizenship, was the keynote speaker. Her inaugural address focused on Special Problems of Minority Working Women in Canadian Society. She discussed the present government policies, legal framework and economic factors dealing with sexual harassment, domestic violence and aging. Dr. Burke highlighted the recent advances in these fields but cautioned that a lot more work remains to be done. She urged CCMW to work in cooperation with other women's groups and to monitor the media, public agencies and private businesses for necessary corrective measures so that all women can work and live with dignity and full equality. Muslim women in Canada must take an active role in promoting the dignity of all women, said Dr. Burke.

The Luncheon Speaker was the Right Reverend Dr. Lois Wilson, President, World Council of Churches. Dr. Wilson's presentation was informal, challenging and lively. Once again, the need for networking among women's groups and for greater participation by Muslim women in the Canadian society were emphasized. Dr. Wilson reported on a pilot project under her leadership in which women from different faith groups are comparing the theological bases of women's status from differing religious backgrounds.

The Canadian Council of Muslim Women thank Dr. Burke, Dr. Wilson and other speakers for their assistance, advice and encouragement. We also thank the Multiculturalism Directorate for financial assistance.

CHAPTER NEWS: LONDON

An examination of titles and authors in the London Public Central Library in London demonstrated a lack of books able to offer an Islamic Perspective. This imbalance was brought to the attention of the administration of the library. The point was made that anyone attempting to locate material for research or personal interest in this area is denied access to much needed information. In response to suggestions of titles and authors for purchase, the library has been building a broader collection. As a member of the reading public, anyone can recommend books for purchase by filling out a small form and this method can produce results. Some titles of interest that are a welcome addition to our library are listed below:

Beyond the Veil - Male-Female Dynamics in a Modern Muslim Society by Fatima Mernissi.

Women in the Muslim World edited by Lois Beck and Nikki Keddie.

Many Sisters - Women in Cross-Cultural Perspective edited by Carolyn Mattiasson.

Middle Eastern Muslim Women Speak edited by Elizabeth Fernea and Baima Battan Berzigan.

My favourite is Middle Eastern Muslim Women Speak which offers a large selection of original texts and is a volume of amazing scope. The book traces through four parts - Tradition, Transition, Beginnings of Change and Future Directions. It reveals the history and contribution women have made within Islamic society from the beginning of Islam to the present. It is an extremely valuable addition to our literature.

INFORMATION NEEDED:

I am looking for information about Egyptian singer Umm Kalthoum. Anyone with photographs, recordings, films or books about her and her early years performing in Cairo which I might borrow, please contact Najet Hassan, 127 Camden Rd., London, tel. (519) 434-5927. All material will be returned to their owners. An event related to women and music will be held at the Music Gallery in Toronto, March 9, 1985. This is in the field of contemporary music and art. Anyone interested is welcome.

HALIFAX

The Urgency for True Security - Women's Alternatives For Negotiating Peace: International Conference, June 5-9, 1985 sponsored by Coalition of Canadian Women's Groups, 166 Bedford Highway, Rm. 9, Seton Annex, Halifax, Nova Scotia, B3M 2J6, Canada.

"It is time that women who work for peace and justice be included in international negotiations for arms reduction and the resolution of international conflicts. All Canadian women's groups are invited to endorse this conference."

Jamelie Hassan

Elderly Women in a Multicultural Society

We are honoured to present summaries of two presentations on Elderly Women which were made at the Canadian Council of Muslim Women's Fall Conference in Toronto on October 6, 1985.

ETHNICITY AND AGING

Dr. Milade Disman

(Dr. Disman is a professor at the University of Toronto. She pointed to the difficulty in discussing ethnicity and aging due to the lack of agreement on a definition.)

Ethnicity is seen as denoting social differences. It is usually defined as a commonness, certain shared values, including religion and customs. But this is only a description of external features. Internal features can only be guessed at.

An immigrant coming to Canada must learn both the language and the culture. Of the two, culture is more difficult to learn, yet it is necessary, particularly in a multicultural society. To deal with others effectively we must be able to "see through their eyes."

