

# SUBMISSION

Presented to

**THE RIGHT HONOURABLE PAUL MARTIN**

**Prime Minister of Canada**

By



The Canadian Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs  
La Fédération Canadienne des Clubs de Femmes de Carrières Commerciales et Professionnelles

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**Patron:** Roberta Bondar, Ph.D., FRCP ©

*Working towards improving economic, political, social and employment  
conditions for women.*

*"Women working for working women."*

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## Introduction

In 1930, BPW Canada was a founding member of an international network of Business and Professional Women's groups that has grown to include more than 108 countries around the world. BPW International, the recognized voice of gainfully employed women in all professions and occupations, promotes equal opportunities and status for women. As a non-governmental organization (NGO), BPW international has Consultative status Category 1 with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

The Canadian Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs (BPW Canada) is an equality-seeking group working towards improving economic, political, social and employment conditions for women. Simply stated, we are "women working for working women." Our membership includes women from a variety of professions and occupations, including women entrepreneurs, in clubs across the country.

For nearly 75 years, we have been advocating for equality in the workplace, and have played a significant role in achieving advancement for women.

Currently, we have 46 local clubs of BPW members across Canada, in eight provinces. Our groups range in size from 10 to 60 members, and excellent leadership training programs are offered in the communities that we serve. Our members bring a wealth of experience to our discussions and deliberations. Our policies are a direct result of a process which includes the voice of all working women. We bring perspective to our position and our policies.

At our recent Biennial Convention in Regina, we approved a resolution in support of the recommendations arising from the *Prime Minister's Task Force on Women Entrepreneurs*. BPW Cambridge and BPW Regina made submissions to the Task Force during the consultations that were held across the country. We ask for the opportunity to participate in future forums to continue our involvement in support of women entrepreneurs.

BPW Canada is pleased to present this submission covering the resolutions passed at our Biennial Convention held in Regina, Saskatchewan on July 15-18, 2004. The delegates from across the country, who belong to clubs in our Federation, considered, discussed and approved these resolutions.

Issues raised by BPW are not just women's issues. They are issues of concern to our society at large as we move closer towards an equality-based society. We look forward to the opportunity to meet with members of the federal government to present our resolutions and concerns in more detail. We have much to contribute to the future of Canada as we build the future together.



## Resolution #2004/1

Presented by BPW Montreal, QC

### ***Employment Insurance Act***

**BPW CANADA** urges the Government of Canada to amend the Employment Insurance Act to correct the inequities with respect to women, using gender-based analysis to incorporate the following: “360 hours to qualify, longer benefit period, benefits up to 18 months for individuals over 35 years of age, a weekly benefit based on no longer than 2/3 of the best 12 weeks of earnings, and regular EI benefits for all hours of work lost while in training”; and

**FURTHER BPW CANADA** urges the Government of Canada to utilize the surplus in the Employment Insurance Fund to re-invest in training, non-financial support and other services for the unemployed.

### **RATIONALE AND REFERENCES**

With the changes made to Bill C-27 in 1977, UI funds were available on a limited scale to support job creation, training and other developmental uses. The government has now expanded and extended this active program. Bill C-21 changed the eligibility and duration criteria to create a one-phase system based on a combination of eligible weeks of work and the unemployment rate of an economic region. This bill increased penalties for claimants who quit their jobs voluntarily, without just cause, refuse a job or are fired for misconduct, by increasing the disqualification period to 7-12 weeks.

In 1990, Bill (C-21) and in 1993 (C-113) the protection of the unemployed was reduced from 74% to 57%. In 1994, legislation was passed to decrease the benefit period by as much as 50% for several claimants. This amendment to the legislation changed the eligibility rules by reducing insurance coverage from 57% of the unemployed in 1993 to 42% in 1996. With the introduction of the Employment Insurance (EI) Act, and the conversion of the “week system” as the measure of labour force attachment to an “hours system,” the EI Act tripled the minimum qualifying hours, reduced the benefit period, and quadrupled the number of weeks required to qualify for part-time workers.

Today, a greater percentage of women work part time. In the first five years of the EI Act, from 1996 to 2001, the gap in insurance protection between men and women more than doubled; specifically, coverage for men fell from 45% in 1996 (before EI) to 44% in 2001, while the coverage for women over the same period fell from 39% to 33%. Women aged 25-44 are the most affected (45% receive EI compared to 58% of men).

Surplus monies in the Employment Insurance Fund (the difference between the amount contributed by employees and employers and the amount used to finance the program) are currently absorbed into the government’s general budget. The overall economy of the country could benefit more by re-investing in workers, providing training and non-financial support and services to the unemployed.

