

Women Unite and Fight

Fifth Estate Collective

1971

Four Michigan women have filed a suit in U.S. District Court charging that the Automatic Retailers of America, Great Lakes Steel Division, discriminate against women by stabilizing them into job categories; in other words, freezing them into dead-end jobs. They also charge that ARA requires women to undergo burdensome training requirements not required for men and deny women equal opportunity to work overtime.

The suit also charges Local 1064, AFL-CIO, United Catering, Restaurant Bar and Hotel Workers union with failing to represent women employees on grievances and in collective bargaining.

This struggle for the rights of women workers started two years ago with a complaint filed with the Michigan Civil Rights Commission. The MCRC has not in any way vigorously processed the many complaints that women have filed with them. The four women involved complained to the Women's Liberation Coalition of Michigan who have helped them to initiate this legal action.

Barbara G. Robb, Irene Piconne and Neal Bush, attorneys for the women, along with many young law students, are doing a tremendous amount of research for this suit. They are carrying on this struggle with the purpose of advancing the rights of women workers. The suit has been filed as a class action and several hundred women similarly situated will be affected.

The hearing in Federal Court will be held to decide whether or not to grant an injunction against ARA and Local 1064 ordering them to cease their 'allegedly discriminatory practices. A date for the hearing has not yet been set.

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