

## CRIAW/ICREF

The 1991 CRIAW/ICREF Conference will be held on 8-10 November in Edmonton, Alberta. This year's theme -- Global Vision/Local Action -- is open to a multiplicity of interpretations. We expect, however, that presentations will demonstrate the wider context of research conducted in a more specific arena, so that a paper describing your research project on women and development issues, for example, or a visual or performance arts project on the wider implications of local feminist issues would both be appropriate to our theme. In any event, your presentation should situate you in a "local" research situation and contain an explanation or description of the broader "global" impact of your research findings.

Presentations may be in the form of a formal paper, in workshop format, or a visual or performance arts presentation and may be either academically or community based. Sessions will be 2 hours in length and will accommodate roughly 3 or 4 presentations/papers of 20 minutes each.

The deadline for submission of abstracts/proposals is 15 April 1991 and should be addressed to:

CRIAW/ICREF Conference Committee  
c/o Misener/Margetts Women's Research Centre  
10349 - 90 Avenue  
Edmonton, Alberta  
T6G 1A6.

The city of Edmonton .... (Noreen will provide material on our lovely city and its attractions.)

CRIAW SORT

e.g. Bristol, Penna, St Hilary

Gov't Advisory Councils

Katie Cooke

Feminist Education

Linda Bristol (classroom)

Body Image

Parsons & Stuter

~~hinda Williams~~

~~Husaini (mainstreaming)~~

Penrod (admin.)

Leske

PANEL Phenomenology/Writing

Malmo - chair

Dumont

Noble

Chiswick

Vance

Rural

Watkins

Words/Code

Gouffée

? Buss (autobiography)

WORKSHOP Fem. therapy/ethics

Pettifor - chair

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-  
-  
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Gender & dev't

Miles

Judd

St-Hilaire (maybe  
- Brainerd  
- also)

Purdy (also health...)

Personal/political

Vaidyanath (marriage)

McMahon & D. Khyatt (friend; chair)

Parmer (abortion)

Forth (generation gap)

Gender & playfulness

Bray & Lloyd

Veg'nism/Enviro.

Sethna

Haslett

Art

Fleming

Therapy

Liburd

Janz & Nelson - mod

PANEL Professionals

Badir - chair

Valentine

Olson

PANEL Trust & Wo So

Shogan - chair

- -  
- -  
- -

Brainerd

WORKSHOP (16) Fem. writing

Williams, facilitator

ROUNDTABLE Disability

Deringer, facilitator

## MINUTES OF THE CRIAW EXECUTIVE MEETING

Ottawa, February 8-10, 1991

Present: Jeri Wine, Marilyn Assheton-Smith, Ann Robinson, Sandi Kirby, Muriel Houston, Linda Clippingdale, Lise Martin.

1. Adoption of agenda

ACTION

The following changes were made to the agenda:

- 9a) wrap up on Charlottetown
- 9c) Toronto conference
- 14b) request from women's federation
- 14c) letter of support for Jerilyn Prior.

2. Adoption of minutes of the September executive meeting. Proposed by Ann Robinson, seconded by Marilyn Assheton-Smith.

3. President's Comments

Jeri indicated that she was very much enjoying her role as CRIAW President. She has been asked to represent CRIAW in a variety of ways. The equality eve preparations are going well; some women have put together a video for the event. The objective of the eve is to look at what has been done and what needs to be done.

The VOW conference is still being planned for June although their funding has been reduced from \$210,000 to \$60,000. DAWN will be responsible for the selection of Third World women. Jeri will be presenting a brief with her assistant, Marina Morrow, on behalf of CRIAW to the Standing Committee on Violence Against Women.

J.W.

4. Linda reported on her French course in Quebec (in French, of course!) She thanked the executive for having given her the opportunity. She visited Ann at her wonderful house and met with Roberta for dinner. Linda feels that her comprehension has greatly improved and feels more confident.

She also indicated that the National Women's Groups were still trying to arrange a meeting with Weiner. Mary Collin's office is helping Linda to arrange meetings between representatives of the groups and key cabinet ministers. We

L.C.

have a new program officer at the Women's Program, Patty Holmes.

5. Financial Report

Linda went through the financial report with the members of the executive. She noted that by the end of January we had received 98% of our projected revenues for 1990-91 fiscal year.

SATURDAY MORNING

6. Sandi presented the proposal on Women and Disabilities. It had been circulated to the Board prior to the executive meeting and was enthusiastically received. It should be made clear, however, that CRIAW's role would be "facilitative". As well, DAWN should be contacted to bring them into the picture. Jeri offered to meet with Pat Israel. Meanwhile, Linda has briefed Suzanne Potvin (Secretariat for the Disabled) on the project and they will be meeting to discuss it on Wednesday, Feb. 20th. Lise, Sandi and Monique have indicated an interest in participating on behalf of CRIAW on this project.

S.K.  
J.W.  
L.C.

7. a) Women and Violence

This proposal has already been submitted to the Family Violence Prevention Program and to the Women's Program. Lise outlined the development of the project. The ultimate goal is a handbook for front line care-givers working with abused women and children. Jeri and Lise will try to meet with the program officer at Health and Welfare on Friday the 15th. Linda and Lise will meet with Patty Holmes on Wednesday - she is CRIAW's new program officer at Secretary of State Women's Program. In addition, the proposal will be sent to a number of other possible funders, including Levis, Avon, and the Ontario Government.

J.W.  
L.M.

b) Women and Development

Lise reported on the January 25th meeting of the committee. (see minutes on file) Marilyn reported that Pat Chuchryk had contacted the Edmonton conference committee and they are very enthusiastic about the idea of the panel and round table with invited participants from Third World countries. Ann suggested that GREMF and/or Femmes-Sahel be added to the Canadian groups. She also offered to provide labels for mailing plus the address of Cinquième monde which arranges exchanges with Africa. Pat and Joanne Prindiville are working on funding proposals for this project.

A.R.

c) Update on Ethno-cultural Proposal

Unfortunately CRIAW's first proposal to the Multiculturalism Department was

rejected. No written communication has been received as yet but we understand the peer review committee of 5 men and 2 women thought it wasn't "academic" enough and that the information already exists on computers. Meanwhile, Lise and Linda had met with a group of ethno-cultural women in Ottawa to discuss the project. They were very receptive to the idea of putting together a resource of community-based research and would like to be involved in the project. Lucya Spencer offered to present it to the NOIVM Board for their endorsement and possible co-sponsorship. As well, Lise and Linda will meet with a program officer at Multi with the idea of submitting a redrafted proposal to a more appropriate sector of the department (eg. cross-cultural understanding and public participation).

L.M.  
L.C.

8. a) Bank of Researchers and b) Women's Directory Project

Now that the Directory database is almost ready, the consultant will start to work on transferring CRIAW's Bank to the new system. This work will take 3-4 weeks. Lise will then do a major update with members of the Bank of Researchers, asking them to include highlights of their recent activities and publications. When the new databases are operational, we will conduct a major publicity campaign to attract users and new members.

L.M.

9. a) Update on Charlottetown Conference

The executive expressed its appreciation (and astonishment) on hearing of the \$18,844.89 profit from the PEI conference. Eight thousand dollars has been forwarded to CRIAW already; a thousand dollar bonus was given to the coordinator, Anne Mazer, for her outstanding work; four thousand has been earmarked for assistance to disabled women to attend the Edmonton conference; and six thousand has been set aside for the Proceedings if needed.

Muriel Houston presented the office with a full report on the conference, a most useful resource for future conference planners. She also reported that a contract has been signed with SORORAL Publishing for the Proceedings, with an expected publishing date of early fall. Linda asked for abstracts to be available for translation no later than April 30th.

M.H.

b) Update on Edmonton

Marilyn reported that a program should be ready for the Board in June. The Westin Hotel has been booked for the conference at a rate of \$90.00, single or double. It is well connected to the downtown core by ped-ways and is accessible for the disabled. (will need to check on number of rooms available for physically disabled.) The committee hopes to settle on a keynote speaker (or speakers) in the next two weeks. Names being discussed include: Charlotte Bunch, Ethel

M.A.S.



Blondin, Glenda Simms and Rosemary Brown. The executive suggested the addition of a francophone (eg. Claire Bonenfant or Maria de Koninck) - also the idea of having all the Chairs in Women's Studies.

Someone has been hired to do a logo and the committee is working to recruit more papers. They will probably extend the deadline to April 15th. Linda will call MATCH to ask for a set of labels.

L.C.

The executive discussed ways to get better francophone representation in Edmonton, including special invitations using Quebec lists.

M.A.S.

## SATURDAY AFTERNOON

### 10. Publications Report

a) Papers Series We have exceeded our commitment for Feminist Perspectives by one. A paper submitted by Carolyn Gammon was briefly discussed. Linda will call Diana to suggest that Sandi and Keith Louise review it. (done)

The translation of Francine Descarries's paper is still being reviewed. Ann indicated that the content of the paper made it "heavy" even in its original French version. Marilyn A.S. agreed to edit it. The need for more French language submissions was mentioned and will be discussed at next week's publication meeting. Ann will send us an address list for GREMF if the publication committee decides to do a special mail-out.

