

have been imposed. Temporary refusals have been instituted. Time limits—for instance, of only being eligible for two years out of five—have been imposed. Health criteria have been imposed. Rate reductions have been imposed.⁹All welfare rates as well as minimum wage rates in the country are below the poverty line.

¹⁰Federal-Provincial-Territorial Ministers Responsible for The Status of Women, 2002.

¹¹Welfare workers and social workers are sometimes reported to us as abusers of their clients. They have much more power to abuse if the women know they have no enforceable right to welfare: they are dependent on the discretion in his hands.

¹²Personal communication, October 2001.

¹³In our work we have become aware of the ownership and prostitution dealings of (at least) The Hell's Angels in every province except the Maritimes, the Big Circle Boys gang, the Lotus gang, Fukianese, the Russians, the Mafia-related gangs, and the Vietnamese gangs.

¹⁴Most of the Canadian women's movement has agreed that prostitutes and low-level drug dealers should not be jailed or even criminalized. We have also agreed that those women trafficked as indentured labour or sex slaves should not be criminalized or deported. Our debates are about how to deal with the men and how to interfere with the trade.

¹⁵Gunilla Eckberg, personal communication, September 2003. She is special advisor to the government of Sweden on prostitution.

¹⁶For instance, see online www.naring.regeringin.se/fragor/jamstaddhet/aktuellt/trafficking.htm.

¹⁷And here we mean johns and pimps. We rarely see the women as the sellers.

¹⁸See online: www.rapreliefshelter.bc.ca/herstory/rr_files/86.html.

¹⁹The extra A is because the cookie company DARE threatened women organized under that name with lawsuits if we used their trademark name, although the police have a drug abuse program with the same name.

²⁰Justice for Girls is a group focusing on feminist intervention against the exploitation of young women.

²¹Cherry Kingsley, personal communication, October 2001. Cherry Kingsley escaped prostitution and often speaks as a woman who has experienced these conditions. She works in the International Centre to Combat Exploitation of Children.

²²Decriminalization used to mean preventing charges against the women. Now it is shorthand for the legitimating of the trade. We continue to stand with the women and against the trade.

²³See CASAC newsletters (1978-1982) available at Vancouver Rape Relief library.

²⁴Such as the member groups of Feminist Alliance for International Action (FAFIA) and the British Columbia CEDAW group.

²⁵See online <http://www.fafia-afai.org/index_e.htm>

References

Brodsky, G. and S. Day. *Canadian Charter Equality Rights for Women: One Step Forward or Two Steps Back?* Ottawa: Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, 1989.

Dobash, E. and R. Dobash. *Women, Violence and Social Change*. London and New York: Routledge, 1992.

Duncan, C. "Raging Women: Fighting Cutbacks in B.C." Paper presented at the Raging Women's Conference by Vancouver Women's Health Collective. Vancouver, Canada, October, 2003.

Lakeman, L. *99 Federal Steps Toward an End to Violence Against Women*. Toronto: National Action Committee on the Status of Women, 1993.

Sidel, R. *Keeping Women and Children Last: America's War on the Poor*. New York: Penguin, 1996.

JOAN BOND

An Apartment Dweller's Desire

Across balcony balusters
and a chartreuse lawn
edges blur wingborne;
hems float as clouds
and sweep aside billowing sleeves.
Brassieres touch pants;
pillowcases whirl around skirts.

The sun perfumes the dancers
lined-up, moved by breeze as by melody.
They tease back and forth
swell, flip, then fall limp.

My back to the dryer, I stare
wishing for cool, cotton sheets
smoothed upon my bed,
heavy with love making
heavy with the scent of clover.

Joan Bond's poetry appears earlier in this volume.