

# Coalition for Fair Wages and Working Conditions for Homeworkers



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Spring 1992

Dear Friend,

The Coalition for Fair Wages and Working Conditions for Homeworkers was established on November 2, 1991. The Coalition consists of members from immigrant, labour, social justice and women's groups.

The Coalition has developed in response to the horrific conditions experienced by homeworkers. Homeworkers are predominantly women who work in the home doing primarily garment piece work. They are the most isolated and vulnerable sector of the labour force. Many homeworkers do not get paid the minimum wage, most work long hours and few receive benefits. In fact, homeworkers are denied the employment protection of significant sections of the Employment Standards Act. Even those provisions of the Act which do cover homeworkers are rarely enforced.

One of the effects of the current economic restructuring and depression is the growth of the "homework" method of production, and its extension beyond the garment industry into other areas of data processing, product assembly, food preparation and so forth. Thus, the struggle for fair wages and working conditions for those women currently performing homework is an integral part of the larger campaign for decent, secure and safe jobs for workers in Canada.

The International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union is a vital member of this Coalition as it has the mandate and knowledge to help protect workers' rights. The Union has used its resources and expertise to conduct a survey of Chinese speaking homeworkers, to operate a Homeworkers' Hotline, and to produce and distribute a brochure on homeworkers' rights. The I.L.G.W.U. has hired a staff person on a contract basis to support the homeworking campaign and to organize an association of homeworkers. However, due to the ongoing crisis in the garment industry, neither the Union nor the other members of the Coalition are able to provide all of the financial support needed for the homeworking campaign. Additional resources are necessary for the Coalition to continue its work.

We would appreciate any assistance you or your organization could give to continue our important campaign for the equal employment rights of homeworkers.

In solidarity,

Alexandra Dagg, Manager, I.L.G.W.U., for:  
Coalition for Fair Wages and Working Conditions for Homeworkers