M.A.S.

A.R.

The CAAW&S paper is now ready to be printed. It will be printed in the same format as the NRT tool. Normally there should be two more tools in the next year. Marilyn Assheton-Smith indicated that we should perhaps think of developing a tool specifically on action research.

Ann hired an assistant through GREMF to put the finishing touch on the Quebec proceedings. The text should be sent to the editor at any moment.

The CRIAW office still wishes to highlight research projects in the Newsletter. Perhaps this can be done in the March issue.

L.M.

Marilyn A.S. indicated that the last issue of the T.W.I. is late. The group is presently undertaking an evaluation of its work.

As for the publicity/communications aspect of the publications we have not been successful in finding a placement student. Lise will look into the possibility of a Challenge program for the summer. Linda will speak to Donna Quince about

L.C.

L.M.

the possibility of her working two days after April.

11. Membership and Promotion

Linda presented the kits to the executive and asked that they send their suggestions. She noted that this was a draft version, especially the History. The executive noted that the kit looked very professional, that the lay-out was impressive.

The membership and promotion committee need to meet to discuss strategy. Muriel will talk to Stella about a possible meeting in Halifax.

M.H.

SUNDAY MORNING

12. Personnel Questions

This item was discussed at the end of the morning with only the executive committee present.

Linda presented her evaluation of Lise Martin for the executive's approval, along with a letter of commendation from Christine St. Peter.

There was a brief discussion on salary scales with a proposal to take to the administrative committee before the June Board.

13. June Board Meeting

Prior to the meeting, Linda will do a mail-out to the Board members asking for their first and second choices for committees. Members are free to stay where they are or to suggest changes. It should be pointed out that certain duties, such as chairing the grants or prizes committees, are one time affair. Also, normally members serve on only one major committee since committees meet at the same time.

L.C.

A draft agenda was drawn up, with time for orientation of new Board members set for Thursday morning June 13th. The formal Board meeting will start at 2 PM the same day with all business concluded by noon on Sunday.

14. Other business

- a) - the request for funding by the WUSC student was turned down as it doesn't fall within CRIAW's mandate.
- b) - It was agreed Linda should write a letter endorsing the nomination of Dr. Jerilyn Prior for the YWCA Woman of Distinction Award.

L.C.

- c) - Individual executive members signed the Women Teachers' Federation petition asking for a Royal Commission on Violence Against Women.



## MEMO

To: Members of the Board  
From: Linda Clippingdale  
Date: February 13, 1991

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### **re lobbying of M.P.'s**

**NOW IS THE TIME.** A meeting of representatives of national groups funded by the Women's Program took place in Montreal yesterday. We decided that M.P.'s need to be visited before the Budget comes down. Each Board of Directors is being asked to visit M.P.'s in their constituencies within the next ten days.

The idea is to talk about CRIAW - the importance of our work to Canadian women - and also to push for a reinstatement of funding by the Women's Program for the National Groups and Publications cut last year. (As you may know, funding has been reinstated for the Women's Centres.)

You are being provided with a CRIAW KIT to leave with the M.P. - plus some background materials provided by NAC and LEAF to make your case.

Note: Please complete the short pink questionnaire included with your kit and return by mail or fax to CRIAW office. Thanks.

The Right Honourable Brian Mulroney  
Prime Minister of Canada  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0A6

Dear Prime Minister,

I am writing to protest the threat your government has made in your latest budget to cut grants to public interest groups by \$75 million. I am particularly opposed to women's groups being included in these cuts.

Women's groups are working towards ending discrimination against half the population. Their work is critical to achieving equality for all women, a goal supported by your government through its commitment to the U.N. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. By undercutting Canada's equality seeking groups you would be widening the gap between those who are privileged and those who are not. This is not acceptable.

Sincerely,

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Honourable Harvie Andre, MP  
Leader of the Government  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0A6

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Sincerely,

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Honourable Gerry Weiner  
Secretary of State  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0A6

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Sincerely,



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The Right Honourable Brian Mulroney, M.P.  
Prime Minister of Canada  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0A6

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Honourable Harvie Andre  
Government House Leader  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0A6

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Honourable Gerry Weiner  
Secretary of State  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, Ontario  
K1A 0A6

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# WE'RE WORTH MORE!

## The Women's Movement and Government Funding

This information sheet  
looks at:

1. Canada's promise to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women.
2. How the government is backing out of its commitment.
3. Government funding of women's groups: pros and cons.
4. What the government has done for women lately.
5. How this affects us all.
6. What we can do.

### 1. CANADA'S COMMITMENT TO END DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

The Canadian government is a signatory to both the *United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*, 1981; and the *Forward Looking Strategies* document, Nairobi, 1985.

Both these documents call for the participation of non-governmental women's groups in any social change movement or institution working to achieve women's equality.

NAC and women's groups across Canada believe "the Canadian government has an obligation to maintain and increase, according to need, its funding of women's organizations dedicated to the principles of the UN Conventions and *The Canadian Charter of Rights*."

#### Background

Government funding for women's groups began in 1973 with the creation of the Women's Program Division of the Secretary of State. This was in response to Royal Commission on the Status of Women recommendations (1970), combined with pressure from emerging women's groups.

Since 1973, countless non-governmental groups have acted as advocates for women and have advised the government on legislation and programs affecting women. Just as importantly, many women's groups have provided essential services in the areas of women's health, transition housing, sexual assault crisis centres, women in conflict with the law, employment counselling, and much more. Hundreds of millions of dollars worth of women's volunteer labour provide these services, and the demand for the services is ever increasing.

### 2. HOW THE GOVERNMENT IS BACKING OUT OF ITS COMMITMENT TO CANADIAN WOMEN

In 1987, the federal government promised that the funding level of the Women's Program would be maintained and indexed to a cost of living allowance, and it considered increasing funding to meet the needs of new groups and emerging priorities. Instead, it has severely cut funding to women's groups over the last two years.

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In 1990-91, \$1.6 million (15%) of the Women's Program budget was cut. The previous year, 1989-90, \$2 million (15.3%) of the budget was cut. The

Women's Program of Secretary of State now has a budget of only \$9.4 million dollars, or .009% of the total Canadian budget. Compare this to the \$14.2 million the government spent promoting its unpopular Goods and Services Tax, or the \$17 million it loaned to strip clubs.

In 1990-91 core funding to 76 women's centres in Newfoundland, Quebec and British Columbia was cut. After country-wide protests, \$1.4 million was returned, but only for one year. Provincial governments have been approached to pick up this funding, but no acceptable agreements have been made.

The Women's Program budget now amounts to only 75¢ for every Canadian female. Women have a right to expect that our taxes are used to remove barriers to our full participation in Canadian society. We deserve and need more federal funding, not budget cuts to the work we do.

Similar cuts were made to programs that fund native and visible minority advocacy groups. The advocacy work of women in these groups has therefore been doubly cut.

The government does not consult with national women's groups about funding priorities.

The government ignores women's protests of its refusal to fund activities related to reproductive rights, peace, the environment and lesbian rights.

The Secretary of State Department will be cut by at least another \$23 million in 1991-92. We can expect further cuts to the women's program.

#### Operational Versus Project Funding

The government has announced it is moving away from operational funding towards project funding.

Most of the approximately 600 women's groups funded by the Women's Program already receive only project grants. A small number receive operational grants. Women's groups had won this more secure, less intrusive operational funding after many years of negotiations with the Women's Program. The two successive 15% cuts were directed explicitly at the "administrative overhead of groups" receiving operational funding. The exception to this was NAC, which was cut by 50% over three years, and feminist publications which lost 100% of their operational funding.

The political effect of the emphasis on project funding is that the Program will have increased influence over the priorities of women's groups.



NON-INTRUSIVE OPERATIONAL FUNDING IS OUR RIGHT,  
AND A NECESSITY FOR GROUPS PROVIDING ONGOING  
ADVOCACY AND ESSENTIAL SERVICES FOR WOMEN.

### 3. GOVERNMENT FUNDING OF WOMEN'S GROUPS: Pros and Cons

"Funding" is more than a transfer of money. It is an agreement between funders and recipients that certain kinds of activities are in part the responsibility of the funder. The current crisis in funding for women's groups is more accurately described as a struggle about who has the bulk of social responsibility to address and change the systematic inequalities women face. The cuts to the Women's Program suggest that the work of eliminating barriers to women's full and equal participation in our society is being "privatized", i.e., foisted upon the voluntary, charitable work of women.

In a market economy resources are unequally distributed, and it is the government's role to redistribute resources to assist disadvantaged groups.

Working in the women's movement, we have had to struggle with the questions of whether government funding criteria violate our autonomy and right to define our issues. Other serious dangers include organizations becoming short-term project driven, becoming an arm of government, being unable to plan for long-term change, facing competition for funding dollars between equally needy groups, being unable to communicate with one another, shaping projects to fit inappropriate government criteria.

Without our clear, strong voice stating what we want and need, the government will define "equality" for us. Social policy has been strengthened by our pressure on government to maintain its international and domestic obligations. Let's not lose this voice. Non-intrusive operational funding is our right.