### **Sources:**

*FALLING UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE PROTECTION FOR CANADA’S UNEMPLOYED.* An analysis of B/U RATIOS (UI beneficiaries to Unemployed) by age and gender from 1990 to 2001, Canadian Labour Congress



## Resolution #2004/2

Presented by BPW Cambridge, ON

### ***The Women's Tribunal (Tokyo Tribunal)***

#### **Women As Victims Of International War Crimes**

**BPW CANADA** urges the Government of Canada in general, and in particular through its Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and through Canada's representatives to the United Nations, to insist that the Government of Japan fully meet its obligations as defined by the Judgment of the Tokyo Tribunal; and

**FURTHER BPW CANADA** urges the Government of Canada in general, and in particular through its Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and through Canada's representatives to the United Nations, to insist that the Government of Japan implement without delay and give as a first priority the implementation of the *Recommendations* section from the Tokyo Tribunal Judgment to include articles 146 through 148 inclusive, as follows:

#### **Recommendation 146**

146. To fulfill its responsibility, the Tribunal holds that the government of Japan must provide each of the following remedial measures:
- i. Acknowledge fully its responsibility and liability for the establishment of the "comfort system," and that this system was in violation of international law.
  - ii. Issue a full and frank apology, taking legal responsibility and giving guarantees of non-repetition.
  - iii. Compensate the victims and survivors and those entitled to recover as a result of the violations declared herein through the government and in amounts adequate to redress the harm and deter its future occurrence.
  - iv. Establish a mechanism for the thorough investigation into the system of military sexual slavery, for public access and historical preservation of the materials.
  - v. Consider, in consultation with the survivors, the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission that will create an historical record of the gender-based crimes committed during the war, transition, and occupation.
  - vi. Recognize and honor the victims and survivors through the creation of memorials and a museum and library dedicated to their memory and the promise of "never again."
  - vii. Sponsor both formal and informal educational initiatives, including meaningful inclusion in textbooks at all levels and support for scholars and writers, to ensure the education of the population and, particularly, the youth and future generations concerning the violations committed and the harm suffered.
  - viii. Support training in the relation between the military slave system and gender inequality and the prerequisites for realizing gender equality and respect for the equality of all the peoples of the region.
  - ix. Repatriate survivors who wish to be repatriated.
  - x. Disclose all documents or other material in its possession with regard to the "Comfort stations."
  - xi. Identify and punish principal perpetrators involved in the establishment and recruitment of the "Comfort stations."
  - xii. Locate and return the remains of the deceased upon the request of family members or close associates.



### **Recommendation 147**

147. The Tribunal further recommends that the former Allied nations:

- i. Immediately declassify all military and governmental records concerning the establishment and operation of the “Comfort” system and the reasons why it was not prosecuted before IMTFE.
- ii. Immediately declassify all military and governmental records concerning the failure to prosecute the Emperor HIROHITO before the IMTFE.
- iii. Acknowledge its own failures to investigate and prosecute the crimes committed against the former “Comfort Women” initially in the post war trials and since in the intervening 55 years.

### **Recommendation 148**

148. The Tribunal further recommends that the United Nations and all the states thereof:

- i. Take all steps necessary to ensure that the government of Japan provides full reparations to the victims and survivors and those entitled to recover on account of the violations committed against them.
- ii. Seek an advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice as to the illegality and continuing liability of the government of Japan in regards to the former “Comfort stations.”

### **RATIONALE AND REFERENCES**

- 1) The issue applies to women everywhere, and the Tokyo Tribunal contains important recommendations for reparations that need to be implemented.
- 2) The Tokyo Tribunal once again confirms that there is irrefutable evidence today that Japan is still shirking its moral responsibilities towards these women – women who are now very few in numbers as they are very old.
- 3) Nothing has happened to give “Comfort Women” restitution. The issue is still mired in Japanese political bureaucracy and denial. Only implementation of the recommendations of the Tokyo Tribunal will address this issue specifically.

To recognize what the UN still calls the largest “unremedied” war crime by a first world country today, BPW Canada passed a resolution regarding “Comfort Women” – women used by the Japanese Imperial Army in the Second World War as sex slaves. “Comfort” stations were set up in many countries to provide sexual services to enlisted men – hence the term for the women, “Comfort Women.”

As a result of continuing investigation by Asian women and human rights organizations, a Tribunal was held in Tokyo on December 8-12, 2000. In its 200+-page judgment report issued on December 4, 2001 in The Hague, The Netherlands, the Tokyo Tribunal issued a number of important recommendations for reparations.

The implementation of these specific recommendations is an important next step to adopting an action plan to bring this issue to justice. This is an important national issue for Canada to stand behind and bring to the international arena for the following reasons:

- 1) Japanese groups are working towards this cause; however, it is important for the international community to put pressure on the Japanese Government to honour its commitment.
- 2) Women in Asian countries rely on countries like Canada to speak out boldly to defend the rights of those who cannot speak for themselves because of possible retaliation and sanctions.
- 3) Amnesty International (AI) has joined the support campaign for “Comfort Women” with permission from AI Japan in August 2003, because they recognize that, to this day, the Japanese Government



has refused to acknowledge its legal responsibilities for crimes against humanity committed against so-called Comfort Women (see Amnesty International, Women's Action Network News, Fall 2003, Issue 3, p. 3)

The women of seven countries – Korea, the Philippines, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Burma and The Netherlands – were subjected to death, rape and other violent acts, forced labour and in particular the staffing of military brothels by the Japanese military during World War II. The Japanese military forced hundreds of thousands of women into sexual slavery for Japanese troops.

