



March 2006

## **WORKING WOMEN NEED CHILD CARE CANADIAN LABOUR CONGRESS MARCH 8<sup>TH</sup> 2006**

On International Women's Day, women around the world celebrate our achievements and commit to continuing our struggle for full equality. This March 8, child care is the critical concern for working women in Canada.

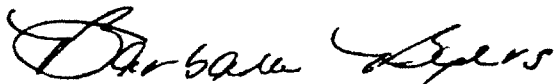
For working women, child care is all about equality. It is about our equal right to work. It is about our ability to find and hold good jobs. It is about our right to go to work without worrying about the care of our children. Two out of every three women with children under the age of three work outside the home, as do three out of four mothers with children between the ages of three and five. **Working women need and deserve safe, affordable, accessible and quality child care for their kids** while they contribute to the economy of our country and to the economic welfare of their families.

Union women have been fighting for quality accessible child care for many years. We saw important first steps towards the creation of much needed child care spaces across the country through the negotiation of agreements between the federal government and the provinces on child care.

Now, with the stroke of a pen, Prime Minister Stephen Harper intends to cancel all of these signed agreements. Instead of supporting quality child care, his Conservative government plans to offer parents \$1200 a year for "choice in child care". What choice is there if we do not have access to good child care? What choice do we have if there are no child care spaces? Women can always use financial support to help with the costs of raising kids. But, \$25 a week - less after tax? Help with diapers maybe, but not child care.

We must not give up our hard-won advance towards the creation of a national child care system. Child care advocates, women's groups, unions, parents are working together to get the message to the Conservative government. The Conservatives must respect the agreements on child care made by the Government of Canada with provincial and territorial governments. **A deal is a deal!**

**On International Women's Day**, the Canadian Labour Congress reaffirms our commitment to women's equality, to women's right to full participation in the world of work and to the right of parents and children to accessible, quality, developmental child care. We encourage all union members to work with others in our communities to make sure that we do not go backwards on child care or on any hard-won equality right. Forward ever! Backward never!



Barbara Byers  
Executive Vice-President

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