

160 WAYS TO UPHOLD THE CHARTER OF RIGHTS

WINNIPEG (CUP) - A Winnipeg women's group has 160 good reasons why the Manitoba government should take a second look at the province's laws.

The Charter of Rights Coalition (Manitoba) recently published a report on women's health, education and correction issues which includes 160 recommendations on how to correct infringements of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms inherent in Manitoba laws.

CORC (Mb) recommends Manitoba universities take steps to reduce the sexism which occurs in classrooms, in the study material and in the working climate.

"We consider non-sexist learning to be a very important step for women in universities," said Jeraldine Bjornson, the coordinator of CORC (Mb). "Our report includes recommendations on sexual harassment policies, on the need to encourage female students into areas of study not traditionally chosen by women and on day care for women with children."

CORC (Mb) received a \$100,000 grant from the provincial Attorney General's Office and the federal

Secretary of State Women's Issues Branch, to document areas where Manitoba laws directly or indirectly violate women's rights.

The first part of the study, released in 1985, dealt with family law pensions, women in the workforce and women and poverty.

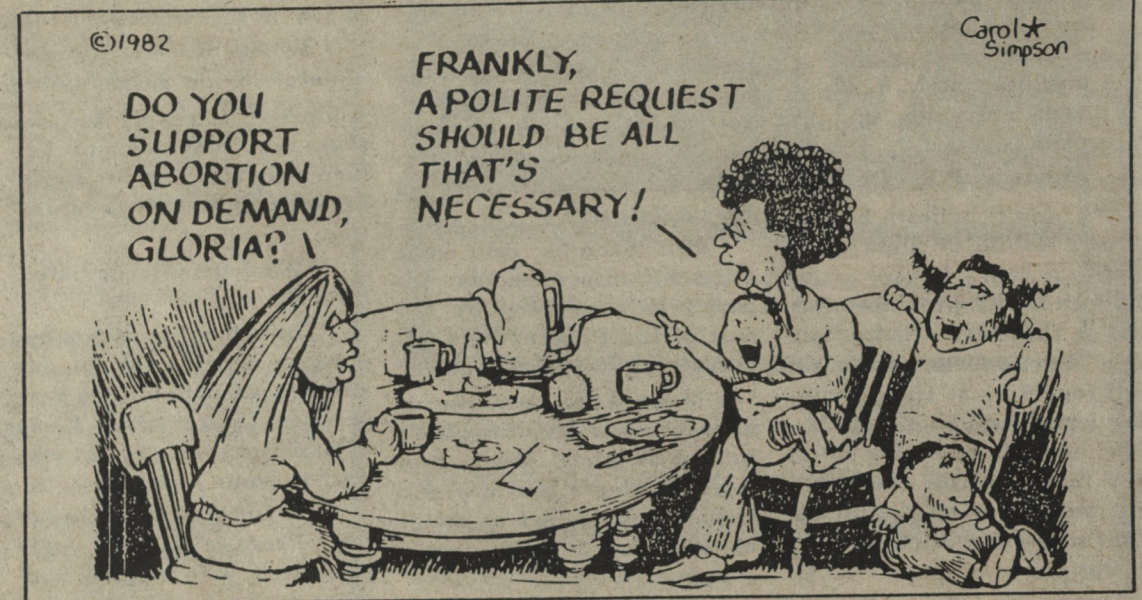
The review advised the provincial government to legalize midwifery and set up health centres and independent sexual assault centres.

The coalition also wants to change a law which says therapeutic abortion committees must require parental consent for abortion applicants 14 to 18 years of age.

"This requirement is basically law right now," said Mona Brown, a Winnipeg lawyer who headed the Coalition's review of women and health. "It simply is not being enforced in Manitoba right now."

Section 251 of the Criminal Code of Canada forbids abortion except when performed in an accredited hospital after receiving written approval by a therapeutic abortion committee of at least three doctors.

"The committee approval require-



ments also deny a woman autonomy and authority in making decisions directly related to her own life and health," said the review.

Monique Rainbault, the administration coordinator for the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women supported the review's stand on all recommendations.

"I am in favour of increasing abortion services for

the women of Manitoba and I hope the government takes this report seriously," said Rainbault, adding the review was very responsive to the diverse views and needs of women in the province.

Muriel Smith, NDP status of women minister, said she was impressed with the quality of analysis in the report.

"What it comes down to now is where these rec-

ommendations will go," said Smith. "We will have to redirect existing monies into their programmes."

The recommendations will be divided up and sent to the appropriate government departments, said Smith.

"I think the recommendations are very timely, especially the health care ones," she said. "but it all comes down to the problems of resources and funding."

Awareness on campus would help blind students

ST. JOHN'S (CUP) - Rick Turner gets lost in hallways because other students keep petting his dog.

Turner is blind, and his golden Labrador puppy Poppy guides him through

Memorial University's tunnels and corridors.

"People don't realize she's a working dog," complains Turner. "When she's out of her harness, fine, it's play-time and you can pet her with no problems. But when she's in the harness she's supposed to be all business."

Students handling Poppy or calling her by name distract the dog, Turner says. Poppy once got turned completely around and led her owner against the flow of traffic.

Regina Ash uses a long white cane to feel her way around the campus.

She can't avoid students, so she relies on them to move out of her way. That can be a problem.

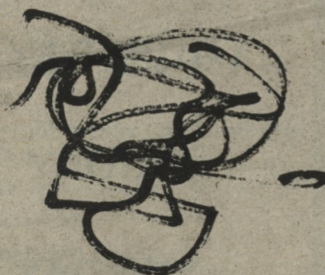
"Especially in tunnels. People stand in groups and I can't tell they're there or how big the group is unless

they're talking. People also sit on floors, which is particularly bad - I've had a couple of accidents from walking into sitting people."

Turner gets really upset when passers-by feed Poppy sandwiches or left-over muffin pieces. The dog is on a special diet to keep her in top condition, and she stops to gobble up the food.

Helpful students trying to open doors without saying so can completely confuse Turner and Ash.

Says Ash, "They want to help, but they don't know how to approach you."



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the level of fear and hysteria there is in the general public over this disease, and how much of an effort organizations like ours have to make to supply information and education to the general public."

"Groups like this (Victorious Women) use issues like these to support bigotry against gay and lesbian liberation," Claussen added.

Millard, who is also chair of the department of English at the University of Saskatchewan, said the Coalition has gay, lesbian and heterosexual members, and is expanding.

"We want to reach the real moral major-

ity in Saskatchewan," said Millard. "We see ourselves ultimately including church groups, unions, single parents and others who are concerned."

Millard said the Coalition will lobby for changes to the Saskatchewan human rights code to make it illegal to discriminate against people on the basis of sexual orientation.

"Sexual orientation is not a prohibited area of discrimination in Saskatchewan, as it is in Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec and the Yukon," said Millard. "If it were, Mr. Schmidt could be charged with counselling to break the law."

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