Overwhelming evidence from the Tokyo Tribunal of December 2000 exhaustively examined the plight of Comfort Women hearing testimonies of survivors, scholars in history, international law and psychology all attesting to the facts surrounding this issue. The Tokyo Tribunal's final judgment calls the crimes committed against these "Comfort Women" as still being "one of the greatest unacknowledged and unremedied injustices of the Second World War."



## Resolution #2004/3

Presented by BPW Selkirk, MB

### ***Women in Afghanistan***

**BPW CANADA** urges the Government of Canada through the Ministries of Defense and Foreign Affairs to maintain a presence in Afghanistan until stability is achieved in the countryside, and to assist the United Nations in actively monitoring the election process prior to, during and after the election to ensure the safety of the women in Afghanistan who wish to exercise their rights and participate in future democratic elections in:

- a) Registering to vote
- b) Voting for a candidate of their choice
- c) Campaigning and supporting women who are running for elected office
- d) Running for elected office
- e) Continuing to protect those who succeed in becoming elected to office; and

**FURTHER BPW CANADA** urges the Government of Canada to increase the Canadian Armed Forces, for the purpose of international peacekeeping in Afghanistan, including upgrading equipment and salaries to be more reflective of the risks involved in the position.

### **RATIONALE AND REFERENCES**

After the invasion of Afghanistan in December 2001, a broad-based interim government was instituted, operating under the rules of the 1964 Constitution. In June of 2002, an emergency *loya jirga* (a representative body of selected/elected Afghanistan's) elected a transitional government for two years to rebuild the administrative infrastructure, with a mandate to develop a new constitution, convene a *loya jirga* to ratify the constitution and hold national elections to transition to a permanent state and legitimate mode of governance. The *loya jirga* was to have been convened in December 2003 but was postponed until January 2004.

In June 2002, Dr. Simi Simar, who was appointed as the Minister of Education and Empowerment of Women, was arrested. Dr. Simar had given an interview to a Canadian journalist, and her comments were taken by a Mullah as a statement of blasphemy. The Conservative Clerics, who were responsible for carrying out the edicts of the Taliban and then held positions in the transitional government, supported this charge. The Clerics called for the "appropriate punishment" to be meted out to Dr. Simar, namely, "stoning to death." Dr. Simar appealed to President Karsai, and negotiated a deal to resign her position in the ministry in exchange for having the "fatwa" stayed.

In November 2003, Sally Armstrong, author of *The Veiled Threat*, a CBC Documentary *Daughters of Afghanistan*, and editor at large with MacLean's and Chatelaine, revealed to the public that Dr. Simar's home was surrounded by barbed wire and that she was under 24-hour UN guard. Despite the *fatwa* being "stayed," her life was still in constant danger.

In January 2004, the *loya jirga*, after much discussion and opposition from the conservative Clerics, was successful in having women's rights entrenched in the Afghan Constitution, and scheduled elections for June of 2004; the elections were later re-scheduled for October 2004. Although women's rights were entrenched in the Constitution, the various provinces may use discretion in implementing them. The new





constitution also states that women have the right to run for political office. However, women continue to face many threats of intimidation as they prepare for election to political office, and can still be faced with the possibility of being eliminated and/or silenced by the Conservative Clerics and hardliners. By August, only about 40% of women were registered to vote.

([http://www.cbc.ca/story/world/national/2004/08/18/afghan\\_voters040818.html](http://www.cbc.ca/story/world/national/2004/08/18/afghan_voters040818.html))

Although there are many positive changes, many schools still do not have water and/or electricity, books and other school supplies. Schools are still being firebombed in rural parts of Afghanistan. Many teachers have fled, and although some have returned, the majority will not return until they feel safe. Afghanistan has one of the highest illiteracy rates in the world. It is imperative that women are included in the political process in order to continue with the changes necessary to bring stability back to this country.

The entrenchment of women's rights is only the first step. Governments around the world need to continue to raise the many issues in support of Afghani women not just during the election process. Their safety needs to be ensured and they must enjoy the fundamental freedom to participate equally in the government of Afghanistan. Life is extremely fragile in Afghanistan, with the recent bombings and killings of Canadians and other peacekeepers. The majority of Canadian troops were scheduled to be withdrawn in August of 2004, leaving only a remnant of peacekeepers committed until 2005 to maintain stability in the country.