Old age is also difficult to define. the definition includes: 1) biological aging reflected by physical changes; 2) psychological aging reflected by behaviour and outlook; and 3) social aging, i.e., the effects and expectations of society on aging. In practical terms aging means losing control and dealing with the stigma attached to this. Since women outlive men and form the majority of the elderly, one is mainly talking of women when referring to the elderly. Women face the difficulty of being old in a society favouring men. Immigrant women, in addition, are a minority in a society favouring the majority and face the loss of their culture, the loss of stability in family life and the loss of traditional values.

Muslims face the conflict between Muslim and western traditions and cannot believe in western values. Some, coming into contact with western ways through their children, add new adaptations to the old way of life.

The elderly need support systems to permit continuity in their lives. It is necessary to understand the changes happening to them and to ourselves in this society in order to help them.

The practice of institutionalization of the elderly will have to undergo some changes, otherwise the present increase in lifespan will lead to several generations of the same family being institutionalized. At present, elderly Muslim women live with their families or alone but that may change as they become

older.

It is a myth that the elderly are a homogenous group and that old age is peaceful. Each person is shaped by unique experiences and faces numerous disadvantages in old age.

In the workshop a lively discussion included the following:

- Most ethnic elderly have been brought to Canada by their adult children. There were conflicting views as to whether one should uproot old parents to bring them here.
- Old people should be part of the decision making process on matters involving them.
- Often the elderly stay at home caring for their grandchildren. This should be their own choice rather than a decision made by their children.
- What is their idea of fun? How can they meet their peer groups? some arrangements should be made to provide them with mobility and recreational activities such as programs for grandmothers with baby sitting facilities.
- The United Way provides funding to well organized senior citizens' groups run by volunteers with part time paid help. The key here is good organization and reliable volunteers.
- Loneliness for the institutionalized elderly can be alleviated by encouraging visits by young people to learn about their heritage or by outings to community recreational centres.
- Religion is important to the elderly as a part of their own heritage and culture. It was pointed out that a devout Muslim spends a considerable amount of time reciting the five prayers and reading the Quran, leaving little time for loneliness.

NEEDS, PROBLEMS AND SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS

Valerie Mah

(Valerie Mah is the treasurer of the Mon Sheong Foundation which operates the Mon Sheong Home for the Aged in Toronto. She shared her experiences in establishing and operating the home.)

She described the growth of the Chinese community. At first only able bodied males were allowed into Canada to build the railway. Later a few wives were allowed to come. However, until 1967 when immigration was opened to Chinese, the community was small and consisted mainly of men.

The Chinese home for the aged opened in 1975 near Toronto's Chinatown. Although all three levels of government contributed the bulk of the money was raised in the community. Until 1977 it had only 2 occupants since most elderly lived either with their families or alone. In 1977 there were 33 male and 22 female residents. This has now been reversed to 24 men and 38 women with a waiting list of women. Although there are some nursing bed cases, it is considered financially impossible to convert any part of the home for nursing care since this would increase the cost due to the need for additional nursing staff.

The home serves Chinese food and provides some Chinese entertainment. There are problems of communication due to the various dialects spoken by the residents.

The home is now running at a deficit since government subsidies do not cover operating costs. Residents pay by turning over their Canada Pension cheques and receive \$106 per month in return as spending money. Those able to pay or whose families are able to pay the full cost are asked to do so. The new wave of immigrants bringing elderly parents not eligible for Canada Pension may create financial problems for the home in the future.

The working group raised the following points:

- Many ethnic communities are constructing homes for the aged and the government is encouraging this. Is this the answer for the Islamic community?
- Minority groups should be represented on the Ontario Advisory Council on Senior Citizens.

WORKING WOMEN AND CHILD CARE

Almost half of our women work outside their homes. Their earnings supplement family incomes. Many of them are single or single parents, and as such, their livelihood depends on their full time or part time jobs. A major problem for working women with young children is child care. The number, scope and price of adequate day care facilities across Canada is most unsatisfactory. It is an area which requires immediate attention of all parents, community groups, and governments.

We reproduce here a set of recommendations from the Report on the Visible Minority Women, Proceedings of a conference on Racism, Sexism and Work, held in Toronto on September 30 - October 2, 1983.

