

What we stand for

The CPC Women's Commission demands:

- no Canadian participation in the phony “war on terrorism” and the US/UK war against Iraq.
 - solidarity with the women of Iraq, Palestine, Colombia, Cuba, the Philippines and other countries facing imperialist violence.
 - reject the proposed the Free Trade Area of the Americas and other forms of capitalist globalization.
- full funding for quality, public healthcare, education and social welfare systems across the country.
- a universal, affordable non-profit childcare system.
 - a shorter work week with no loss in pay and no reduction in public services, and ban compulsory overtime; full benefits for part-time workers.
- intensify the labour movement's efforts to organize part-time workers and female dominated workplaces.
- employment equity legislation, extended pay equity legislation, and expanded job creation programs, especially for disadvantaged young women; enhance parental leave benefits, to eliminate barriers which disqualify thousands of women.
 - allocate sufficient federal funds for subsidies to save the family farm.
 - reinstate and expand core funding for women's equality-seeking organizations, including NAC
 - full funding for grassroots, feminist services to deal with violence against women.

- enshrine within the constitution the rights of Quebec, aboriginal peoples, and Acadians to self-determination and self-government, and guarantee the full economic, social and political equality of aboriginal women.
- full funding for safe, public, accessible abortion clinics.
 - allocate 1% of the federal budget to the creation of social, affordable and subsidized housing.
- establish a fair and just immigration and refugee policy.
 - extend all public benefits, including marriage rights, to same-sex couples; end discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered people.
 - replace the student loans program by student grants; phase out post-secondary tuition fees.



A working class party that fights for full equality!

To join the Communist Party of Canada or to get more information, get in touch with us:

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International
Women's
Day 2003



Women of the
whole world:



marching for
peace and justice!

IWD 2003 Statement from the Central Women's
Commission, Communist Party of Canada

Our victories are in danger!

Working class women and our allies in Canada achieved many important advances in the past century: the vote, reproductive choice, trade unions to defend us in the workplace, some legal protections against violence, homophobia and racism, social programs to provide a measure of equality. But today all these victories are under attack by profit-hungry corporations, fundamentalist groups, and right-wing governments. We need a united fightback to defend our rights, and to prevent a new and terrible war against Iraq. Just as important, we need a strategy to achieve a world truly liberated from exploitation, oppression, poverty and the threat of war and environmental catastrophe.

The problem is capitalism

What's behind the backlash against women's rights? The basic problem is much deeper than religious or anti-woman bigotry, or even vicious corporations and politicians. The underlying problem is the economic system based on private ownership of most wealth: capitalism.

Human societies were originally based on a non-hierarchical division of labour. Only when private ownership of resources arose did societies become divided, with wealthy (mostly male) rulers exploiting the rest of the population. Women were largely restricted to domestic labour, in a position of economic, social, political and cultural inferiority. The patriarchal family structure was rigidly enforced as the social norm.

Today's capitalists benefit from the systematic oppression of women and minority groups. The transnational corporations super-exploit women as workers, reaping extra profits by paying them lower wages. Women of colour and Aboriginal women face even higher unemployment rates and lower incomes. Millions of women are caught in part-time and temporary jobs, low-wage ghettos in the service industry, or home-based jobs difficult to organize into unions. Some male workers think they benefit from this pattern, but their wages and working conditions are also dragged down by the oppression of their female co-workers.

As well as forming almost half the paid workforce in Canada, women still do the bulk of domestic labour. While such unpaid labour is not directly part of the cycle of capitalist exploitation, it is essential in the process of raising each new generation of workers. This double burden is one of the key forms of oppression of women

under capitalism.

The corporate agenda includes attacks on childcare and parental leave and vicious cuts to social services. The shift towards "home care" for the sick and elderly aims to reduce health care budgets by forcing women to leave their jobs to care for relatives. Violence against women remains widespread, yet funding is being eliminated for women's shelters and rape crisis centres.



"...and for the woman's point of view we'll hear from Mr. Hanson who has carefully polled all of our female employees."

Women of the world, unite!

On a global scale, women face rising unemployment, environmental crises and regional conflicts. Many of the political and economic leaders who impose neoliberal policies also seek to strengthen the institutions of patriarchy, in an effort to preserve social inequality and divide working people.

Despite paying lip service to equality, US imperialism and its allies are the worst enemies of women's rights under the guise of their phony "war on terrorism."

Hundreds of Afghan women have been killed by US bombs since the Taliban was replaced by another anti-woman regime. The women of Palestine are a major force in the heroic resistance against Israel's illegal occupation of their homeland, yet the US funnels billions of dollars in aid and arms to Israel.

Most horrifying, as this IWD approaches, the United States

and Britain are preparing their "Shock and Awe" blitzkrieg against Iraq, a military assault which would kill thousands of defenceless women, men and children. The regional allies of the US in this aggression include Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, notorious for treating women as second-class human beings.

The Bush White House has even lined up with patriarchal religious bodies in a global offensive to limit women's reproductive rights and other freedoms.

What's the answer?

The Communist Party of Canada believes that the entire working class movement today must step up the struggle to defend and expand women's rights, to combat sexist, racist, homophobic and anti-immigrant views promoted by the corporate media and culture, and to oppose war and militarism.

Above all, the trade union movement must build on its historic record of defending the social and workplace rights of women. That means more efforts to organize part-time, temporary and contract workers, and the unemployed, so that these workers can raise their living standards and expand their political and economic action. By combating all forms of scape-goating, the labour movement can help unite all sections of the working class.

Despite recent setbacks caused largely by government cutbacks, women's organizations remain a vital force in the battles for pay equity, affirmative action, fully paid parental leave, reproductive choice, and universally accessible child care. As long as capitalism promotes discrimination and oppression, the women's movement will be a necessary factor for change.

The Communist Party believes that our daily struggles must be integrated into a long-term strategy. We call for stronger unity of all progressive forces, during elections and in our streets and workplaces, to help build a People's Coalition. Full women's equality must be a crucial element of the policies which unite such a coalition.

This strategy could open the way towards a socialist Canada, where the principal means of producing and distributing wealth will be the common property of all, and the exploitation of labour will be abolished. Ecological degradation will be replaced by measures to reduce the impact of human life on the natural environment. Poverty, insecurity and discrimination will be ended. Socialism will finally realize a new society based on solidarity, equality and emancipation.