([http://www.cbc.ca/stories/2004/04/14/canada/afghan\\_troops040414](http://www.cbc.ca/stories/2004/04/14/canada/afghan_troops040414))

The women of Afghanistan have suffered untold civil and political oppression under the rule of the previous Taliban government. They have been denied the right to an education, freedom to work and obtain medical assistance, and to leave their homes without a special pass, a male relative escort, and without covering their bodies with a "Burka." Despite the opposition of the Conservative Clerics, women's civil and political rights in Afghanistan were entrenched in the Afghan Constitution and ratified at the emergency meeting of the *loya jirga* in January of 2004. The implementation of the Constitution, which included ensuring that the rights of women, will be under the jurisdiction of elected officials in the respective provinces and municipalities.

Rural Afghanistan is still under the control the War Lords and the Taliban, and the Conservative Clerics who carried out the oppressive edicts of the Taliban still hold political office in the Interim Government.



## Resolution #2004/4

Presented by BPW Toronto, ON

### ***Implications of the Divorce Act on Women***

**BPW CANADA** strongly urges the Government of Canada and the Minister of Justice to adopt in their entirety the 14 recommendations proposed by Andrée Côté and Pamela Cross on behalf of the Ontario Women's Network on Child Custody and Access, the Ontario Women's Justice Network and the National Association of Women and the Law in their Preliminary Analysis of Bill C-22, An Act to Amend the Divorce Act, dated March 8, 2003. The recommendations are as follows:

#### **A) Amendments to Bill C-22**

1. The *Divorce Act* must begin with a Preamble that establishes the reality and gendered nature of violence within some Canadian families as well as the presence of male power and control within many more. It must also explicitly acknowledge the lack of equality still experienced by Canadian women and the impact this has on the issue of custody and access. The Preamble should also set out the fact that, both historically and currently, women have been and are the primary caregivers in most Canadian families, and this must be acknowledged when custody and access decisions are made. In addition, the Preamble should propose an equality rights framework for interpreting the provisions of the *Divorce Act*, and in particular should prohibit any discrimination on the basis of class or socio-economic condition, Aboriginal heritage, race and ethnic origin, disability and sexual orientation.
2. The concepts of custody and access must remain the terminology used in legislation dealing with care-giving arrangements for children after their parents have separated. This language is well understood by judges, lawyers and those using the family court system. In jurisdictions where language has been changed, there has been confusion and increased litigation.
3. If the proposed language is to be maintained with respect to parenting time and decision-making, the responsibilities of care giving and decision-making must be tied together to prevent abusive fathers from maintaining rigid decision-making control while abdicating any actual care giving responsibilities.
4. The definition of family violence contained in section 16 must include sexual and psychological abuse.
5. The best interests of the child test set out in section 16.2, clause (e) must include both race and ethnic origin. The issue of Aboriginal heritage or upbringing must be dealt with in its own clause, in recognition of the unique place of Aboriginal peoples who live in Canada.
6. Legislation must openly recognize that there will be cases where no parenting time and/or no decision-making authority at all is appropriate in order to protect the safety and well being of both the mother and children. In particular, the *Divorce Act* should include a presumption against a perpetrator of domestic violence having what is now referred to as sole custody or joint custody.



## **B) Operational Issues**

7. Appropriate arrangements must be created or expanded to ensure that supervised access or "parenting time" be available in all cases where it is required. These services should routinely be provided as part of the family court system. Federal, Provincial and Territorial governments must ensure that the services are accessible, secure and provided by supervisors with specific expertise in cases of child abuse and violence against women. Services must be racially, culturally and linguistically appropriate to the diverse families in Canada.

8. There should be an expedited family law process for women and children in abusive relationships.

9. Legal aid services must be viewed as a right and made available to all women who require them. Legal aid services must ensure that barriers to access, such as literacy issues and barriers for women with disabilities are removed. French language services and language interpretation must be available when needed. The Federal government must provide funding for legal aid to Provinces and Territories for family law matters and must ensure that provinces and territories use this money appropriately.

10. Lawyers, judges and all family court personnel must receive mandatory training in the new legislation that also includes training on the realities and dynamics of women's poverty and violence against women and the differential impacts of poverty and violence among women, especially in the context of ongoing family court proceedings.

11. Mediation must never be mandatory. Where a woman discloses past abuse/control issues, she should not be expected to enter or continue with mediation. Mediation is not counselling; it is a process with serious legal implications for the participants. Therefore, mediation should not be recommended as a form of therapeutic intervention for so called "high conflict" family law disputers. Use of any form of alternative dispute resolution must never be a required prerequisite to family court access nor a requirement for receiving legal aid or any community support services related to family law issues.

12. Given the high incidence but low reporting in family court files of violence against women and children, and given that family court personnel often fail to identify the impacts of violence when it is disclosed, every case before the family court must be examined for the possible existence of violence and coercive control.

13. Measures need to be developed that will ensure that the determination and enforcement of child support payments will not be delayed or otherwise made more difficult because of the amendments to the *Divorce Act*.

14. Measures need to be developed that will ensure that children are not made more vulnerable to international kidnapping because of the proposed amendments to the *Divorce Act*.