### 4. WHAT HAS THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT DONE FOR WOMEN LATELY?

#### *The Federal government*

- is in the process of recriminalizing abortion;
- reneged on its promise of a new childcare system;
- called the 0.5% reduction in the wage gap a "victory";
- MPs gave themselves a \$9000 raise;
- free-traded away women's jobs in electronics, food processing and textile industries;
- backed out of its responsibility for unemployment insurance and retraining;
- shut us out of the constitutional decision making process;
- refused to fund women's work on reproductive choice, lesbian rights, peace and the environment;
- decreased funding to women's groups by \$3.6 million in the last two years;
- taken the country to war;
- is in the process of reducing and privatizing social programs, healthcare, post-secondary education.

### 5. HOW THESE CUTS AFFECT YOU

- The movement towards women's full equality in Canada is being thwarted.
- Women's groups will not be able to meet demands for their services. Groups' limited, and now massively reduced, resources are being shifted away from dealing with the needs of women, to the needs of funders and fundraising.
- Women's organizations, centres and periodicals will disappear. The accumulated cuts have resulted in the majority of Canadian women's organizations being in peril. They have had to cut staff, services, newsletters and more. Providing broader services for survivors of sexual violence and abuse, for example, has become almost impossible.
- Although women's centres won back transitional funding for 1 (possibly 2) years, many of them are in jeopardy of closing if agreements with their provinces fall through.
- Due to the cuts, newly formed organizations, such as visible minority, disabled, native or immigrant women's groups, are not as likely to receive secure funding.
- The cuts particularly target political advocacy and educational groups.
- Women's groups must compete with other social movements for shrinking public and private dollars.
- Solidarity across regions will suffer, as groups have less and less resources to communicate with one another.
- If you are a woman in trouble, you will find there are fewer services — shelters, transition houses, crisis centres, information and networking for you.
- If you are a citizen concerned about equality and social justice, you will see less of your tax dollars being spent on these issues.

### 6. HOW YOUR VOICE CAN BE HEARD

- Write, call, or fax Brian Mulroney, Prime Minister of Canada, House of Commons, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6. The FAX # is (613) 957-5636.
- Visit, call or write your local Member of Parliament in her or his constituency office.
- Become active in or make a donation to feminist organizations. Keep our voice strong.
- Talk to friends, colleagues, neighbours about the federal cuts to women's equality in Canada.



## THE CASE FOR CORE FUNDING

The Women's Program of the Secretary of State has provided core funding to a cross-section of women's groups for fifteen years. Core or operational funding is provided to organizations by the Federal Government in general as a cost effective, stable form of support for the operations of organizations that have a proven track record of proper financial management. Typically, this funding takes the form of a grant or a contribution, as opposed to a contract for projects or fee for service. This core funding allows for strategic planning, a base from which to build and seek other funding, and a stability that allows the organization to focus on its main purpose. It is accountable in many ways. Organizations must apply annually, are subject to complete audits, and must provide regular financial and activity reports.

Project funding on the other hand is labour intensive for both the recipient and the funder. A switch from core funding to project funding leads to the need to redefine the general work of an organization into specific projects, each requiring separate accounting, reporting, and monitoring on both sides of the arrangement. The applicant becomes much more tied to government and its independence is seriously eroded under the guise of accountability. There is more paperwork under project funding, but no more accountability for the expenditure of public funds than under core funding.

It is important that equality seeking women's organizations, and indeed for all equality seeking groups, to receive government support through public funding until equality is achieved. It is equally important that the form that such funding takes respects and indeed enhances the independence of these organizations. There is little value in turning voluntary organizations into government run bodies. It is essential that the Women's Program continue to fund equality seeking women's groups, and that this funding have a major emphasis on core support in the form of grants.

National Women's Organizations, 1991

## POURQUOI LE FINANCEMENT FIXE EST PRÉFÉRABLE

Le Programme de promotion de la femme du secrétariat d'État fournit depuis une quinzaine d'années un financement fixe à un échantillon de groupes féministes. Le financement fixe, ou financement des fonds d'exploitation, est une forme de support financier avantageux et stable remis par le gouvernement fédéral aux organismes qui ont une réputation établie de bonne gestion financière. Cette forme de financement prend ordinairement la forme d'une subvention ou d'une contribution, plutôt que d'un contrat associé à un projet particulier, ou d'une rémunération pour un acte précis. Le financement fixe permet une planification stratégique, fournit une base à partir de laquelle l'organisme touché peut chercher à obtenir d'autres formes de financement, et favorise la stabilité qui permet à l'organisme de se concentrer sur son but principal. Les organismes recevant cette forme de financement sont imputables de diverses façons. Elles doivent soumettre une demande annuelle, fournir des rapports de vérification détaillés, et remettre régulièrement des rapports de leurs situation financière et de leurs activités.

Le financement relié directement aux projets, quant à lui, demande beaucoup de travail, tant pour l'organisme récipiendaire des fonds que pour la source des fonds. Lorsqu'il doit passer du financement fixe au financement de projets précis, un organisme se voit dans l'obligation de redéfinir l'ensemble de son travail en terme de tels projets. Il faut alors compter pour chaque projet une comptabilité, une méthode de transmission de l'information comptable et une surveillance distinctes et ce, chez chacune des deux parties concernées. L'organisme demandeur de fonds devient alors beaucoup plus dépendant du gouvernement et voit son autonomie sérieusement rongée sous le couvert de la nécessité de rendre des comptes. Bien que le travail de bureau soit de beaucoup augmenté dans le cas du financement de projets particuliers, l'organisme ne rend pas un compte plus détaillé des dépenses des deniers publics qu'il ne le fait lorsqu'il reçoit un financement fixe.

Il est important que les organismes féministes qui luttent pour l'égalité, de même que tous les groupes qui ont le même but, reçoivent du gouvernement un support financier à même les deniers publics et ce, jusqu'à ce que l'égalité recherchée devienne réalité. Il est tout aussi important que ce financement prenne une forme qui respecte, voire favorise l'indépendance de ces organismes. Les organismes bénévoles n'y gagneront vraisemblablement pas à devenir des groupes relevant du gouvernement. Il est essentiel que le Programme de promotion de la femme continue à financer les groupes féministes qui luttent pour l'égalité, et que soit privilégié le financement fixe sous forme de subventions.

February 7, 1991

Secretariat **NATIONAL** Of  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**REINSTATEMENT OF FUNDING TO WOMEN'S CENTRES  
A VICTORY FOR CANADIAN WOMEN**

In an unprecedented reversal of government policy, the \$1.2 million cut from women's centres in last year's federal budget was reinstated last week, the National Action Committee on the Status of Women announced today. The 76 women's centres which lost their funding have been told that they can now re-apply for core funding to carry out their public education and advocacy activities.

"Last spring's protests showed the government that centres are critical to communities all across the country. This is only time we have seen this government admit it was wrong in the face of popular, grass roots protest", said Judy Rebick, President of NAC. "This is an important victory for women", she said. "Women's access to information, support and educational material in many rural and urban areas is now relatively secure."

Treasury Board permanently increased the core budget of the Secretary of State Women's Program by \$1.2 million after reviewing a Report on the outcome of attempts to negotiate with four Provinces for substitute funding for the centres. None of the Provinces had agreed to replace the federal government funding.

"It is terrific that the principle of operational funding has been reinstated, but it is not adequate," said Donna Cameron, NAC's British Columbia Representative. The \$1.2 million is 15% below the 1988 levels of funding for centres. It has been explicitly designated for centres that were cut last year. This means that only some centres in B.C., the Yukon, Quebec, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland have secure, core funding. The cuts to national women's publications, advocacy and research groups or regional cuts to project funding have not been reinstated. "The Secretary of State still has to cut \$23 million from his budget in the next year, and we are concerned that he will cut project funding to centres not affected last year and/or support to national groups" Ms. Cameron continued.

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For more information contact:

Judy Rebick	(416)654-8130
Alice de Wolff, NAC Office	(416)922-3246
Donna Cameron	(604)492-8193





**LES CENTRES POUR FEMMES FINANCÉS A NOUVEAU :  
 UNE VICTOIRE POUR TOUTES LES CANADIENNES**

Nous assistons à un retournement sans précédent dans les politiques du gouvernement, alors que celui-ci annonçait la semaine dernière que la somme de 1,2 million de dollars qui avait été éliminée du budget fédéral destiné aux centres pour femmes a été remise à la disposition de ces mêmes centres. C'est ce que rapporte aujourd'hui le Comité canadien pour le statut de la femme. Les 76 centres pour femmes qui avaient perdu tout financement ont été informés qu'ils pouvaient maintenant présenter une nouvelle demande pour obtenir le financement de base qui leur permettra de réaliser leurs activités de sensibilisation du public et de défense des droits.

