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INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY COMMITTEE

NEWSLETTER

Sept '79
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ABORTION PROTEST !

Once again the misnamed "Right-to-Lifers" are mobilizing against a woman's right to control her reproduction. This time the location is Toronto; the function is a weekend conference at the Royal York Hotel on October 6-7.

The latest Gallup poll revealed that 84% of people in Canada believe that a woman has the right to an abortion if her physical and mental health is threatened. Yet anti-abortion groups have been able to take advantage of a political climate that threatens the rights of women, lesbians and gays. They continue to press for greater restrictions on our right to abortion, infiltrate hospital boards to control the policy on abortion and insidiously intimidate candidates in federal and provincial elections to support their policies. In response to this push by the right-to-lifers, the federal Tory government has proclaimed its intention to call for a 'free' vote on abortion in the upcoming parliamentary session. The "right-to-lifers" are now using every possible tactic to gain mileage for their positions - the upcoming conference is the first such example here in Toronto.

In late August, members of the International Women's Day Committee met with members of other concerned organizations and organized a coalition to protest the positions to be put forward at this conference. The IWDC thinks that control of our reproduction is a basic, long fought for right and that our right to choose is by no means secure. The social and economic conditions we are struggling against rob too many women of this choice. With rising prices, lagging wages, inadequate daycare facilities and the general climate of economic insecurity, many women are forced not to have the children they want. It is in this context then, that the IWDC has strongly endorsed the planned protest by the Abortion Coalition and urges all of its members to participate both in building the coalition and in the protest itself.

The protest will begin at Queen's Park at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, October 6 and proceed to the Royal York Hotel via the downtown hospitals and Yonge Street. If you are interested in helping to organize the event, call Marg Moores: 598-0442.

Don't let the anti-abortion forces creep up on us! Let's act now and forcefully demonstrate our opposition to the policies and aims of the "right-to-lifers".

See you on the 6th!

Upcoming Discussions: In the spring the IWDC held a series of discussions aimed at defining the character of the organization, its goals, its base and its priorities in action. This fall we will be specifically discussing how to consolidate ourselves as a particular current within the women's movement. In this context, over the next few weeks, we will be discussing two key proposals: (1) our political self-definition (basis of unity) and (2) an action report which deals with the proposals for carrying out actions.

Fall Meeting Schedule: Place: Auditorium, University Settlement House. Time: 7:30

September 26; October 3; 17; 31; November 14; 28

Finally we would like to remind everyone that we are in great need of funds! If you want to stay on our regular mailing list - to receive reports of meetings, written materials, etc., please send \$3.00. Even if you just want to remain on the ordinary mailing list, we would appreciate any contributions!

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