

Needed: a working class response to the crisis

The response to the economic crisis by working people, women and men, must be a massive campaign to build a People's Coalition for a genuine alternative to corporate greed. Such a campaign, led by the labour movement and its allies, should fight to restructure the economy, to provide sustainable jobs and to improve social services such as health, education and universal child care, to provide increased opportunities for women in the work force. To protect jobless workers and their families, EI payments must be set at 90% of previous earnings for the full duration of unemployment. Evictions and utility cutoffs against all families affected by unemployment must be banned. The labour movement must put much greater emphasis on organizing unorganized women, the most important way to combat poverty and income disparity.

But as long as capitalism continues, it will continue to generate poverty, inequality, exploitation, environmental degradation and war. These are not accidental side-effects, they are necessary ingredients of a system designed to maximize profit in private hands. Under capitalism, the women of the world face tremendous struggles to win new progress, or to hold on to gains already won. Every step forward will be threatened by the next economic downturn, and the danger of war is never absent. Only socialism, based on democratic, collective ownership and working class power, can permit the enormous creative and productive potential of the world's workers to be used constructively for human needs.

On IWD 2010, the Communist Party of Canada stands in solidarity with all those who struggle for peace, equality, democracy and social progress. A better world is both possible and necessary - the world of socialism, the only system which can guarantee full equality and a future for humanity!

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The origin of IWD

The following resolution was adopted by the Second International Conference of Socialist Women, held August 26-27, 1910, in Copenhagen, Denmark. This resolution launched the organized celebration of March 8 as International Women's Day.

"In agreement with the class-conscious, political and trade union organizations of the proletariat of their respective countries, the Socialist women of all countries will hold each year a Women's Day, whose foremost purpose it must be to aid the attainment of women's suffrage. This demand must be held in conjunction with the entire women's question according to Socialist precepts. The Women's Day must have an international character and is to be prepared carefully."

Since our founding in 1921, Canadian Communists have played a leading role in struggles for peace, jobs, equality, democracy, and socialism. Contact us for information:

COMMUNIST PARTY OF CANADA

290A Danforth Ave., Toronto, ON, M4K 1N6

416-469-2446 info@cpc-pcc-ca

www.communist-party.ca

YOUNG COMMUNIST LEAGUE

The YCL works across Canada to help build the fightback by youth against corporate globalization and imperialist war.

YCL, 290 Danforth Ave., Toronto, ON, M4K 1N6

416-469 2446 ycl_ljc@ycl-ljc.ca www.ycl-ljc.ca

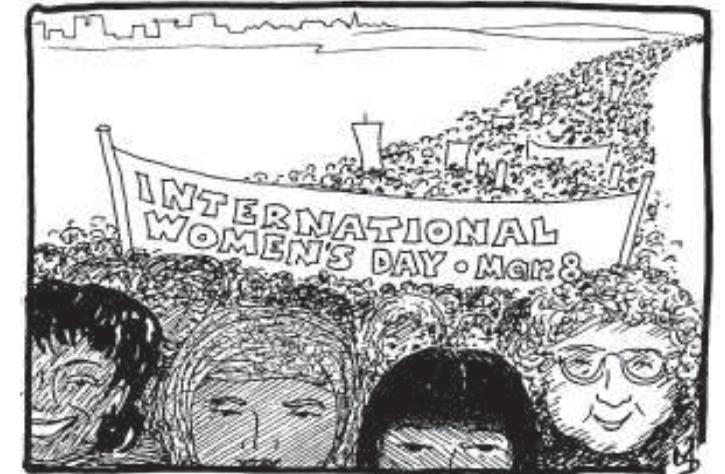
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March 8th...

"Equal rights, equal opportunities, progress for all"



For 99 years, March 8 has been a day to honour women's struggles, take stock of hard-won gains, and put forward demands to promote full equality. Communists have played a leading role since the inception of International Women's Day, which was unanimously adopted by a Socialist International women's conference in Copenhagen in 1910 and observed for the first time in 1911. The Communist Party of Canada salutes women who are struggling throughout the world for peace, justice and equality, whose full participation is essential for the success of all working class and democratic movements.

Communist Party of Canada
IWD 2010 statement

"Equal rights, equal opportunities, progress for all."

This year on IWD, the United Nations has chosen the slogan "Equal rights, equal opportunities, progress for all." Yet the obstacles to achieving those legitimate goals are massive.

Canada's status of women, particularly economic condition, is being condemned internationally.

The recent report, "Reality Check: Women in Canada and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action Fifteen Years On" (by the CLC and FAFIA) has stated, "women and girls living in poverty currently rely on welfare incomes so low that the National Council of Welfare called them "cruel" in its 2006 report. The poverty levels and the lack of social assistance to women in Canada has been raised by virtually every United Nations body that reviews Canada's human rights performance, including the CEDAW Committee, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Human Rights Committee, and the Human Rights Council. The United Nations has asked the Government of Canada to establish minimum standards for social assistance, applicable at the federal, provincial and territorial levels."

We must reverse under-funding of emergency shelters and support services for victims of family violence. We must address the shameful economic and social conditions of Aboriginal women and girls, who have been particularly vulnerable to racism and inequality - hundreds have been murdered or disappeared. Internationally, trillions of

dollars are wasted on war instead of development efforts to provide women and girls with education and economic opportunities, clean water, adequate health care, and more human rights protection, including personal security, choice in marriage, and reproductive choice.

Global environmental devastation impacts women and children, from those living downstream from Canada's tars sands, to those living in drought stricken sub-saharan Africa. Changing material conditions goes hand in hand with changing social attitudes. Today it is more obvious than ever that war is the most terrible crime against humanity. In many countries, from the Middle East to Afghanistan



to Congo to Colombia, wars increasingly target civilian populations. Women and children are casualties of bombardment from the air and atrocities on the ground, and also the most frequent victims of public health catastrophes arising from the destruction of power plants, water supply systems and hospitals.

The Communist Party expresses our full solidarity for

the women who are involved in the struggle for survival under difficult conditions. We call on all governments to demand that the state of Israel abandon its policy of territorial expansion, violence and economic strangulation of Palestinian communities, an apartheid policy which imposes terrible hardships upon the women of Gaza and the West Bank. The women of Haiti need our full solidarity following the tragic earthquake in that country; we reject the strategy of imperialist governments which have responded by sending troops instead of medical personnel.

International Women's Day 2010 takes place as the most serious global economic crisis in decades drags on. Layoffs at

levels unseen in generations continue, destroying the livelihood of countless families, and threatening much of the social infrastructure which has improved women's lives. In response to the crisis, the corporations, and the governments which serve them, are increasing economic disparity by cutting social programs and giving bailouts to wealthy shareholders and CEOs. Rather than pay for the crisis which their system created, the capitalists want to roll back workers' gains and set the stage for ever-deepening exploitation. Here in Canada, unemployment is still rising, and the corporations are pushing for wage and pension cuts. The demand for a country-wide child care system, a key issue in election after election, has again been abandoned by the minority Harper government. Incredibly, pay equity is actually under attack, with plans to reduce the opportunity for complaints through the courts.

The Tories have ignored calls to improve the Employment Insurance system paid for by all workers. As the majority of part-time and minimum wage workers, women are disproportionately under-protected; only three women out of ten in the workforce are eligible to collect EI. Even those who do meet the requirements can't survive on benefit rates set at 55% of their low previous earnings.