« Les protestations du printemps dernier ont montré au gouvernement que les centres jouaient un rôle essentiel dans toutes les collectivités du pays. C'est la première fois que nous voyons le gouvernement admettre avoir eu tort suite aux pressions exercées par le peuple » de dire Judy Rebick, présidente du CCA. « C'est là une victoire d'importance pour les femmes, ajoute-t-elle. L'accès à l'information, au soutien et au matériel éducatif dans bien des régions rurales et urbaines leur est maintenant relativement assuré. »

Le Conseil du trésor a augmenté de façon permanente le budget de base du Programme de promotion de la femme du secrétariat d'état en y ajoutant la somme de 1,2 million de dollars. Cette décision a été prise après avoir fait l'étude du rapport des résultats des tentatives de négociations avec quatre provinces pour tenter d'obtenir des fonds de remplacement pour les centres touchés. Aucune des provinces n'était prête à avancer les fonds nécessaires pour remplacer l'apport du gouvernement fédéral.

« Il est bien sûr merveilleux que le principe du financement des fonds d'exploitation soit de nouveau en vigueur, mais cela n'est pas suffisant », déclare Donna Cameron, représentante du CCA pour la Colombie-Britannique. Comparativement au niveau de financement des centres en 1988, cette somme de 1,2 million de dollars représente une diminution de 15 %. Ces fonds sont destinés explicitement aux centres qui ont subi des compressions l'an dernier. Cela signifie que seuls quelques centres de la Colombie-Britannique, du Yukon, du Québec, de la Nouvelle-Écosse et de Terre-Neuve disposent maintenant d'un financement de base stable. Les coupures infligées aux publications féministes nationales, aux groupes de défense des droits et de recherche, ou les coupures régionales touchant divers projets sont toujours une réalité. « Le secrétariat d'état doit encore éliminer 23 millions de dollars de son budget au cours de la prochaine année, et nous craignons qu'il n'élimine le financement des projets des centres qui n'ont pas été touchés l'an dernier, ou encore le financement des groupes nationaux » ajoute Mme Cameron.

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## **REVIEW OF THE SITUATION OF CANADIAN WOMEN**

**Prepared by the  
NATIONAL ACTION COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN**

**February 1991**





## REVIEW OF THE SITUATION OF CANADIAN WOMEN

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The lives of the majority of Canadian women are getting harder, many women are poorer and their working conditions are deteriorating.

All aspects of women's lives have been enormously affected by recent federal policies which restructure the Canadian economy and change the focus of government. The government has shifted its priorities away from solving the problems of inequalities between people, regional inequalities, unemployment and the need for social programs to a focus on inflation, productivity and improving the conditions for business competitiveness. This has been accomplished through initiatives, such as the Free Trade Agreement with the United States, which have crippled many manufacturing industries, strengthened arms manufacturing, destabilized service industries and increased unemployment. At the same time many services have been privatized, including those which supply the country's educational, social, communications, transportation and financial infrastructure. These factors in combination with a devolution of powers to the provincial level are fundamentally changing the character and role of the Canadian state and the very values upon which it has been historically founded. Canadian women are now suffering the adverse effects of these changes.

The effects of this policy shift on women have been so significant that even employment equity legislation, pay equity legislation, labour market adjustment programs, programs to combat violence and progressive rulings by the Supreme Court of Canada have not countered their effects on women.

Despite the fact that economic and government restructuring is having a tremendous impact, the government expects the entire burden of adjustment to fall on individuals. The changes have had an adverse effect on women's disposable income, working conditions, economic and social well-being and equality of opportunity and they have hurt women disproportionately. New systemic barriers have been created for the majority of women who have limited economic resources, low levels of education and family responsibilities. Women are still working in job ghettos, are increasingly working part time, or short term AND are taking on larger responsibilities around the care of their children, their parents and ill or disabled family members.

A large proportion of immigrant women, aboriginal women, older women and single parent women are likely to find these new barriers insurmountable, while a few women have been able to take advantage of some changes. We can now see increasing economic division among women, with a small minority improving their economic conditions while conditions for the majority continue to deteriorate. The gaps, however, between men and women are still enormous.

## 1. WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT

More women are participating in the workforce than at any other time in our history. The change in how family groups support themselves has been dramatic over the past 20 years. There are now almost as many female headed single parent families in Canada as there are families where a man supports a wife and children. In 1961 65% of Canadian families had a male as sole earner supporting a family with children.<sup>1</sup> We can catch a glimpse of the extent of the change when we look at the percentage of sole male earners supporting families in two different income groups: 10.6% of families with an income of \$30-35,000 and .8% of families with an income of \$70-75,000 were supported by sole male earners.<sup>2</sup> This does not however signal increased economic independence, increased occupation choice or improved living conditions for all women.

Economic restructuring has led to increased differentiation in women's employment opportunities. Almost all new jobs in the 1980s were either in low paying, part-time/temporary work in community business, personal services and wholesale and retail trade or in professional/managerial occupations in lower-wage industries. As a strategy to increase "labour market flexibility" employers have tended to segment their own labour pools, investing higher wages, job security and benefits in a smaller core of employees, while the periphery of contract, low waged, part-time employees with no job security has grown.<sup>3</sup>

The industries most dramatically affected by closures and job losses related to the Free Trade Agreement have been those where women have been most concentrated in manufacturing. We are just beginning to see the loss of jobs in the service sector. From September to October 1990, 28,000 jobs were lost in Quebec. Of these, 27,000 were women's jobs in public and private sector services.<sup>4</sup>

The 1990 recession will inevitably make the situation of women in the most vulnerable positions in both manufacturing and services more difficult. After the recession of the early '80s Canadians were able to return to a relatively intact economy: this will not be true after the current recession if the government continues with its economic policies. The restructuring of the past four years has permanently eliminated a large number of small, medium and large businesses and their jobs. The new Unemployment Insurance legislation makes matters worse. Many women who work part time will find themselves ineligible for any assistance at all. Because of the technological nature of many new jobs, women who have no access to training or re-training will find it increasingly difficult to recover from job loss.

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<sup>1</sup> Statistics Canada, Survey of Consumer Finances, 1985.

<sup>2</sup> Statistics Canada, 1990.

<sup>3</sup> Our understanding has greatly benefitted from Marcy Cohen and Margie White's work, see bibliography.

<sup>4</sup> The Gazette, "'Last-Hired, first-fired' policy hurts women: lobby", November 8 1990. Source, Statistics Canada.

and 1988.<sup>5</sup> The analysis here shows us that this small increase represents an improvement in the salaries and working conditions for some women, while most are employed in female job ghettos in the lowest paying, least stable jobs in the economy.

## 1.2 Service Sector Workers

The most significant characteristic of the service sector is the recent growth in low paid unstable jobs. While there has been fast growth in managerial/professional occupations in finance, business and non-market services, the lower paying part-time occupations in consumer services have also grown substantially.<sup>6</sup> At the same time as some women have moved into new managerial positions, women in the lower paying service sector jobs are experiencing a drop in income (between 1981 and 1987 women's service sector salaries dropped by 10%).<sup>7</sup> Most women continue to work in the service sector: it currently provides 84% of women's jobs.<sup>8</sup>

Increasing use of new computer and electronics communications technology in both the public and private sectors has permitted employers to sub-contract more clerical, data processing and accounting functions. Changes in the regulation of trade in services now make it possible for employers to transfer data processing to the U.S. The Canadian Independent Computer Services Association estimated that by 1988 200,000 managerial, administrative, clerical and computer related office jobs had been transferred to U.S. head offices; and that an additional 150,000 jobs will be moved to the U.S. in the next five years.<sup>9</sup>

## 1.3 Clerical Workers

The most substantial change in women's work is taking place in the clerical sector. Clerical work has been the fastest growing sector throughout the century until this decade, when its growth slowed substantially. The slow down in growth is due in large part to the introduction of computer technology and the new trade in services. There have been virtually no wage gains for the 28.2% of working women who are in clerical occupations<sup>10</sup>,

Technological changes in the information industry have precipitated the reorganization of office employment: managerial/professional jobs have been integrated with senior clerical functions; many traditional clerical jobs have been eliminated; and routinized computer-related clerical jobs have expanded. This has created two distinct labour markets for clerical workers: a limited number of senior level jobs which require some college-based

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<sup>5</sup> Statistics Canada, Earnings of Men and Women 1988, #13-217.

<sup>6</sup> Economic Council of Canada, 1990, pg 14. and Poole, Phebe-Jane, "Employment Equity and the Banks", National Action Committee on the Status of Women and Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 1990.

<sup>7</sup> Cohen, Marcy, 1990.

<sup>8</sup> Statistics Canada, Women in Canada - Second Edition, 1990.

<sup>9</sup> Loewen, W.H. "Free Trade's Effect on Systems Jobs in Canada", *CIPS Review*, October 1988, pg. 10-12.

<sup>10</sup> Statistics Canada Women in Canada - Second Edition, 1990.

training and larger numbers of routine clerical, data entry jobs. The latter jobs are expected to be eliminated with further automation. There are few routes for mobility from routine to senior level jobs other than through college education.

The polarizing of the clerical workforce can be seen in another way, by looking at the shift from full to part-time work. In 1986, 54.5% or 1,001,340 clerical workers worked part-time or part-year and earned salaries that were below the national poverty level.<sup>11</sup> A British Columbia study suggests that the increase in part time clerical work represents a determined effort by large employers to "unlock themselves from past commitments to full-time employees and to seek greater long-run flexibility over their clerical labour force".<sup>12</sup> Public sector employers have also increased their use of part time workers over the last five years.

