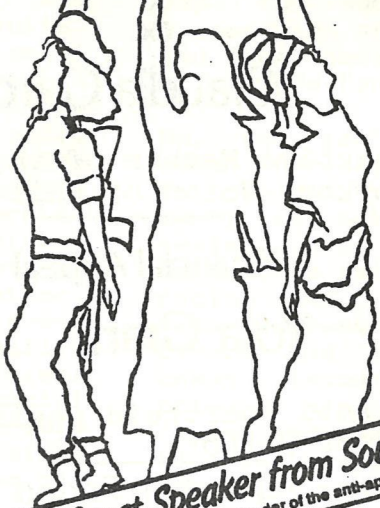
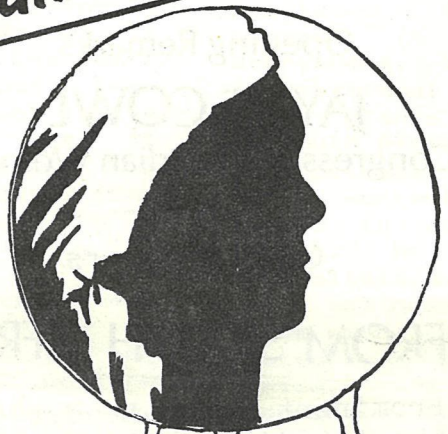


1986

# International Women's Day



**Guest Speaker from South Africa**  
Prominent woman leader of the anti-apartheid movement

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## Agenda

### Performance

**Janis Daly / Barbara Lee**

### Opening Remarks

**JAYNIE COWL**

Congress of Canadian Women

### Guest Speakers

## **FROM SOUTH AFRICA**

Prominent Women Leader of  
the Anti Apartheid Movement

&

**Claudia Garcia**

Executive Member of the Construction  
Workers Union of Chile

### Financial Appeal

**Yola Grant**

Anti Apartheid Coalition  
of Toronto

### Question Period

**IWD**

The theme of International Women's Day, 1986, is: "Say No to Racism from Toronto to South Africa". This theme recognizes that racism is a system which suffocates and crushes its victims in every part of the world where it has taken root. It acknowledges, as well, that racism is being fought courageously and determinedly all over the world. To find the heart of the system, we must look backwards, to the origin of racism and around us, to see what is common to racist policies and practices in places as distant from one another as Toronto and South Africa.

Racism hasn't always existed--it was developed as an ideology to justify genocide, slavery, and robbery in the period of western expansionism, or colonialism. Through heroic efforts, and against unbelievable odds, racism was opposed: through slave revolts, uprisings against colonial repression, the civil rights movement, national liberation struggles. Gains have been made, but racism persists today, in those areas where profit is placed before human needs and abilities--where it can be used by finance and business to divide people whose interests as workers should bind them together, to pay less than even the lowest standard wage, to rationalize inferior employment opportunities, education and other social services. Racism is a terrible injustice--a crime against humanity, as the United Nations has declared.

South Africa is a formidable bastion of racism in the world today. Our solidarity with the women and men fighting for freedom from oppression and exploitation in South Africa stems from our condemnation of racism, our understanding of its roots, and our knowledge that a blow struck against it anywhere, is felt everywhere. We must recognize that transnational corporations do not close plants in Canada to relocate in South Africa because they prefer the climate--but because there, Black workers have been brutally forced to accept less for their labour. We should note that the journalists, academics, governments, and businessmen who invest in, trade with, apologize for and give platforms to apartheid South Africa, are the same ones who vigorously oppose or drag their heels on affirmative action, equal pay for work of equal value, prosecution of racist hate-mongers and just settlement of Native land claims, in Canada.

No, you can't say no to racism in South Africa, and ignore it in Toronto--or vice versa. And you can't say not to racism and leave sexism, its partner, unopposed. Sexism is used in the same way as racism and, ultimately, for the same purpose--to divide working people and to provide a pool of cheap labour. Thus Women of colour, are doubly victimized--by racism and sexism. One example of this is the fact that, as a group, non-white women earn less than both white men and white women--with Native women at the very bottom of the economic ladder in Canada.



