

failure to care for its most vulnerable citizens.

The safety net fails in several ways. Two-thirds of single parent households are not in subsidized housing, although half of these are on waiting lists. Many have been waiting for more than two years. Social assistance payments—either general welfare or Family Benefits—fail to provide for basic needs.

What do these women really want? Popular wisdom has it they want to stay home, have babies, and be supported. But 73 per cent of women surveyed said the thing that would make the greatest difference in their lives was a job. Seventy-five per cent wanted cheaper housing. Sixty-three per cent wanted more education or job training. This is a picture of people struggling to survive in a society where they are given less opportunities.

Let us hope that when this recession ends we will never again stand for the erosion of programmes designed to maintain people in health and dignity through rough periods in their lives. In the meantime, during this recession, we need a great public outcry against governments that put deficit reduction before hungry people, and blame those very people for their hunger while balancing budgets on their backs.

Susan Cox is Assistant Executive Director of the Daily Bread Food Bank in Toronto.

Three new booklets on the subject of **CHILDHOOD SEXUAL ABUSE**

A Booklet for Adult Survivors
A Booklet for First Nations
Adult Survivors
A Booklet for Partners and Friends



For information contact:
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306 - 620 View Street Victoria BC V8W 1J6
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HEATHER PYRCZ

Talking

I am learning
to listen
to myself
and watch while I
say poverty for property
not missing a beat

I expose myself
like an Ihalmuit shaman
to howling winds and unfathomable
hunger
to gainsay

Heather Pyrcz is a writer who lives in Wolfville, Nova Scotia. Her work has been published in Fiddlehead, West Coast Line, and Pottersfield Portfolio.

MAURA STOREY

Chasm

They get in through the walls
the cracks in the foundation
and floor the chasm under
the livingroom windows where
Summers a sow-thistle grows
blooms if tended toward
Fall inside my house mice
don't need much space even less
for going out again mornings I
find them cringing near my pillow
or in fractions
in miscellaneous, amputated bits
half-eaten twice now they've left
their precisely abandoned faces on
my carpet: whiskers taut, tiny
clenched teeth, eyes bulging alert
watching waiting for my house
to crumble.

Maura Storey lives on a farm north of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, and works on contract as an educational consultant.