#### 1.4 Manufacturing Workers

A large percentage of the manufacturing jobs lost through the free trade agreement are women's jobs. Between January and December 1990 124,000 fewer people were employed in manufacturing industries. While women workers held 29% of the manufacturing jobs in January 1990, 36% of the jobs lost by the end of the year were women's jobs.<sup>13</sup>

Women who are most disadvantaged have taken the brunt of economic adjustment policies and free trade. Immigrant women were 49.6% of the workforce in clothing industries in 1986.<sup>14</sup> These jobs have been concentrated in Quebec and Ontario: 59.4% of clothing industry jobs were located in Quebec, and 28.2% in Ontario. In Ontario almost 70% of the women workers in the clothing industry were immigrants; 36% of the women clothing workers in Quebec were immigrants. In this industry, the proportion of Southern European workers decreased to 21% in 1986 while the proportion of Asian-born women increased to 16.3%. Almost one half of these Southern European women are older workers (45-64), while only 23% of Asian women workers fall into this category. 45.4% of women in the clothing industry had grade 5 - 10 education in 1986. Over 25% of these Asian women workers speak neither official language, compared with 17.7% of Southern European women in the industry.

Most textiles and clothing plants are not unionized. This, plus the lack of enforcement of the Employment Standards Act means that women have little protection. A recent inquiry into garment factory closings in Toronto examined plant closures which have deprived women of wages, severance pay, vacation pay and where "closing" has simply meant moving equipment to a new location.

The 'adjustment' in these industries has meant phenomenal job loss, and possible permanent unemployment for the women affected. More than 25% of women laid off between 1981

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<sup>11</sup> Statistics Canada, census data, 1986.

<sup>12</sup> Cohen, Marcy and White, 1989.

<sup>13</sup> Statistics Canada, The Labour Force, January & December, 1990.

<sup>14</sup> Seward, Shirley, "Challenges of Labour Adjustment: The Case of Immigrant Women in the Clothing Industry", Institute for Research on Public Policy, Ottawa, 1988. All figures in this paragraph are from this report.



and 1984 did not return to the workforce, compared to 12% of men.<sup>15</sup> This is likely to occur again during the current recession. Those workers least able to take advantage of training or labour mobility adjustment programs are women, especially married women, older workers, workers with low levels of education, and those who are in regions characterized by high unemployment levels and limited employment opportunities. Difficulties for women in the garment industries are compounded by their ability to speak either French or English. Many have either become long-term unemployed or are taking unorganized jobs in the lower paying service sector.

### 1.5 Domestic Workers

The plight of domestic workers has been raised publicly for many years. Yet very little has changed. Domestic workers are the only category of worker not covered by all the provisions of the Employment Standards Act. In the absence of government provisions for limited working hours, about 60% of the workers work more than a 45-hour week, and of these 44.7% receive no compensation for overtime.<sup>16</sup>

Domestic workers are required by Canada's Foreign Domestic Movement Program to live in the home of their employers, a requirement that not only results in the erosion of private, independent personal lives, but causes ambiguities in the definition of "work", since the worker is still available for "extra" duties. The possibility of sexual harassment is increased by the live-in requirement. Special criteria are used to evaluate domestic workers' landing status which are not applied to any other comparable occupation: they are expected to demonstrate "social adaptation" by becoming actively involved in their communities, while simultaneously "upgrading" their education (subject to high differential fees for courses) and proving "financial security" by saving money. These criteria are quite difficult to fulfil given a high degree of social isolation and a 45-60 hour work week. Domestic workers are often reluctant to leave exploitive working situations because their immigration status may be adversely affected; a "release letter" from the employer is required if a worker wants to leave one position for another.

In general, domestic workers are not afforded the same legal protection and assistance programs as immigrant workers in other occupations, and are frequently discriminated against if they have spouses or dependent children. Advocates for domestic workers are concerned that the domestic worker program is part of the government's effort to privatise child care.

### 1.6 Unemployed Women

Women's annual rate of unemployment in 1990 was reported as 8.1%: in January 1991 this rate has risen to 9.3%<sup>17</sup> As appalling high as this is, there is a large amount of disguised

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<sup>15</sup> Picot, Garnett and Ted Wannell, "Job Loss and Labour Market Adjustment in the Canadian Economy", *The Labour Force*, 1987.

<sup>16</sup> INTERCEDE, Report and Recommendations on the Foreign Domestic Movement Program, October 1990, Toronto.

<sup>17</sup> Statistics Canada, #4917, 1990, and The Labour Force, January 1991.



unemployment in women's involuntary part time and short term work. Over 40% of the increase in part-time work for women in the 1980's has been involuntary.<sup>18</sup> One researcher has concluded that 11.6% of women are fully unemployed or are involuntary part time workers.<sup>19</sup> This figure still does not account for involuntary part-year employment. Approximately 30% of the female labour force falls into this category.<sup>20</sup>

For some groups of women the situation is even more dramatic. Aboriginal women experience "official" unemployment rates of 21.8%, and 22% of single parents whose youngest child is under three were unemployed.<sup>21</sup>

Again, we are concerned about the effects of the recession on women's unemployment. All disadvantaged groups are hurt in a recession, but with the unprecedented proportion of women in the workforce largely in low-paid and unstable jobs we feel that women will be particularly hit hard.

## 2. WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT AND GOVERNMENT MEASURES - Child Care, Labour Adjustment, Unemployment Insurance and Education

Rather than effectively stopping the adverse effects of economic re-structuring on women, most government measures are exacerbating the problem. Even those measures designed to improve the condition of women are so weak as to be ineffectual.

### 2.1 Child Care

Since 1986 child benefits have been partially de-indexed and have grown slower than the rate of inflation<sup>22</sup>, the number of mothers who have to work has increased dramatically while the proportion of children in publically sponsored child care spaces has not increased since 1977, and the rate of child poverty has increased to become the second highest among industrialized countries.

In 1989, 80.2% of Canadian women in prime child bearing/raising age groups (20-45) were in the labour force. 77.4% of women in the workforce between the ages of 20 and 45 had children under age 15.<sup>23</sup> Adequate childcare has become less accessible. In 1989, there were 450,000 more pre-school children with mothers in the labour force for whom no licensed child care was available than there were in 1979. Only 8% of children with working

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<sup>18</sup> Statistics Canada, #71-001, Annual Averages 1981 and 1989.

<sup>19</sup> Gower, David, "Time Lost: An Alternative View of Unemployment" *Perspectives on Labour and Income*, Statistics Canada, #75-001E, Spring 1990.

<sup>20</sup> Cohen, Marcy, 1990.

<sup>21</sup> Alfred, Diane, Labour Market Paper, Women, Employment and Immigration, Economic Services Branch, B.C./Yukon Region, December 1989.

<sup>22</sup> Canadian Council on Social Development, "Canada's Social Programs are in Trouble", October, 1990.

<sup>23</sup> Statistics Canada, Labour Survey Projections, 1989.

mothers were cared for in licensed child care services in 1987.<sup>24</sup>

According to the National Day Care Information Centre of the National Department of Health and Welfare, in 1987 only 12% of Canadian children under 13 had access to licensed child care -- the same proportion as in 1977. Advocates unanimously agreed that the federal Child Care Act, introduced in 1987 and shelved following the 1988 election, would not have resulted in any improvement in access to quality child care.

The situation for native children is particularly critical. The provinces are empowered by the federal government to "apprehend" native children and remove them from their communities completely. The negative impact of residential schools is only now being examined by the government. Because of cultural alienation and the threat of social dissolution, which is exacerbated by existing child-care/educational services designed without First Nations input, the need for native-administrated child care is most acute. The federal government reimburses the provinces 100% of the cost of apprehending children and placing them with foster families (about \$5,000 a year); but there has been no capital funding of provincial native childcare centres since 1975.<sup>25</sup>

There are five federal tax programs related to children and child care: family allowances, the non-refundable children's credit, the refundable child tax credit, the equivalent-to-married non-refundable children's credit and the child care expense deduction. They are very complex, but it is estimated that only families on welfare will actually receive more benefits in 1991. The total benefits for families of all other levels of income will decrease.<sup>26</sup> The government will 'clawback' family allowances from higher income Canadians this year, and will spend 15% less on this program than it did in 1984/85.<sup>27</sup>

## 2.2 Employment Equity

The 'rate of success' of the federal employment equity program continues to be virtually indistinguishable from trends in the general workforce.

Women of all the targeted groups continue to experience the greatest wage differentials. Of the permanent employees covered by the Employment Equity Act, 41% of women and 84% of men earn over \$27,500.; 21% of aboriginal women and 81% of aboriginal men earn over \$27,500.; 29% of women with disabilities and 86% of men with disabilities earn over \$27,500.; and 28% of visible minority women and 75% of visible minority men earn over \$27,500.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Statistics Canada, The Labour Force, 1989.

<sup>25</sup> Assembly of First Nations, Report of the National Inquiry Into First Nations Child Care, July 1989.

<sup>26</sup> Gray, Gratton

<sup>27</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> Employment and Immigration Canada, Employment Equity Act Annual Report 1990, Table 7.10.