## **RATIONALE AND REFERENCES**

On December 20, 2002, the federal Minister of Justice introduced Bill C-22, amending the *Divorce Act* and its provisions relating to the custody and access of children after divorce. Any changes to the *Divorce Act* and family law will have a deep impact on women's lives. [Source: *Executive Summary, Brief submitted to the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Working Group on Family Law by the Ontario Women's Network on Custody and Access, June 2001, [www.nawl.ca](http://www.nawl.ca), at Page 1*]. According to the National Association of



Women and the Law web site, the current discussions ignore women's realities and do not use a gender-based analysis. Equality is the law in Canada. [*ibid*, at Pages 1 & 2]

The overwhelming majority of women with children are primary caregivers during marriage. Though 70% of mothers now participate in the workforce, women nonetheless remain the parent who is most intimately involved in their children's daily life. [*Source: Executive Summary, Brief submitted to the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Working Group on Family Law by the Ontario Women's Network on Custody and Access, June 2001, [www.nawl.ca](http://www.nawl.ca), at Page 1*]. The recognition of the care-giving responsibilities undertaken by women is crucial, and must be fundamental to considerations of custody and access during separation and divorce.

The public consultations overseen by the Federal/Provincial/Territorial group Family Law Committee do **not** recognize the distinct role that many women play in regards to their children, nor do they recognize the difficult social and economic conditions under which most women have taken on these responsibilities. Parents are referred to in gender-neutral terms, and parenting is discussed in a manner that does not acknowledge how women and men actually engage with their children. Canadians are being asked to evaluate choices around custody and access, such as shared parenting, in the abstract, without any consideration of the conditions and context of women's lives.

The framework document, "Putting Children's Interests First" completely ignores Canada's commitment to a gender-based analysis strategy that was approved in 1995 in "Setting the Stage for the Next Century: The Federal Plan for Gender Equality," and internationally with Canada being a signatory to the 1995 Commonwealth Plan of Action on Gender Development and the Beijing Platform for Action. These agreements clearly outline the need to "promote a gender perspective in all legislation and policies."

[*Source: Executive Summary, Brief submitted to the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Working Group on Family Law by the Ontario Women's Network on Custody and Access, June 2001, [www.nawl.ca](http://www.nawl.ca), at Page 2*].



## Resolution #2004/5

Presented by BPW Selkirk, MB

### *Eating Disorders*

**BPW CANADA** strongly urges the Minister of Health Canada to fund research for the development of a “Best Practices in the Prevention and Treatment of Eating Disorders” such as bulimia and anorexia; and **FURTHER BPW CANADA** strongly urges the Minister of Health Canada to provide funding for the Canadian Medical Association to develop sound training programs for Canadian physicians in the detection, understanding and treatment of eating disorders; and **FURTHER BPW CANADA** strongly urges the Minister of Health Canada to urge the National Health Council to work with Provincial and Territorial Ministers of Health to design educational materials for various media, regarding eating disorders and the problems that their material can create with the production of information that constantly promotes the need for women to lose weight.

### **RATIONALE AND REFERENCES**

For the past two decades, eating disorders have grown to epidemic proportions in Canadian society (Ontario Health Data, 1995 and Winnipeg Regional Health Authority data, 1999, still valid in 2004). The mortality rates of young females struggling from eating disorders are estimated to be 5-17% of the population (based on Manitoba Health Data/1998 – 2002).

Forty-seven per cent of 11-year-old Canadian females, 42% of 13-year-old Canadian females and 48% of 15-year-old Canadian females say they need to lose weight, which often leads to eating disorders (Health and Welfare Canada). There is no recognized “best practices treatment” for those suffering from Eating Disorders such as Bulimia or Anorexia. There are no standardized prevention education programs for eating disorders such as Bulimia and Anorexia.

Females have been subjected to judgmental and degrading treatment due to the lack of knowledge of medical personnel. Girls and women make up 90 – 95% of those struggling with anorexia or bulimia and these women form a large part of the workforce (Winnipeg Regional Health Authority 1999 – 2002).

These disorders cause many health problems such as depression and physical illnesses, which affect the ability of women to function at work and contribute to absenteeism from their jobs, possibly obstructing their opportunities for advancement in the workforce. Frequent periods of absenteeism may also have an affect on the ability of young girls in school to learn, causing them to fall behind at school and lose out in possible opportunities for their future.

The loss of work or reduction in hours due to the various illnesses caused by eating disorders affects the ability of women to earn income and maintain independence. The media plays a huge role in influencing teenagers and adults in their eating habits, body image and other behaviours, through numerous articles and advertisements on television, radio, print form and the internet stressing the importance of weight loss and body image and encouraging people to try the numerous diets that are reported in magazines, newspapers, television and the internet. Pictures of svelte models and statements inferring that slender bodies lead to healthy, more satisfying lives are constantly flashed in the public eye. The effects are evidenced by the increase in the weight-loss business as a flourishing industry in today’s society. The



Ottawa Citizen (1990) reported sales in Canadian diet centres were at least \$300 million per year. (This has grown over the past 14 years.)

