



Our Lives:

Excerpts from the
*Review of the Situation
of Women in Canada, 1993*

"The reality of women's lives shows that the status of women is worsening on both economic and social fronts, and that the Tory agenda is dealing a heavy blow to women's hard earned gains in equality."

SUNERA THOBANI, PRESIDENT OF NAC.

The *Review of the Situation of Women in Canada, 1993*, proves beyond the shadow of a doubt that women are facing the strongest backlash in twenty five years. The Report, based upon the latest research by feminist activists and scholars and by the labour movement, is a stinging indictment of the neo-conservative agenda and its impact on the equality of women in Canada.

Among the Report's findings :

For the first time in twenty five years, women's participation in the paid workforce is declining.

In 1993, 57.6% of all women were in the workforce, down from 58.4% in 1990. The most dramatic decrease was among young women between the ages of 15 and 24.

Official unemployment rates mask the extent of unemployment among women.

While the official rate in March 1993 was set at 11.1%, the real rate of

unemployment among women was much higher. Women's unemployment is hidden in part-time work, as many women who would prefer full-time work take part-time jobs to make ends meet. If we take into consideration the women who are forced into part-time work because of the lack of full-time jobs, and the women who have become discouraged by the impossibility of finding a job and have dropped out of the workforce, women's real rate of unemployment is closer to 20%. The Report also found that one in every five unemployed women is the head of her household, and that older women tend to be unemployed for longer periods of time.

Over two thirds (68.3%) of part-time workers are women.

Ninety four percent (94%) of all newly created jobs are in the low paying service sector, and are

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filled primarily by women and young people.

These jobs are characterized by poor working conditions, and limited - and often non-existent - benefits.

Seventy-two percent (72%) of workers in the ten lowest paying jobs are women, while only 20% of workers in the

ten highest paying jobs are women.

One quarter of women in the workforce earn an average of \$9,000 a year.

The wage gap between women and men has not decreased, despite recent claims to the contrary.

On average, women earn 61.5 % of what men earn, and the wage gap increases with age, with older

women workers earning much less than their male counterparts.


The impact of these economic changes is greater on women of colour, immigrant women, and women with disabilities who face added discrimination.


The evidence is clear. Tory policies don't work—ask a woman who wants to.


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You can participate.

 distribute this and other NAC fact sheets.

 attend all candidates' meetings and ask your candidates questions on women's issues. Suggested questions are in the NAC Voters' Guide, or are available from the NAC office or through your regional representative on the NAC executive.

 buy the NAC Voters' Guide, read it, then sell copies in your community. This short book outlines key issues of concern to women, NAC's position on them, and the positions of the 3 major federal parties, and is available for \$4.95 (cheaper if you buy it in bulk).

 write or send a post-card to party leaders demanding a debate on women's issues.

NAC materials are available from the national office. Call 1-800-665-5124, FAX your request to 416-759-5370, or write to 57 Mobile Drive, Toronto M4A 1H5.

Send a financial contribution to ensure NAC's strength and survival. In spite of the donation of thousands of hours of skilled woman power, NAC still needs more than \$50,000 to ensure that women's concerns are heard and addressed in this election. Call, toll free, 1-800-665-5124. To make a credit card gift or, to mail your cheque payable to "NAC", write to "Equality is the Bottom Line", c/o NAC, 57 Mobile Drive, Toronto, Ont. M4A 1H5.

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