### 2.3 Adjustment Programs: Training

The Canadian Jobs Strategy (CJS) was introduced in 1985. It consists of four programs for training and re-training: one, the Re-Entry part of Entry, is designed specifically for women who wish to re-enter the labour force. While the program has certain benefits for women in terms of daycare and transportation allowances, increased access for disadvantaged women and the opportunity for some decentralized and community-based training, it has also introduced some worrisome new trends.

First, it has led to the privatization of training. Much of the training has been taken out of the community colleges and into the for-profit sector. In Ontario in the first year, 61% of funds went to the for-profit sector, 16% to not-for-profit and community groups and only 9% to community colleges.<sup>29</sup> Second the programs are short-term which appear to be more geared to employers' short-term needs than women's long-term needs. Third, rigid qualification requirements such as the original three years out of the labour force for the re-entry program threatened already existing programs. Fourth, women's training under the CJS continues to be predominantly in women's traditional job areas such as clerical, sales, service or health and medicine. In the first two years of the re-entry program, 87% of the training was in these areas.<sup>30</sup>

The CJS has not led to an increase in dollars spent on training programs. In fact, there has been an overall decrease in training dollars since 1984-85.

In 1987 a new program of Social Assistance Recipients (SAR) agreements was introduced. These are federal-provincial agreements for the training of social assistance recipients delivered through the CJS. They allow the provinces to divert social assistance funds into training grants. These programs suffer the same basic problems as other CJS programs in their short-term, as-hoc nature of training.<sup>31</sup>

A recent southern Ontario study documents the combination of impediments to re-training experienced by the large number of immigrant women who have recently lost manufacturing jobs in southern Ontario.<sup>32</sup> Employers have tended to classify women's manufacturing jobs as unskilled, do not invest in their training and are more likely during re-structuring to lay them off. These women are eligible for government or private re-training, but there are many serious barriers to this, including:

- 49% of the women in the survey report harassment by employment officials. Workers are told training programs are too hard for them, they are pressured to take any available job even for lower wages without re-training, or are threatened with the loss of unemployment insurance benefits, thus removing the possibility of

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<sup>29</sup> Dance, Terry and Susan Witter, "The Privatization of Training: Women Pay the Cost", *Women's Education des femmes*, Vol 6, No 1, Winter 1988.

<sup>30</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> Lord, Stella, Linda Roberts and Joan Brown-Hicks, The Social Assistance Recipients (SAR) Agreement: A Critical Review, CCLOW, Nova Scotia, June 1989.

<sup>32</sup> Metro Labour Education Centre and Coalition of Visible Minority Women, The Forgotten Women: Labour adjustment for immigrant women, Phase 1 Report, Sept '89-March '90.

progressive transition to more secure or rewarding work.

- Programs do not offer adequate income support, and women are not able to afford childcare or family survival while re-training.
- In order to access training many women feel they need to attend English As A Second Language (ESL) classes. Many reported giving up U.I. benefits to attend ESL. Many also remembered being discouraged by Employment and Immigration (CEIC) from taking ESL upon entering Canada. Some women lose their benefits because they cannot read notices to report in English, consequently do not report and are disentitled.
- Older women are discouraged from applying for employer sponsored re-training. Employers are reported to feel that they can get more years of work out of younger workers and pay them less.
- Women reported explicit racial and gender discrimination both by employers and CEIC.
- Information on U.I. and re-training is not available except through CEIC (ie. not in workplaces). Usually this information is available only in English and French.
- Women who held nursing or teaching credentials in their home countries are not encouraged by CEIC to pursue Canadian certification.
- When they are received, severance wages (which are significant to higher-paid unionized or industrial workers) can actually increase the waiting time and reduce the benefits of U.I.

The new thrust in training is through the government's Labour Force Development Strategy. Under this plan, a substantial part of the funds saved from the reform of the federal government's unemployment insurance plan - lower payments and longer qualifying periods, are to be diverted to training. In other words, these "new" training funds are coming directly out of the pockets of the unemployed. Further, most of the new training dollars will not go directly to train the unemployed but rather to employers for the development of human resource programs. An estimate puts direct training at \$90 million out of a total of \$800 million.<sup>33</sup> There will be no specific programs for women under the Labour Force Development Strategy. The new "National Training Board" which will create policy for the Labour Force Development Strategy will have only one seat for a women's representative.

#### 2.4 Language Training Programs

The eligibility criteria for Canada's language training program for newly arrived immigrants are discriminatory towards women. Fully subsidized training can be refused to "sponsored" immigrants (60% of whom are women), individuals not considered to be "destined for the labour market", anyone for whom language is not considered necessary as a means of obtaining "suitable" employment, and individuals who have a spouse earning more than \$210 per week. These criteria are systematically interpreted in ways that disadvantage women. Three organizations are challenging the program in the courts under Section 15 of the Canadian Charter of Rights.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> "Training the Jobless", *Globe and Mail*, May 18, 1989.

<sup>34</sup> Nuala Doherty, "Immigrant women's organization joins challenge of language training program", *LEAF Lines*, Toronto, April 1990.



## 2.5 Unemployment Insurance

The effects of the new Unemployment Insurance legislation, in conjunction with the 1990 recession and cuts in both public and private service jobs, are already being felt. The new law cuts the number of weeks of benefits for people receiving U.I., increases the number of weeks people have to work to receive benefits and raises the level of unemployment needed by any region to demonstrate that the region qualifies for extra benefits. The Bill outlines the transfer of the program's management to employers, and plans the complete withdrawal of the federal government funds from the program. We fear a trend towards privatization of what should be government services and a devolution of federal powers to the provinces, both of which will result in an uneven network of services through which the most disadvantaged women will fall.

## 2.6 Women's Access to Education

The most dramatic improvement in the last 20 years for Canadian women is in the area of education, yet much remains to be done. Women and girls are still ghettoized in public and post-secondary education, and women are still under-represented at senior teaching and management levels.

In 1988, 17.2% of Canadian women continued to have less than a Grade 9 education.<sup>35</sup> While most young women are receiving an education that provides them at least with entry level job competence, many older women have not had access to formal schooling or work related training. These women will have the most difficulty handling the increasing skill required in the service sector and the polarization of the labour market.

**WOMEN TEACHERS:** Although women now dominate the elementary and secondary school systems in terms of number and receive the greatest wage parity of any occupation in Ontario (60-70%), they are still not promoted into positions such as director of education, superintendent and principal. Six of 172 Ontario school boards have female directors, and even though women were 54% of the principal's qualification course, men outnumber women 7 to 1 in principal jobs.<sup>36</sup>

**WOMEN IN HIGHER EDUCATION:** While women are entering male-dominated fields of study in greater numbers, they are still concentrated in traditional fields of study. And whether by choice or by necessity, women are far more likely than men to be part-time students. At undergraduate level, women made up 55% of the student body, while they were under-represented at the graduate level at 44%. In 1987, women received 53% of graduate degrees, 45% of the master's degrees, and 29% of the doctorates.

The total number of women holding full-time teaching positions in universities almost doubled between 1970-71 and 1985-86. However they only represented 17% of the permanent university teaching staff in 1989, as compared with 13% in 1970-71. Women

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<sup>35</sup> Statistics Canada, Women In Canada - Second Edition, 1990.

<sup>36</sup> "School boards' record under fire", Lynne Ainsworth, Toronto Star, November 7, 1990.



hold only 11.2% of those university positions with senior administration duties.<sup>37</sup> Women still have little access to tenure track positions, especially in non-traditional areas of study. The situation in community colleges and trade schools is somewhat better, where women occupy 33% of the full-time teaching positions and 26% of the full-time academic administration positions in 1986-87, up from 31% and 18% in 1978-79.<sup>38</sup>

Since education is directly linked to labour force participation, the streaming of women into traditional areas of study in highschools will determine their future success in employment. Major private sector funding is directed mainly to applied post secondary science and technology studies, which are still largely filled by male students. Government assistance for native post secondary students has been seriously cut in the last two years, reducing the possibilities for young native women to attend college or university to almost nil. The planned elimination of the federal contribution through to post secondary education Bill C-69 could result in prohibitive fee increases, and the loss of subsidies to young people from disadvantaged circumstances or older women returning to school.

### 3. SOCIAL PROGRAMS: GOVERNMENT SPENDING AND INCOME

Federal economic and social policy is seriously undermining the situation of the majority of women. Through government policies and reforms which have relieved the business community's tax burden, corporate taxes have become a much smaller proportion of government revenue than in 1984. Taxes on individuals (income and consumption taxes) now make up a much larger proportion of government revenue. In a society where women continue to be the care givers, decreased real social spending means that women will spend more hours providing unpaid care to young, older, disabled or sick family members, they will be involved in more unpaid voluntary work with charities, and the (already low paid) work of service workers will be decreased. Increased taxes mean that they will be doing this extra work while coping with less expendable income.

