

ADJUSTING THE IMAGE: A NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CANADIAN BROADCASTING POLICY

MediaWatch, the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC) and the Canadian Coalition Against Media Pornography (CCAMP) are sponsoring a national conference on women and Canadian broadcasting policy, funding for which has been approved by the Minister of Communications. Although our production schedule precludes coverage of this important event in this issue of CWS/cf, we are publishing the following material for your information. We hope to include a post-conference report in our next issue of the journal.

This conference entitled "Adjusting the Image" will be held at the Skyline Hotel in Ottawa beginning at 6:00 p.m. on Friday, March 20 and ending after lunch on Sunday, March 22, 1987 and will bring together, for the first time, the principal groups concerned with this issue, namely the Canadian Association of Broadcasters, the Canadian Advertising Foundation, the CBC, private broadcasters, cultural agencies and members of the public represented by women's groups, education groups, etc.

The Honourable Flora MacDonald will give the keynote address on the Friday evening; Saturday morning will be devoted to presentations on various government initiatives affecting women and broadcasting (the CRTC's Policy on Sex-role Stereotyping, the Caplan-Sauvageau Task Force Report, Employment Equity legislation, etc.); on Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning we will look at ways to further improve the portrayal and representation of women in broadcasting; and on Saturday evening MediaWatch will launch the first of its Annual Awards for the positive portrayal of women.

The purpose of this conference is three-fold:

- to provide a forum for the discussion of the CRTC's Policy on Sex-Role Stereotyping in the Broadcast Media.
- to study those elements of the Caplan-Sauvageau Report that address women and the broadcast media and to develop a response for presentation to the Standing Committee on Communications and Culture.
- to develop recommendations on

broadcasting policy for inclusion in a new Broadcasting Act.

Policy on Sex-Role Stereotyping in the Broadcasting Media

This report was released by the CRTC on December 22, 1986. It states that though "a significant effort has been made both by broadcasters and advertisers alike, as well as by members of the public, to make self-regulation work...it has been only partially successful and further action is necessary." It lists several Commission expectations and recommendations aimed at the CBC, the CAB, the CAF, the public (represented by MediaWatch) and the Government which can be summarized as follows:

- the CBC should show leadership in providing a more equal reflection and better portrayal of women in the media.
 - the CAB should consult with public representatives in the revision of the present guidelines; should identify critical areas for research and as measurement for change over three years; and should help the industry eliminate sex-role stereotyping through its own educational efforts by means of seminars, convention workshops, and other initiatives.
 - The CAF should involve public representatives in the revision of the present guidelines; should identify and set targets for further improvement over the next three years; and should continue the educational efforts of its own members.
 - the public (MediaWatch) should continue to be vigilant through the responsible use of the complaints procedure and interventions at public hearings.
 - the government should initiate action on voice-overs in advertising produced by the federal government; advise departments of the government to eliminate sex-role stereotyping in external and internal communication; and rectify the under-representation of women on CRTC and CBC Boards.
- This conference will bring together, for the first time, members of the

public concerned with sex-role stereotyping in the broadcast media and representatives of the broadcasting and advertising industries. This will serve to help the CAB and the CAF to identify public representatives prepared and qualified to work with them in the development of a strategy to ensure compliance with the CRTC's policy on sex-role stereotyping. It will also assist in the identification of qualified women to serve on the Boards of the CBC and the CRTC.

In addition, the Conference will provide a forum for the discussion and implementation of the above recommendations. MediaWatch will take this opportunity to educate members of the public about the complaints procedure and encourage their appearance at public hearings; the CAB and the CAF will be invited to use this occasion to educate their members on ways to eliminate sex-role stereotyping; and the CBC and the government will be invited to send staff members to learn about the concerns of the public and the steps being taken by the broadcasting and advertising industries to eliminate sex-role stereotyping on radio and television.

The Caplan-Sauvageau Report

The recommendations in the Caplan-Sauvageau Report that address women in the broadcast media will be reviewed at the Conference, as will a draft paper on recommendations for presentation to the Standing Committee on Communications and Culture outlining the issues raised by Caplan-Sauvageau that should be adopted as public policy as well as issues that Caplan-Sauvageau failed to address but that should also be incorporated into any public policy on broadcasting.

A New Broadcasting Act

It is hoped that the discussions that take place at the conference in relation to the CRTC's policy on Sex-Role Stereotyping and the Caplan-Sauvageau Report will produce recommendations on broadcasting policy for inclusion in a new Broadcasting Act. These will be presented for consideration to the Minister of Communications in a post-conference report.