# Statement of Political Agreement

The struggles against racism and sexism are an integral part of the major issues which face us today. When we must remember that women and men of color are over-represented in the ranks of the unemployed and underemployed. Mandatory, legislated, affirmative action must be one of our demands--not only for women, but for all groups who have been similarly, historically, discriminated against "Visible Minorities", Native people, the disabled--both men and women.

Similarly, equal pay for work of equal value has the potential to strike at the foundations of low-paying "job ghettos" to which many workers have been relegated on the basis of gender and/or colour.

When we fight against free trade with the United States, we must do so in unity, with the knowledge that, while it is against the interests of all working people in Canada, it is women and men of colour who will be most negatively affected by the threat this poses to the manufacturing and service sectors and to accessible social services.

When we raise our voices for nuclear disarmament and against the threat of nuclear war, we must do so in unison, remembering that the billions of dollars that are spent on arms, could instead be spent on education, housing, social services, day care, training, affirmative action, equal pay for work of equal value--on breaking

down the systems of racism and sexism. And, most importantly, we must be united through our awareness that global nuclear war means an end to the struggle for justice, equality, freedom--and end to life itself.

Racism and sexism are welded together in a massive weight, crushing working people--both genders, and all colours. While all are hurt, those who suffer most are the ones who have been forced to the bottom women and men of colour. If we fight amongst ourselves in our efforts to be free, the weight remains lodged, and our pain is increased. Only through our collective strength and effort can we throw off that burden. We must do more than say no to racism from Toronto to South Africa.

1986 is

--the 30th Anniversary of the formation of the Federation of South African Women, and the year of Umkhonto we Sizwe - Let us increase our solidarity actions with the Black Majority in South Africa!

--the Year of Peace--let us intensify our struggles against sexism, and racism--which the United Nation identifies as a major threat to peace in the World!

--the 100th Anniversary of "May Day" let us strengthen the unity of working people by greater efforts against the divisive policies and practices of racism and sexism.

An injury to one is an injury to all!

COMMITTEE FOR RACIAL EQUALITY  
MARCH 1986

PEACE We are living in dangerous times. A nuclear war could end our struggle, our aspirations, our lives. For us, no other issue is more crucial to our future and our equality. The very threat of war denies us our right, diverting funds from arms purchase; funds which governments could otherwise use to provide jobs, child care, social services, education and health facilities.

The creation of new types of weapons increases our danger and initiates yet another spiral in arms spending. Canadians should not allow the Cruise Missile to be tested on our soil or in any way participate in nuclear armament. The United States Star Wars program further threatens world peace, thus the Canadian government should prohibit all Canadian participation in Star Wars. Further the government of Canada must withdraw from NORAD in order to ensure a Canadian independent foreign policy of peace, disarmament and detente.

Women, young and old, are joining the struggle for peace. Every day our numbers increase. There is a world to win...for ourselves, our sisters and brothers, our parents and children. With them, we will win it.

EQUALITY Central to the equality of women is the right to a job and economic security. Women continue to earn much less than men and are concentrated in low paying jobs. The Mulroney Conservative government is attacking our living standards by eroding social programs and maintaining high unemployment. The right to join a union and have a decent collective agreement was defended by striking workers at Graham Cable T.V., (garment workers), Eaton's and Visa workers, many of whom were women. Victories were achieved by the Eaton's and Visa Workers.

In Ontario, despite the change to a Liberal government, women's status remains unchanged. The Peterson government has refused to make Equal Pay for Work of Equal Value a reality for working women in the province.

To be complete, the equality of women must encompass the right to education, health care and housing, the right to have or not to have a child, the right to develop as individuals in directions decided by our own will. In our midst, Native and immigrant women particularly those from visible minorities, suffer the greatest denial of these rights. While advances have been made our struggle is not over. Full equality for all has yet to be won.