Between 1984 and 1990 the GDP increased by 17.5% but social spending increased only by 2%.<sup>39</sup> Federal revenues have been increased over the same period by increasing revenues from federal sales and excise taxes by 68%, increasing personal income tax by 46%, increasing U.I. premiums by 27%, and raising corporate taxes by 21%. The government also managed to effect an estimated \$26 billion reduction in its social spending from 1986 to 1990 through de-indexing family allowances and pensions, reducing Established Programs Financing formulae (health care and education), and changes in the personal income tax system. The increased revenue has been used primarily to service the federal debt. The cost of servicing the debt has increased largely because of the policy of maintaining high interest rates. Contrary to federal government claims, it is artificially high interest rates rather than social spending that is creating the major problem with the federal budget.

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<sup>37</sup> Statistics Canada, Women In Canada - Second Edition, 1990.

<sup>38</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> Gray, Gratton, pg. 20.

The proposed legislation to phase out federal government funding for Established Programs (health care, post-secondary education) and limiting the Canada Assistance Plan (Bill C-69) may come into effect this winter. If the Bill comes into effect, direct federal funding for health care and post-secondary education will be reduced from the current level of spending of approximately \$9 billion to \$0 by the year 2004. The limitation on CAP includes welfare and social services designed to offset regional disparities in income and quality of life (non-profit housing, child care, funds for native communities, as well as social assistance programs for battered women and children, young offenders, the unemployed, the mentally and physically differently abled). The Social Planning Council of Ottawa-Carleton estimates that the limitation on CAP could mean that \$596 million less will be spent on these programs in the next two years.

### 3.1 Poverty

The number and proportion of poor women continues to increase in Canada. In 1987 1,515,000 adult women lived in poverty; between 1971 and 1986 the number of poor women increased by 110% (the increase for men was 24%).<sup>40</sup> Canadian women face a higher risk of being poor than men. A large proportion of poor women are older, many are low-waged working poor, many are aboriginal women, many are permanently out of the labour force and on welfare and a significant number are young single parents.

57% of single-parent families headed by women live below the poverty line.<sup>41</sup> This figure has not changed since 1974. The big differences between poor and non-poor lone parent mothers are in age and educational attainment. If Canada cannot provide young (in many cases adolescent) mothers with both the means to pursue their own educational goals and a supportive environment in which to raise their children, the future for these families is bleak.

Child poverty has increased in Canada in the last decade. In 1986 1,121,000 children lived in poverty in Canada; this figure increased 7%, or from 1,077,000 since 1979. 35.9% of these children live in families headed by lone-parent mothers.<sup>42</sup> A conservative estimate is that half of all aboriginal children are poor: infant mortality among native children is twice the national average, post neo-natal death is four times the national average.<sup>43</sup>

### 3.2 Older Women

About 75% of all Canadian women live the last quarter of their lives in poverty.<sup>44</sup> Seniors living alone or with non-relatives, where most women are found, have high rates of poverty,

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<sup>40</sup> Pelletier, Debbie, "Women Need Welfare State: Most females destined to die in poverty, expert claims", *The Edmonton Journal*, Oct.29, 1990. Source Leah Cohen.

<sup>41</sup> National Council of Welfare, *Women and Poverty Revisited*, 1990.

<sup>42</sup> Ross and Shillington, *The Canadian Fact Book on Poverty*, 1989, Canadian Council on Social Development, 1989.

<sup>43</sup> Assembly of First Nations, *Report of the National Inquiry into First Nations Child Care*, 1989.

<sup>44</sup> Cohen, Leah, in *Edmonton Journal*, and *Women in Poverty*.

which increase sharply for women with advancing age. Older women are vulnerable to the lack of affordable single-person housing, lack of high-quality long-term institutional care, lack of public transit, decreased independence and social isolation. 'When men get older and frailer, most of them have built-in housekeepers and nurses -- their wives.' A number of factors contribute to the fact that the majority of elderly women live out their years in lonely poverty: Old Age Security benefits are inadequate; many women have not had access to their husband's pension plans (no spouse or widows benefits); many women's work history (as part time workers) has not provided them with their own pensions; and the life expectancy of women has increased meaning that women are living more years past retirement, often outliving spouses, often in ill-health.

New measures which tax back pensions for higher-income Canadians, (along with family allowances) represent the first erosion of the long-standing Canadian principle of universality in social security.

### 3.3 Health

The government has acknowledged that "within the low-income bracket, certain groups have a higher chance of experiencing poor health than others. Older people, the unemployed, welfare recipients, single women supporting children and minorities such as natives and immigrants fall into this category".<sup>45</sup> While the large majority of women need the health care system to remain a publicly funded, universally accessible, non-marketable commodity, the system is being seriously eroded by Drug Patent legislation, proposals to eliminate the federal contribution to health care, freer trade in services including health insurance and government subcontracting to private health care companies.

While women need our health care system, there are a number of trends within it which do not successfully address women's health. Canadian health care continues to emphasize surgery and medication, rather than the social and environmental factors in women's health. There is little research on illnesses specific to women, while the normal phases of a woman's life have become controlled to the point where women can expect to be overmedicated and subjected to surgical intervention. Women who are post-menopausal can expect to be placed on tranquillizer or hormonal therapy by physicians. An estimated 50% of hysterectomies are unnecessary. An alarming number of Caesarean sections are performed by doctors, increasing the dangers of childbirth, lengthening recovery time and turning birth into a pathological (and expensive) medical event. In 1988-89, Ontario women had 28,234 Caesarean sections, or 20% of all hospital deliveries.<sup>46</sup> Meanwhile, the regulation and legislation of midwives as health advocates and specialists in normal births has still not taken place.

These trends are most disturbing when we look at the New Reproductive Technologies where millions are spent on high tech procedures of questionable success and safety while little is done to prevent massive infertility problems among young women. One of the few positive government initiatives for women in the past few years has been the establishment

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<sup>45</sup> National Health and Welfare, Achieving Health for All: A Framework for Health Promotion, Ottawa, 1986, pg4.

<sup>46</sup> Vaginal Birth After Caesarean, Toronto.



of the Royal Commission on New Reproductive Technologies.

Access to quality medical services is unequally distributed among Canadian women. Women in northern centres (aboriginal women) must be flown out of their communities to receive treatment for any pregnancy involving the slightest complication. Information regarding sexually transmitted and pelvic inflammatory diseases is not widely available. Large sums are being invested in research related to the concerns of wealthy health care consumers (In Vitro Fertilization) while surprisingly little is known about successful treatment of PreMenstrual Syndrome, endometriosis or fibroid tumours.

### 3.4 Health: ABORTION ACCESS

Abortion has been legal in Canada for 3 years due to the 1987 Supreme Court Morgentaller decision. The Supreme Court ruled Canada's previous legislation on abortion unconstitutional, stating that: "Forcing a woman, by threat of criminal sanction to carry a foetus to term unless she meets certain criteria unrelated to her own priorities and aspirations, is a profound interference with a woman's body and thus an infringement of the security of the person." The defeat of Bill C-43 in the Senate means that abortion is not a criminal offense.

After the Supreme Court decision there was only a slight increase in the number of abortions. Bill C-43, introduced in 1989, proposed to re-criminalize abortion, making the procedure punishable by up to two years in jail unless a doctor determined that continuing a pregnancy threatened a woman's physical, mental or psychological health. Even before it was defeated, Bill C-43 created a serious crisis in access. In response to the proposed legislation, at least 60 doctors stopped performing abortions for fear of possible criminal prosecution and another 275 promised to stop if the Bill was passed. In January 1991 there were virtually no doctors performing abortions (outside of free-standing clinics) in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and P.E.I. Waiting periods for the procedure are in some provinces 4-5 weeks long (the only hospital in Edmonton, Alberta still performing abortions is now turning away 35-50 women per week because they are more than ten weeks pregnant).<sup>47</sup> With the defeat of Bill C-43 access should improve slightly, but provincial governments must take more initiatives to ensure this vital health service for women.

Women in Canada have fought to establish the principle that abortion is a woman's right, a personal and private decision. The Supreme Court and 74% of Canadians agree with this position. However northern, rural, poor, immigrant and young women without information have considerable trouble finding services in Canada, and their rights are severely diminished by lack of access.

### 3.5 Violence

One in four Canadian women are sexually abused at some time in their lives; half of these are abused before they reach age 17. In Canada one woman in ten is a victim of domestic violence. In the last two years over 100 women per year were killed by their male

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<sup>47</sup> Canadian Abortion Rights Action League, 1990.



partners.<sup>48</sup>

For the past fifteen years women's groups have sensitized the public and pressed government authorities to criminalize domestic violence. Women's groups have created shelters and transition houses to protect women and their children, and to help break the cycle of domestic violence. In Canada in 1985-86 more than 230 women's shelters served 172,592 women and children.<sup>49</sup>

Women who are victims of domestic violence live in isolation and in distress. They come from all social backgrounds and are found in every milieu. 18% of women who go to hospital emergency wards are victims of domestic violence<sup>50</sup>; 80% of women involved in violent crimes have been sexually abused by their partner<sup>51</sup>; 1 woman in 4 who commits suicide has been abused by her spouse or partner<sup>52</sup>.

