

International Women's Day (IWD)



So you want to be a feminist government? Here are three simple steps you can take!

On International Women's Day, Canada's unions are asking our government to act on their stated feminist principles.

"Since the last election, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has repeatedly stated his support for

gender equality and declared himself a feminist," said Canadian Labour Congress Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Byers. "But it's 2017 and Canadian women are still waiting for some basic changes."

"A feminist government means implementing concrete actions that deal with the economic inequality Canadian women experience on a daily basis," Byers stated.

Byers acknowledged Trudeau's government has made some advances, including appointing a Cabinet where 50% of Ministers are women, reinstating some funding for women's organizations, and beginning a national inquiry on missing and murdered Indigenous women. But on several key actions, she said, the government continues to drag its feet.

"Feminism means getting things done. So this International Women's Day, we're asking our government to do these three things in 2017," Byers stated.

1. Let's get proactive pay equity legislation tabled.

- Pay equity is equal pay for work of equal value. It compares the value of different occupations to fix the unfair reality that results in lower wages for jobs traditionally performed by women.
- The work is already done. In 2004, a Pay Equity Task Force carried out an exhaustive study on the issue and made 113 concrete recommendations for action.
- So why wait? The Canadian government says it is committed to tabling legislation, but not until the end of 2018. But the work is already done, and unions and other experts are ready to help draft the legislation, so why wait? Let's get this done in 2017.

2. Let's get a national child care framework signed and funded.

- Child care helps parents, particularly women, take part in the labour force. We all benefit when people can go to work knowing their kids have a safe place to play and learn. It's good for women, it's good for kids, and it's good for the economy. But in Canada, it's hard to find and afford.
- The Liberals promised a new child care deal with the provinces and territories. We need that deal and funding to provinces and territories to ensure all Canadian families can access quality, affordable child care. Let's get this done in 2017.

3. Let's get paid domestic violence leave into the Labour Code.

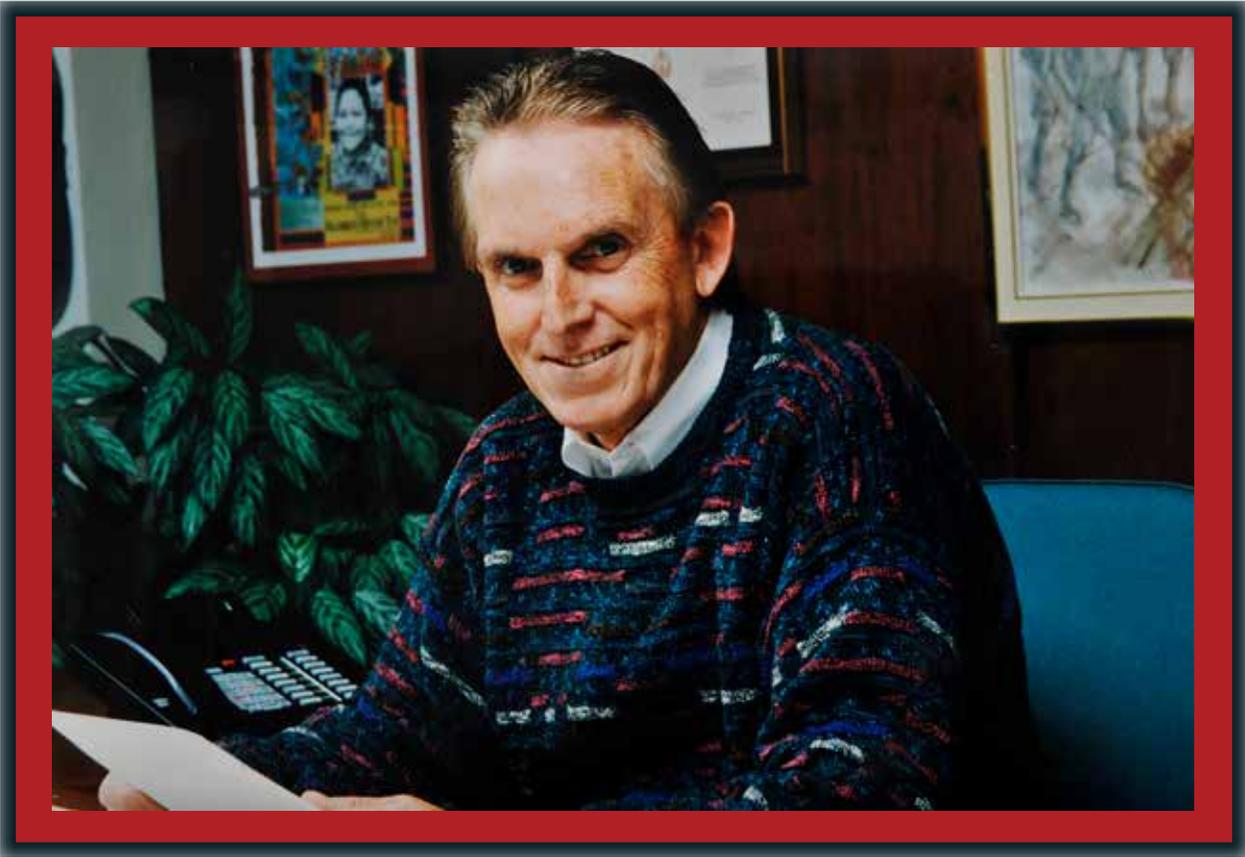
- **Domestic** violence doesn't stay at home. It follows people to work, putting jobs and safety at risk. One in three workers in Canada has experienced domestic violence in their lifetime, and more than half say they experienced violence at or near their workplace.
- Paid domestic violence leave can help keep victims safe. It means being able to take the time to deal with police or lawyers, get new bank accounts, and find a new place to live – without worrying about losing their job.
- Manitoba's government recently passed a law giving all workers the right to five paid days of domestic violence leave – the first of its kind in Canada. Now we need the federal government to do the same with the federal Labour Code. Let's get this done in 2017.



How you can help:

- Watch and share our new video, which highlights some of the above-mentioned problems and shows how ridiculous it is that they haven't yet been fixed. Use the hashtag #whywait.
- Send an email to your MP using our simple online form [will be live at whywait2017.ca as of March 7th].





Canada's unions mourn the loss of former CLC president Bob White

Canada's unions are mourning the loss of a great and inspirational leader, former Canadian Labour Congress president Bob White, who has died at age 81.

"Bob was a courageous leader who blazed a lot of trails in the labour movement," said CLC president Hassan Yussuff.

"He will be remembered by all of us for his fearless leadership and his commitment to social justice for people in Canada and around the world," he added.

White became president of the Canadian Auto Workers at its founding convention in 1985, where he served until being elected president of the Canadian Labour Congress in June 1992. He was re-elected in 1994 and retired in 1999.

Through that time he was recognized around the world as a staunch defender of human rights and social justice, and was an icon in Canada's anti-apartheid movement.

He championed fairness for workers around the world as the first Canadian president of the OECD's Trade

Union Advisory Committee (TUAC) and as chair of the Human and Trade Union Rights Committee of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, now called the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions.

He also worked tirelessly to keep Canada's unions strong.

"Bob White embraced change and recognized that in order to stay relevant, unions had to adapt and welcome leadership from women, workers of colour and all equity-seeking groups," said Yussuff.

"I will remember him as a great friend and mentor who encouraged me, as a young worker of colour, to step up and lead, first at the CAW, and then as vice president at the CLC," he added.

"We all send our heartfelt condolences to his family,," he said.