# Endorsements

UNITY Women around the world have the same aspirations as women in Canada-economic security, health, education and housing. Millions suffer the denial of these rights daily, many others still fight and die to achieve them. We, women in Canada know that we will not completely achieve our own equality while women elsewhere are denied theirs.

We condemn the U.S. interventionist policies, especially in the internal affairs of Grenada and Nicaragua. We applaud the courage and strength of the South African, Chilean, Salvadorean, Palestinian, Iranian and Irish women. We support the women of all countries where the struggle to end national oppression encompasses the promise of the advancement of women.

Our rights can only be realized if the following demands are met:

- # the right to a job, institute verifiable, mandatory affirmative action programs
- # equal pay for work of equal value; raise the minimum wage
- # the right to union representation on the job
- # no discrimination on the basis of sex, race, ethnicity, age, marital status, sexual orientation or political and religious beliefs
- # ensure universal access to childcare services, family benefits and support services funded by government
- # 17 weeks full paid maternity leave with the option of a year's absence without loss of seniority or benefits

- # equal access to education and technical training; provide special courses for immigrant women
- # free post secondary education
- # access to information on birth control and pregnancy termination in our own languages; remove abortion from the Criminal Code and establish free standing abortion clinics covered by OHIP; end forced sterilization
- # grant farm wives the right to receive wages for farm work
- # provide affordable housing; implement rent controls and raise the ceiling on rents to be controlled; no evictions or foreclosures due to unemployment
- # control food prices and corporate profits; remove sales tax on contraceptives, personal hygiene products and restaurant food under \$7
- # the right to a safe and healthy environment at work and in the community
- # controlled introduction of new technology with job and retraining guarantees; a 30 hr work week with no reduction in pay
- # full coverage of domestic and farm workers under the Employment Standards Act, the Labour Relations Act, the Occupational Health and Safety Act and the Ontario Human Rights Code.
- # \$850/month guaranteed; non-contributory, indexed old age pension per person
- # halve the military budget; annul Cruise testing agreement, make Canada a nuclear weapons free zone No Canadian involvement in Star Wars and No renewal of the NORAD agreement

Africa Ethiopia Anti-Hunger Fund  
African Studies Student Association  
Afro-African-Caribbean Students Association  
African National Congress  
AMPES  
Anti-Apartheid Coalition of Toronto  
Association of Concerned Gyanese  
Association of United Ukrainians of Canada  
Bookworld  
CAN  
Canada Cuba Friendship Association  
Canada GDR  
Canadians Concerned About Southern Africa  
Canadian Peace Congress  
Canadian Union of Educational Workers  
(National Office)  
Chilean Women's Front  
Chinese Canadian National Council  
(Women's Issues Committee)  
Committee for Racial Equality  
Committee of Progressive Pakistani Canadians  
Committee of Progressive Electors  
Communist Party of Canada  
Congress of Canadian Women  
COSFES  
CUPE 1230

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Development Education Centre  
Divestment Committee, U of T  
Federation of Russian Canadians  
Federation of Women Teachers of Ontario  
Greek Canadian Democratic Organization  
International Children's Day Committee  
Jamaican Democratic Association  
Latin American Working Group  
Ontario Voice of Women  
Organized Working Women  
Partisan Gallery  
Portuguese Canadian Democratic Association  
Silvia Platoon  
Student Christian Movement  
Students for Democratic Action  
Democratic Womens Orgaization of Iran  
Supporters of the Organization of Iranian  
People's Fedaian (Majority) in Canada  
Supporters of Tudeh Party  
Toronto Association for Chile  
Toronto Association for Peace  
Toronto Chilean Society  
Toronto Disarmament Network  
United Electrical Workers Union  
United Jewish People's Order  
Urban Alliance on Race Relations  
Women Working with Immigrant Women  
York Student Movement Against Apartheid  
York University Faculty Association  
Young Communist League  
\* and many individuals