Shelters offer free, safe places for women and their children. Their programs provide general counselling and attempt to find alternatives to abusive situations. In Canada, each province determines the form of funding and support for women's shelters. Several provinces have a permanent budget for this problem, but in every province the budget allotment is insufficient to respond to the real needs of women's shelters. As a result shelters have had to limit or suspend their services due to lack of funds. Shelters have always relied heavily on volunteer labour and now that support is very stretched.

### 3.6 Women's Program

The current level of support for non-governmental women's organizations represents 0.009% of the total federal budget. It is to these groups that women affected by re-structuring turn when they need help. Yet the government targeted these very women's organizations for cuts in the last budget. The minimum the government could do is ensure that these non-government voluntary organizations survive and provide services in the coming period.

Canada is one of the only countries in the world that recognizes that disadvantaged groups need financial assistance to integrate their concerns into policy discussions. Since 1972 the federal government has funded women's equality seeking groups to be advocates around a variety of issues and concerns. Canada has based some of its international reputation for the progressiveness of its 'women's machineries' on this program.

In its 1987 response to the Women's Program Review, Fairness in Funding, the federal government stated that "the current funding level should be maintained. There are emerging groups and priorities which the Women's Program should be addressing and the government agrees with the overall goal of expanding the Program's sphere of activity..." Contrary to

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<sup>48</sup> Toronto Transit Commission et al, Making Transit Safer for Women, Toronto, 1989.

<sup>49</sup> Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

<sup>50</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> Regroupement provincial des maisons d'hébergement et de transition pour femmes victimes de violence conjugale, Québec.

<sup>52</sup> Statistics Canada.

its own recommendation, the government cut the Women's Program by 15%, from \$13 million to \$11.2 million in 1989 and by another 15% in 1990. These cuts have created serious setbacks for women's publications, women's research, women's centres, and national organizations. The cuts in funding raises concerns about the government's commitment to the principle of supporting equality seeking groups and to the Women's Program.<sup>53</sup>

### 3.7 Taxation

Changes in the tax structure over the past 6 years have placed a heavier burden on low income wage earners than ever before. One estimate indicates that two earners whose combined income was \$20,000, who had two children, would be paying \$676 more in taxes, (3.4% of their income) in 1991 than in 1984. This is a 38.6% increase. Income tax for two earners, two children with \$50,000 income increased by \$1,210 (to 2.4% of income). This is a 15% increase. Income tax for two earners, two children with a \$100,000 combined income increased by \$1,004 (or 1% of income). This was a 4% increase in tax over this period.<sup>54</sup> Although we have not found research directly on the impact of tax changes on women, we can anticipate that the effect on women has paralleled the polarization in the labour market. Some higher waged women are likely to be paying a smaller proportion of their income in taxes, and lower-income women's taxes and proportion of income paid in taxes will have significantly increased.

"More than a million working poor taxpayers have been added to the tax roles from 1985 to 1987. Partial indexation will depress the taxpaying threshold again after 1988 and will force more and more low-income Canadians to pay income tax with each passing year. The (government) have failed to remove the burden of taxation from Canada's working poor: a single parent with one child and earnings of only \$15,000 still forked over \$500 in federal and provincial income taxes after tax reform."<sup>55</sup>

An additional burden in the form of a Goods and Services Tax is being levied on Canadians.

## 4. ABORIGINAL WOMEN AND REINSTATEMENT OF INDIAN STATUS

"The sexual discrimination that was to be redressed through Bill C-31 continues to be felt. There remains unequal treatment of male and female siblings. Women who lost status through marriage cannot pass status along through successive generations in the same way as their brothers who married non-Indian women prior to 1985. The brothers, their non-Indian spouses and children are automatically considered band members while their sisters'

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<sup>53</sup> Department of Finance, *The Budget*, February 1990.

<sup>54</sup> Gray, Gratton

<sup>55</sup> *ibid.*

children can only acquire status. The children of the female line have conditional entitlement to band membership."<sup>56</sup>

Additional problems with inadequate resources to be shared with newly-registered Indians have caused band members to see new members as competitors in an acute housing shortage, and for health care, social programs and educational benefits. In cases where the Registrar does not control band membership, re-enfranchised women must apply separately to the band for addition to their membership list. Newly-reinstated Indian women and children can be stigmatized within their communities to the extent that they are referred to as (and sometimes refer to themselves as) "C-31's".

The Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) underestimated the number of people applying for status/band registration, causing a strain on the registration system -- lack of information caused confusion. In 1985, DIAND projected that 65,000 people would be eligible to apply, 52,000 would apply, and that 5,200 would apply to return to reserves. In actuality, to date the total applicants numbered 136,512 (total applications 77,880), with 75,555 people registered and 43,594 denied registration. The necessary documentation to prove eligibility is extremely difficult to obtain if it exists at all (frequently involving a genealogical search back to the nineteenth century), and its requirement has been determined by DIAND policy, which undermines the authority of Treaty Indians to determine their own membership. Even though DIAND possesses much of the required documentation, individual family members must submit applications separately. Issues of changing marital status, adoption and the invasion of privacy that can be involved in proving biological parenthood are causing technical difficulties in proving the legal status of children; children from the same family are treated differently by Bill C-31 depending on their date of birth.

## 5. MEDIA REPRESENTATION

The electronic media, television in particular, have an enormous influence in teaching young people their future roles in the family and in society. Studies of the values the media transmit conclude that they portray women very narrowly either as sexual objects or caregivers to their families. As a result of reports documenting the demeaning and unrealistic portrayal of women in the media, the CRTC made adherence to a set of guidelines on sex-role stereotyping a condition of licence in 1986. According to critics, however, the enforcement of these guidelines has been very weak.<sup>57</sup>

### 5.1 Studio D

In spite of its internationally recognized standard of film-making and numerous prestigious awards, Studio D (a wing of the National Film Board of Canada concerned with filmmaking by women) has experienced funding cuts which threaten its continued existence.

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<sup>56</sup> The Joint Steering Committee on the Impacts of Bill C-31, Correcting Historical Wrongs? Report of the National Aboriginal Inquiry on the Impacts of Bill C-31, July 1990.

<sup>57</sup> National Council of Welfare, Women and Poverty Revisited, 1990.

## **5.2 Culture**

Women as composers, conductors, artisans, visual artists, playwrights, and participants in other cultural forms have been marginalized from access to any public forum, administrative positions in cultural organizations and funding.

## **5.3 Television Administration**

The CRTC should review the news/sports/entertainment coverage of the networks in order to evaluate whether the issues affecting 51% of the nation's population are being fairly represented, and not being further undermined by unacceptable images of women in commercial advertising. Questions should be asked about the representation of women on the administrative boards of the Canadian Broadcasting Company and the CRTC.

## **6. PUBLIC LIFE**

Despite modest gains in recent years, women remain seriously under-represented in Parliament, on federally appointed boards and commissions, in managerial positions of the federal public service and in the judiciary. A study done by Chantal Maille, of the Simone de Beauvoir Institute of Montreal's Concordia University, says that although women form the majority of Canadian population, only 40 out of 295 members of the House of Commons are women, 73 of 850 federally-appointed judges are women.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

Despite the government's rhetorical commitment to women's equality our research tells another story. In fact, government policies are doing little to improve the status of women in Canada and federal economic policies are seriously deteriorating women's economic conditions. What women need is a dramatic change in government policy to focus on human need rather than the corporate bottom line.



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## APPENDIX "A"

## Availability of Gender and Race Sensitive Data

In the course of preparing this material we have noticed several large gaps in the data available from government sources. While Statistics Canada collects relatively standard data, we have found that certain material is not being collected, or if it is, it is very difficult to find. Gender sensitive data collection and research requires not only adding male and female breakdowns to standard questions but also recording entirely new areas of activity. The following notes highlight the gaps that were the most noticeable to us. This is by no means a conclusive list.

- \* While we recognize that the categorizations needed to collect data about minority women are problematic, it is very clear that there is insufficient data available relating to aboriginal women, visible minority women and immigrant women to conduct thorough, racially sensitive analyses.
- \* Information about the actual number of jobs lost by women due to corporate flight is not available. Plant closures where less than 500 employees are affected are not formally reported to CEIC, and permanent job losses through short term lay-offs are also not tracked. We suspect that women are a large proportion of the workers affected in both these situations.
- \* Statistics Canada does not report accumulated assets and property. Statements about the relative wealth of men and women are usually extrapolations from data about income, and are inadequate.
- \* Employment and Immigration does not keep records of part-year involuntary unemployment. Perhaps 30% of women workers are in this category.
- \* "Informal" economies are developing in different parts of the country, some of them based on an increase in women's contractual home work. Very little information is available.
- \* Virtually all sources on the incidence of male violence against women and children are qualified by statements about inconsistencies in reporting practices of different police jurisdictions and service organizations. The estimate that less than one half of incidents are reported to the police is common. Statistics need to be kept on what percentage of all cases handled by police are domestic violence, and in what percentage of cases charges are laid and convictions result. These figures would not only establish the extent of the problem, but would help government administrators calculate the cost of NOT funding preventative measures and shelters for the victims of violence.

We have also noticed a decrease in the capacity of equality-seeking groups to conduct and publish their own research and analysis. Among our members this is a direct effect of cuts in government funding.