WORKSHOP 8: WORKING WOMEN AND CHILD CARE

Be It Resolved That:

1. Appropriate governments oversee the development and implementation of race relations policies at all day care centres.
2. Educational institutions concerned with training of ECE workers include courses relevant to multiculturalism and race relations.
3. Day care centres and the primary grades in public school be encouraged to develop appropriate transition programs.
4. Women get together to form collective/co-operatives for the provision of culturally sensitive child care.
5. Parents be educated about appropriate alternatives leading to a forum for the exchange or cross-cultural dialogue.
6. Women/collectives learn how to make child care centres responsive to cultural needs.
7. The ethnic press be utilized in educating parents and providers of child care services.
8. Conference organizers provide participants with an up-to-date listing of child care services in Ontario.
9. Governments make subsidies and child care facilities more widely available through, for example, boards of education.
10. Employers provide child care.
11. Unions be utilized for more support of child care.
12. Twenty-four-hour child care be made available to accommodate shift-workers; there is also a need for child care during summer weeks and before and after school.
13. Child care be more responsive to the sexual, cultural and other special needs of children and their families.
14. Information services be provided for parents regarding the value of group care.

The Causes and Possible Solution for Muslim Disunity

Bushra Khan, Ottawa

Right up until the time that the Prophet (P.U.B.H.) died, he asked Allah to unite his ummah, and keep them united. It was a most fervent desire. Each Muslim should and must share our Prophet's concern for this unity among the Muslims, for the old age is true - united we stand, and divided we fall.

If we are to be concerned with righting the problems that cause disunity among Muslims, we must find a personal level, for we can only change those conditions that are directly under our own sphere of influence, and we are responsible to Allah, only for ourselves. Also, it is not enough to just identify the problem(s) for then the whole issue becomes an academic exercise in futility. This paper identifies nationalism among Muslims to be one of, if not the chief source of disunity, and attempts to offer some solution to same.

What unites a people? Common food, dress, place of birth, way of life, culture, economics, or politics perhaps? These can and do bind nations. However, the Muslims and Muslim world are constituted of so many diverse races and cultures. (This is inevitable since Islam is the only way of life that transgresses man-made nationalistic boundaries). What can unite such a wide spectrum of kinds of peoples, races, cultures, and colours? Surely nothing that is nationalistic in any way as there is no commonality in such fields. One must also remember that one has no choice in his place of birth or physical appearance, but one can control his choice of belief structure, personality, etc. Nationalism results in a bond that is most artificial because it is not a matter of conscious choice. But Pakistanis will stay with Pakistanis, Indians with Indians, Arabs with Arabs, and the list goes on. None communicate with each other, therefore ideas and knowledge are not shared, and unity never results. It is not enough that there happens to be a language barrier as all must know at least English, to be able to live in North America.

The only thing that can bind the Muslims is a common Islam since it appeals to the intellect, and cements the bonds between us by laying a common ground in that we all should share the same way of life. It is a most comprehensive bond since it governs our morals, values, socio-economic and political welfare, and feeds the human spirit with peace. Nationalism is a divisive force among the Muslims and it is not a valid reason to compartmentalize by categories of nationality.

Islam goes so far to unite Muslims that it requires every Muslim to offer the salat in Arabic at time of salat, so that every Muslim in the world, regardless of where they are, or what language they speak, can recognize another Muslim, simply through the shahadah and salat.

The malaise of Muslims being afraid to take any responsibility at all is very deep-rooted now. Parents wonder that their children are not very knowledgeable about Islamic precepts and that they may be deviating from the Islamic guidelines. It must be the Mosque's fault! for not providing sufficient programs

to teach the children. But they forget that it is not the Mosque's responsibility to educate the children in the first place. It is the parents' duty. If that happened, it is not valid to search for a scapegoat, but take the responsibility ourselves.

