

The Rose

Equality: We'll Never Give Up!

As you know, women's struggle for equality is not over. We need to pursue our struggle for full representation in all spheres.

This is a pivotal year for CUPW. Its two main bargaining units are in negotiations with Canada Post. After having been legislated back to work through an employer-dictated lockout, members of the urban unit are now at the mercy of an arbitrator who will decide between two final offers. The Harper Government has given the arbitrator a very restrictive mandate with very clear instructions. Is that the meaning of free collective bargaining?

In this context, what can we expect for members of the RSMC unit (66% of whom are women), whose collective agreement

expires in December 2011? The last re-opener is not even finished. RSMCs have 38 million dollars sitting in Canada Post coffers, and the Corporation is still dragging its feet. RSMCs have not had wage increases since January 2009! Never has there been so much money available to finally improve RSMCs' working conditions.

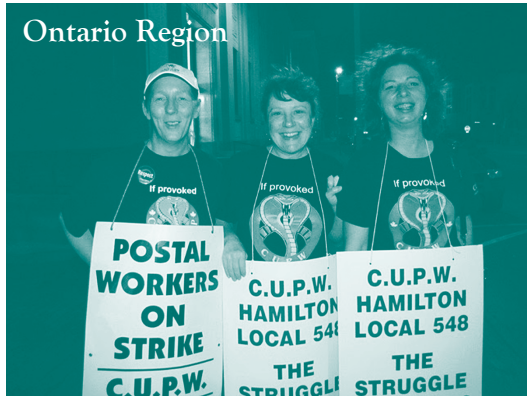
So why isn't Canada Post budging on wage increases? Does it believe we are going to give up? Of course, that's out of the question. We are going to fight until Canada Post comes to its senses. RSMCs are not second-class workers and we want full equality for RSMCs with the urban unit.

The struggle continues.



WOMEN on the LINE

Everywhere you looked, CUPW sisters were out in force on the picket lines during the urban operations strike/lockout...



Ontario Region



Atlantic Region



Montreal Region



Central Region



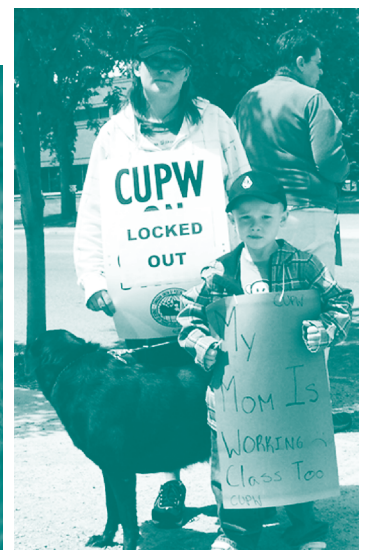
Toronto Region



Pacific Region



Québec Region



Prairie Region

Solidarity with Sisters in Spirit

In Fall 2009, *The Rose* featured a cover story about the October 4th Sisters in Spirit vigils for Aboriginal missing and murdered women taking place across the country. Since then, Sisters in Spirit has come under attack by the Harper government....



The Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) was founded in 1974 to promote the social, economic, cultural and political well-being of First Nation and Métis women. In 2004 NWAC began its Sisters In Spirit (SIS) initiative to raise awareness about violence against First Nation and Métis women. In 2005, NWAC received funding from Status of Women Canada to raise awareness of the violence against Aboriginal women, gather knowledge to understand the root causes of this violence and identify ways of securing the safety of Aboriginal women and girls. The report 'What Their Stories Tell Us: Research Findings from the Sisters In Spirit Initiative' is based on NWAC's research findings and is globally renowned as the first of its kind. NWAC then used its research on the streets in a project called 'Evidence to Action 1.' Status of Women funded 'Evidence to Action 2' to continue the work of SIS.

This government partnership's aim was to build better relationships between law enforcement agencies, organizations, the justice system and stakeholders, and put in place measures to give Aboriginal women and girls the respect and safety they deserve. This was the understanding of NWAC when it agreed to the terms of the project's continued support with federal funds. Then, on October 29, 2010, everything changed.

That's when the federal government announced funding for a national strategy to deal with murdered and missing women cases. But Sisters In Spirit was totally excluded from the

ten-million-dollar budget allocation. Instead, a new police support centre for missing persons was created. More money and power was being given to police, even though the Sisters in Spirit research revealed over 500 cases of missing and murdered women that had been previously ignored by both the police and RCMP.

The government's decision to cut off SIS sparked outrage from many people, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal. The government eventually agreed to continue to fund SIS but restricted its funds from being used for research and policy work. It has also forbidden SIS to use their logo.

Many provinces have now formed or supported projects bringing justice to the many missing and murdered Aboriginal women of Canada. Vigils are held on October 4th each year to honour and remember the lives of those missing and murdered. These women are grandmothers, mothers, aunts, daughters, and sisters. They deserve to be respected and remembered, not reduced to statistics.

Visit NWAC's website at www.nwac.ca to find information on a Sisters in Spirit vigil near you. If there's no vigil in your area, why not create one? Make sure to let NWAC know of the event so it can be posted on their website. Make sure to take pictures and send them to NWAC. Contact NWAC to request information about Sisters in Spirit to educate others before, during and after your vigil. Show our sisterhood and solidarity. Support SIS!

In Memoriam: Marie-Pascale Proulx

I've been a letter carrier for 24 years. In 1986, I was one of a rare few women doing this job, but the number of women working for Canada Post has increased drastically over the past 25 years. Today, customers have finally stopped being surprised when they see a woman show up at their door. Among the many female letter carriers with whom I crossed paths over the years was Marie-Pascale Proulx. She came to work at my station in 2003. She was so shy that I barely knew her. I assumed she already had her circle of friends. Always smiling, with her head bent at her case and her nose to the grindstone, she went unnoticed. Her husband, also a letter carrier, came to pick her up every day. He nosed around the station until the day he too got a route with us, to be closer to her for love, I thought. The couple stayed three months. Or was it eight months? Hard to say: they were so quiet. "Good luck in your new workplace," we told them when they left, arm in arm, for another station.

On April 30, 2010, a 40-year old mother of two children aged 6 and 8 years old was beaten to death in her Laval home. It was Marie-Pascale.

I am deeply troubled by such a terrible tragedy happening to someone who worked next to me. The killer was her husband, our former colleague. The pieces of the puzzle all fell into place, but too late. Was he isolating her? Probably, but I didn't notice. Did anyone notice? Domestic abuse is not a myth. It's all around us. Did Marie-Pascale show any signs that she needed support? If so, I didn't see them. Are we oblivious to signals of distress from our colleagues, especially women? Did she contact the Employee Assistance Program? I have no idea. All my questions about her atrocious and senseless death remain unanswered because no one will give answers to someone who was not closely related to her. Can we develop a bond between sisters so tight that such torments can be shared? This is a question – a matter of life and death – I put to all postal workers in Canada.

Michèle Guérette, Montreal letter carrier

Take Back the Night

In this country...

- On average, every six days, a woman is killed by her intimate partner. In 2009, 67 women were murdered by a current or former spouse or boyfriend.
- Each year, over 40,000 arrests result from domestic violence. Since only 22% of all incidents are reported to the police, the real number is much higher.
- Half of all women have experienced at least one incident of physical or sexual violence since the age of 16.

SOURCES : THE CANADIAN WOMEN'S FOUNDATION AND STATISTICS CANADA

December 6th

**Got something to say in The Rose?
contact your
National Women's Committee
representative**