For the past 10 to 15 years, there have been numerous studies done by Medical Groups, Health Canada, and eating disorders organizations that have identified problems with eating habits of women and girls. Many women go on and off diets, lose and regain their weight over and over, but increasingly larger numbers are falling prey to horrible disorders such as bulimia and anorexia. In a 2001 Canadian Medical Journal, it was reported that a study of Ontario girls 12–18 years of age with problematic food and weight behaviour showed that about 15% were expected to develop full-fledged eating disorders.

It is shocking that, in a 1999 report of Ontario Health, 0.6% of females aged 14- 64 have full syndrome Anorexia, and 1.4% have partial a syndrome. Dr. P.E. Garfinkel of New York, who co-produced the *Handbook for Psychotherapy for Anorexia Nervosa and Bulimia*, was quoted in the 1995 Ontario Health Supplemental Data as stating that there was a mortality rate of 5-17% and chronic morbidity of 25%. In addition to problems in Canada, the USA National Institute of Mental Health indicates a prevalence rate of 1% of adolescent girls suffers from anorexia and another 2-3% suffer from bulimia nervosa.

A video called “Eating Disorders Teen Issues” shows the role of the media in influencing teenagers and explains why self-starvation can lead to a feeling of control. Numerous other studies have also been produced showing data throughout the international community and the USA to support these claims. In addition to the deterioration of the emotional, mental and physical well-being of the victims, there are residual costs of reacting to the problem, which will be much greater than at present if Canada does not take a proactive position in this area of medicine.



## Resolution # 2004/6

Presented by BPW London, ON

### ***Public Health Screening***

**BPW CANADA** urges the Minister of Health and Health Canada *to propose legislation that formally recognizes violence as a public health issue and provide adequate resources to public health services in rural communities to:*

- a. increase the number of public health nurses providing services in rural communities;
- b. provide additional training to public health nurses in recognizing woman abuse;
- c. increase the number of mobile health clinics in rural communities in order to conduct the Routine Universal Comprehensive Screening (RUCS) protocols and counsel abused women on their rights and resources available to improve their situation;
- d. increase the number of mobile health clinics in rural communities;
- e. enhance and expand the tele-health system;
- f. increase advertising and promotion of resources such as crises lines and health networks;
- g. strengthen the network of nurse practitioners in rural communities; and

**FURTHER BPW CANADA** urges the Government of Canada through the Minister of Health and Health Canada to declare RUCS for woman abuse as a major initiative across the country and in conjunction with other federal Ministries, such as Status of Women Canada, fund collaborative projects to implement and evaluate the outcomes of screening initiatives; and

**FURTHER BPW CANADA** urges the Government of Canada to endorse and implement (RUCS) as a public health initiative across the country; and

**FURTHER BPW CANADA** reaffirms the following resolutions:

**a. Resolution 600.10.42 Family Violence (1992);**

**THAT CFBPWC** petition the Federal Government to undertake an evaluation of the wife assault policy of the various provinces to pinpoint the effectiveness of the policy, together with the effectiveness of its implementation.

**THAT CFBPWC** urge provincial organizations to petition their respective provincial governments to develop a fully coordinated system such as that used in Duluth, Minnesota, where policies and social services work as a team, offering immediate and ongoing support and resource information to victims (including children) and abusers.

**THAT CFBPWC** urge the provincial organizations to petition their respective provincial governments to provide funding for long-term support services including counseling, housing and retaining for victims of violence and their children.

**THAT CFBPWC** ask the Government of Canada to make the population more aware of the problem of incest by providing an adequate program of preventative information on matters of incest.

**b. Resolution 600.10.62 Community Coordination Programs to Stop Violence (1996)**

**THAT CFBPWC** urge the Federal Solicitor General/Attorney General and other relevant ministries to urge their provincial counterparts to issue/re-issue and emphasize/re-emphasize directives similar to those outlined in the April 6, 1989 memorandum on spousal assault from the Ontario Police College and the





Ministry of Solicitor General to all Chiefs of Police in Ontario, specifically emphasizing that police officers lay charges where there are reasonable and probable grounds to believe that an offence has occurred.

**THAT** concerns raised by immigrant and visible minority women's groups, specifically in a brief submitted by the National Organization of Immigrant and Visible Minority Women of Canada to the Ontario Commission on Systemic Racism in the Criminal Justice System in October, 1993, about how the police intervene in minority and immigrant communities be recognized and incorporated into directives similar to those outlined in the memorandum without diluting their force, recognizing one solution cannot address multiple and complex problems.