What we as Muslims must do is let our petty differences fall by the wayside and unite. Most disagreements result from people who do not understand roots, etc. If we would just stop to think what we are doing and why we are doing it, perhaps it would give a little time to reflect as to how important it really is. We are the ones that must solve them. And it all starts at the level of you, the individual, and me, the individual, for what more is a society than a group of individuals? It is time to stop waiting for someone else to do something about the problems that afflict Muslims, and take the initiative to do it ourselves, because no one is going to give us unity on a silver platter; we have to work for it.

Nothing will ever get accomplished if these attitudes continue. Is there any wonder why we have the problems that we do have? We may have lost the past, but we can still buy the future if we unite under the banner of Islam, and teach each other truth, patience, and constancy.

TORONTO

Members of the Toronto Chapter of CCMW met twice to discuss organizational matters and to develop a program of activities. Our priorities include the development of a Counseling and Assistance Service for Muslim women who experience harassment, discrimination or violence at work or in the home; periodic social get-togethers (e.g. Eid Reception in June '85) and networking with other women's groups in the area.

Talat Muinuddin is one of the founding members of Women's Intercultural Network. This organization organized a very successful Appreciation Dinner for the former Premier of Ontario, the Honourable William G. Davis, and Mrs. Kathleen Davis, at the Four Seasons Hotel on April 10, 1985. Thirty members and friends of CCMW (Toronto) attended this gala evening.

Congratulations to Sisters Zubeda Barmania and Sudha Khandwani who were recently awarded the Volunteer Services Awards (5 years category) by the Honourable Susan Fish. They were nominated by Islam West Associates (Canada).

News and Views

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FEDERAL/PROVINCIAL STATUS OF WOMEN COUNCILS

The joint meeting was held in Quebec City on November 5-6, 1984. The theme was Youth Employment. Several critical concerns were brought into focus. It was pointed out that many high school girls are not taking senior sciences and mathematics. Further, young girls are not yet aware of the inequalities in the current system. Further difficulty lies in blending career plans with home family options.

In particular we endorse one recommendation of the Conference. Let every local Muslim women's group adopt a few teenage girls and their mothers in the Community. Help them to expand their horizons, education and experiences so that they grow up to become leaders in the Community.

WIFE BATTERING

The Ontario Government has sanctioned \$160,000.00 for studies into wife battering so that a more reliable data base can be established on this prevalent social problem and on the way the justice system responds.

We urge our readers to get in touch with the Secretariat for Justice, Queens Park, Toronto, Ontario.

CRIAW CONFERENCE ON WOMEN AND ISOLATION

The 1985 CRIAW Conference on Women and Isolation will be held at Saskatoon on November 8-10. The Conference will explore the isolation of women primarily caused by geographical or social circumstances. Women in rural areas are separated by physical distance. Many Native women and immigrant women are isolated by social and linguistic barriers. The Conference focus is on the phenomenon of isolation; the experience of isolation; making the connections to end isolation (e.g. networking skills and information sharing, research, data, resources) and celebrating community.

For information contact CRIAW/ICRAF Program Committee, Education 3088, College of Education,

WE SALUTE THESE WOMEN

Her Excellency Jeanne Sauve, the first woman to serve the nation as the Queen's Representative.

Maureen Forrester for becoming the first woman to chair Canada Council.

The Honourable Andree Champagne, Pat Carney, Barbara McDougall, Suzanne Blais-Grenier, Flora MacDonald and Monique Vezina, members of the Federal Cabinet, who symbolize a major break through for women in Canadian Politics. The Honourable Bette Stephenson on her appointment as the first woman Deputy Premier of Ontario.

PLEASE TELL US

The Canadian Muslim Woman is your voice. Please help us with your comments, suggestions for improvements, and themes for discussion and articles. We also invite you to write book reviews and to send subscriptions.

We plan to include regular columns as the status and role of women in Islam, legislative changes in Canada affecting women, Muslim Women Organizations in different Canadian regions and outstanding Muslim Women Achievers. Please let us know if you or another sister in your community received an award, a distinction or a Position of responsibility.

THE CANADIAN COUNCIL OF MUSLIM WOMEN

On April 24, 1982 Muslim women came from across Canada to a Founding Conference, in Winnipeg, Manitoba of the Canadian Council of Muslim Women. The Council presently has twenty Chapters in operation or in process of formation, extending across Canada, from Vancouver, British Columbia to St. John's, Newfoundland.

OBJECTIVES

- To coordinate the activities of organizations of Muslim women across Canada and to present the Islamic way of life as defined by Quran and Sunnah.
- To stimulate a direction of thinking among Muslim women across Canada which is characterized by acknowledgement of the multicultural differences and the harmony in such diversity of cultures, and by an awareness of their rights, responsibilities and roles in a multicultural society.
- To foster Islamic education for and among Muslim women and stimulate Islamic thought among them.
- To communicate with women throughout the Muslim World.

**Canadian Council of Muslim Women Quebec: Montreal and Suburbs Chapter
Spring Conference
May 4 and 5, 1985**

MUSLIM WOMEN - AN ETHNIC MINORITY IN A MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY

McGill University Student Union Building,

3480 McTavish Street, Montreal

Saturday, May 4, 1985	
THEME: Women's concerns about the effects of pornography and prostitution on the integrity of the human being.	
9:15 - 9:45am	Registration
9:45 - 10:10am	Welcome - Keynote Address - Omaira Mansi, First Vice-President
10:10 - 10:45am	Pornography in Today's Society: A Critical View Marie Ellen Boyle, vice-President, Canadian Council on the Status of Women
	A Comparative Analysis of Islamic and Canadian Law re Pornography (a) Islamic Law in regards to Pornography and Prostitution. Islamic Approach

10:45 - 11:25am	towards dealing with these Phenomena - Lyne Fostati, M.A. Islamic Studies
11:25 - 11:45am	COFFEE BREAK
11:45 - 12:25pm	(b) Canadian Law in regards to Pornography and Prostitution Zubaida Bairminia, Toronto Lawyer
12:25 - 1:00pm	(c) Local Measures to Deal with Pornography - Chairperson: Ablah Moustafa Ahmad Marie Ellen Boyle, Vice-President, Canadian Council on the Status of Women
1:00 - 2:30pm	Prayers LUNCH + "FOOD FOR THOUGHT" The Meaning and Purpose of Modesty in Islam - Taped Interview with Imam Koutbi El Mehdi
2:30 - 3:30pm	Group Discussions
3:30 - 4:00pm	Reaction of the Panel to the Results of the Group Discussion. Chairperson: Omaima Mansi
4:00 - 5:00pm	Forum for Questions about C.C.M.W. - Meet the Council Members of the Local Chapter
6:00 - 8:00pm	Pot Luck Dinner. Host - The Ladies of the Muslim Community of Quebec Location: 7445 Chester Avenue Prayers
Sunday, May 5, 1985	
THEME: Women's concerns about their elderly and about the use of violence in a multicultural society. Available resources for them.	
9:30 - 10:00am	Registration
10:00 - 10:45am	Battered Women and Children in Today's Society - Available Resources Marie Ellen Boyle, Vice-President, Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women
10:45 - 11:30am	Sexual Assaults on Women and Children in Today's society - Available Resources Deborah Trent, Coordinator, The Montreal Sexual Assault Center
11:30 - 11:45am	Question Period - Chairperson: Dr. Nessim Yousef
11:45 - 12:00am	COFFEE BREAK
12:00 - 12:30pm	The Islamic View on the Use of Violence - Taped Interview with Imam Koutbi El Mehdi
12:30 - 2:00pm	LUNCH - PRAYERS
2:00 - 3:00pm	The needs and the problems of the Elderly Women in Today's Society Sekina Mita, retired physician. Chairperson: Nagah Berada
3:00 - 3:30pm	Closing Remarks - Dr. Laila Fahlman, President, C.C.M.W.
3:30 - 5:30pm	C.C.M.W. Executive Meeting

**C.C.M.W. Vancouver Spring Conference
Muslim Women - An Ethnic Minority in a Multicultural Society**

May 11 and 12, 1985

Kwanplen College, Richmond, B.C.

**Canadian Council of Muslim Women
Le Conseil Canadien des Femmes Musulmanes
2400 Dundas Street, W., Suite 513
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