## **RATIONALE AND REFERENCES**

Women's health involves "emotional, social and physical well-being and is determined by the social and political context of their lives, as well as biology" (para. 89 U.N. Platform for Action, Beijing, 1995). Health Canada Women's Health Strategy released in 1999 states that "half of Canadian women are victims of physical or sexual assault as defined by the Criminal Code, at least once beyond age 16 and are most at risk from their male partners." Woman abuse is a grave and continuing problem in our communities. Information on the real costs associated with woman abuse is not easily available. Hospital admissions, reported crime data from police, Children's Aid Society cases of child protection related to woman abuse do not capture the true costs to health and the long-term effect of violence. These effects include costs that are difficult to capture and measure:

- The abused woman who is less able to respond to the needs of her children or be a parent in the way she would otherwise (without an abusive partner);
- Abused children who suffer the effects of witnessing abuse that include: peer isolation, delinquency, fears, loneliness, running away, depression, stealing, alcohol and drug addiction;
- Male batterers, who themselves witness violence in their own family of origin.

The most devastating effect of woman abuse is fatality. Other effects include, but are not limited to:

- Physical effects: broken bones, cuts and stab wounds, bites (often on the breast and other sexual areas), perforated ear drums, chipped or lost teeth, irritable bowel syndrome, chronic headache, lost hair, hypertension, etc.
- Psychological effects: difficulty in forming and maintaining healthy relationships, dysfunctional parenting, acute anxiety, hypervigilance, memory loss, phobias, etc.
- Psychiatric effects: eating disorders, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, suicidal ideation, dissociation
- Sexual Effects: sexually transmitted diseases such as HIV, genital mutilation, chronic vaginal infection or tearing, frequent unwanted pregnancy, infertility, etc.

An annual survey produced by the Integration and Analysis Program, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics - Statistics Canada's 1999, General Social Survey on Victimization, and published in "*Family Violence Report, 2000*" p.5 findings include the following: "...that almost 60,000 people who are currently living with a violent spouse fear for their lives, and over the past five years almost 500,000 children have either seen or heard violence in their homes."

The "Domestic Violence", *New England Journal of Medicine*, vol. 341, Number 12, September 16, 1999 pp. 886-892, cited the following woman abuse statistics:

- 1 in 4 women seeking care in the emergency room (ER) is a victim of violence;
- 1 in 3 women treated for trauma in the ER has been injured by an intimate partner;





- 1 in 4 women who attempts suicide is a victim of abuse; and
- 1 in 4 women treated for psychiatric symptoms have been abused.

The *Task Force on the Health Effects of Woman Abuse - Final Report*, reports (ch.1, p.1) that in 1997 the Ontario Public Health Association formally recognized violence as a public health issue. Routine screening has been implemented successfully in other areas of health such as breast screening for cancer in women over 50, and Healthy Babies, Healthy Children (Ontario 1999 initiative) screening of infants for “at risk” infants. Research has shown that on average, a woman is assaulted 35 times before police are involved. There are many barriers to leaving abusive relationships and for some there are additional burdens, as with new Canadians, rural women, women with disabilities, etc. The costs associated with undetected and continuing abuse are enormous and a study called *Selected Estimates of the Costs of Violence Against Women and Children* (1995), prepared by the Centre for Research on Violence Against Women and Children University of Western Ontario, published estimates on the costs in four area (health/medicine, criminal justice, social services/education, and labour/employment to be \$4.2 billion annually and 87.5% of those costs are paid through tax dollars. In 2001, one quarter of all violent crimes reported were cases of family violence according to Family Violence in Canada, 6<sup>th</sup> annual edition (2003). Two thirds of the cases noted above were violent acts by a spouse or an ex-spouse and 85% were acts against a female. According to the Canadian Panel on “Violence Against Women, Changing the Landscape, 1993 (p 10), 270 women were killed; of them 225 were killed by men and 121 were killed by intimate partners. The National Forum on Health published in 1997, Canada Health Action: Building on the Legacy, made recommendations for action by implementing an integrated response to woman abuse including all health care professionals.

The long-term health care effects of woman abuse continues to have a devastating, often fatal, and costly effect on society, financially and in terms of long term health care effects on women and their children in Canada. Women in rural communities have additional barriers to fleeing abuse including geographic isolation, economic dependency, the threat of violence with weapons, lack of transportation, etc., and access to medical help in many areas is limited to a public health nurse. In 1997, the Ontario Public Health Association took the initiative to pass a resolution formally recognizing violence as a public health issue. Woman abuse is insidious and occurs over time with a woman being assaulted, on average, 35 times before police intervene.



## Resolution #2004/7

Presented by BPW Brampton, ON and BPW Cambridge, ON

### ***Task Force on Women Entrepreneurs ~ Recommendations***

**BPW CANADA** commends the Prime Minister's Task Force on Women Entrepreneurs for the work on its report; and

**FURTHER BPW CANADA** urges the Prime Minister of Canada and Government of Canada to begin implementing the recommendations of the Task Force by establishing an Office of Women's Business Ownership, as recommended by Recommendation 1.01 of the Task Force; and

**FURTHER BPW CANADA** urges the Government of Canada to fulfill the promises made by the former Prime Minister of Canada, Jean Chrétien, in his speech on October 29, 2003 at the official presentation of the 'Report' recommendations:

- The federal government will extend the Women's Enterprise Initiative funded by Western Economic Diversification Canada.
- The federal government will commit to multi-year funding for the Women in Business Initiative in Atlantic Canada.
- The federal government will create two new Women Enterprise Centres in Ontario and Quebec. The federal government will instruct Industry Canada to work with women entrepreneurs on the issue of micro lending in these centres.
- The federal government will organize a national Women's Economic Forum to extend the work of the Task Force.
- The federal government will also, for the first time, create a Canadian Women's Innovation Award. As part of the Canadian Woman Entrepreneur of the Year Awards, this new Innovation Award will help raise the profile of women entrepreneurs and encourage young women to guide their own careers.
- The federal government will expand its research and publications program to better meet the needs of women entrepreneurs, and the federal government will ensure that this program provides policymakers with information about emerging issues.
- The federal government will be raising entrepreneurship in future federal-provincial and territorial meetings so that all levels of government are aware of the concerns of women entrepreneurs.
- The federal government will continue its focus on Aboriginal women entrepreneurs to identify their needs. The government will be developing a business-planning guide to help Aboriginal women break into new markets.
- The Prime Minister will ask the National Aboriginal Economic Development Board to examine the situation that Aboriginal women face in the field of entrepreneurship.
- To provide Canadian women entrepreneurs with opportunities to expand their markets beyond our borders, the federal government will ensure that women entrepreneurs continue to be represented in Canada's trade promotion activities and on trade missions; and

**FURTHER BPW CANADA** urges the Government of Canada to further study the results of the Task Force and implement the remaining recommendations of the Task Force.

## RATIONALE AND REFERENCES

In November 2002, the Prime Minister of Canada announced the creation of the first Prime Minister's Task Force on Women Entrepreneurs to provide advice on how the federal government can enhance the contribution of women entrepreneurs to the Canadian economy. The mandate of the Task Force was two-fold:

1. To examine the unique challenges faced by women-owned businesses, consider the factors required to encourage women's entrepreneurship, assess existing resources and identify gaps and areas for possible future action, and evaluate best international practices and their appropriateness to the Canadian context; and
2. To provide advice to the federal government on broad policy issues in women's entrepreneurship, both domestic and international, including specific initiatives that the government should consider in areas such as research and trade.

According to Statistics Canada, small business is the fastest-growing segment of the business sector in Canada. Women-owned businesses are the fastest-growing part of that segment, with women creating two times as many new businesses as men. In fact, according to recently released data from the 2001 Census of Canada, the number of women entrepreneurs grew by 8% between 1996 and 2001, compared with a 0.6% increase for men. Between 1981 and 2001, the number of women entrepreneurs in Canada increased 208%, compared with a 38% increase for men. According to data from the Organization for Economic Cooperation Development (OECD), women in Canada make up a larger share of the self-employed than in any other country.

The government of Canada needs to look at the implications of the rising number of self-employed women in Canada and their economic contribution and status. Under the 'old economy', women made gains due to higher education levels, increased labour force participation, and public policy and legislation supporting women's work, such as pay equity, maternity leave, Employment Insurance, and the Canadian Pension Plan. Under the 'new economy', there are growing numbers of women who are self-employed and therefore fall outside the scope of the public policy and legislation that has improved the working lives of women and their economic status.

It is clear that Canadian women are creating a range of businesses that fall outside the traditional model of paid employment. Any definition of an 'entrepreneurial economy' must recognize this diverse range of activity – from one-person practices, to small businesses with a few employees, to large enterprises with many employees. The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) studies entrepreneurship and public policy in over 37 countries. Its 2001 Global Report made six public policy recommendations. One of the strongest recommendations was to facilitate greater levels of female participation:

*"There is perhaps no greater initiative a country can take to realize higher levels of entrepreneurial activity than to encourage more of its women to participate."*

Further, the 2001 GEM report for the U.S. found that:

*"There is still a need to not only increase the number of female entrepreneurs, but also enhance their effectiveness in starting and growing their ventures."*

Some of the salient facts reported by the Task Force are:

- There are more than 821,000 women entrepreneurs in Canada.



- Canadian women entrepreneurs contribute in excess of \$18.109 billion to the Canadian economy every year.
- Self employment has grown faster in the past 25 years than paid employment.
- One in six workers in Canada is self-employed.
- Self-employment among women rose from 8.6% of workers in 1976 to 11.5% in 2002.
- Since 1976, the average annual growth rate of self-employment for women has been 5.3%, compared with 2.2% for men.
- Between 1981 and 2001, the number of women entrepreneurs in Canada increased 208%, compared with a 38% increase for men.
- One third of self-employed Canadians in 2002 were women.
- Women entrepreneurs held ownership in 45% of Canadian small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in 2000.
- 9% of women entrepreneurs are involved in international business.
- The likelihood of self-employment in women increases with age and most female entrepreneurs are between the ages of 35 and 54.
- Average earnings for women who are self-employed or work on their own account are lower than for employed women.



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