

NAC 221



June 12, 1991

Secretariat NATIONAL C

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NAC CONFERENCE TO ADDRESS KEY ISSUES IN FEMINIST MOVEMENT TODAY

Women from across Canada will meet in Ottawa at Carleton University from June 14 to 17 to debate issues as diverse as national unity, violence against women, new reproductive technologies and Free Trade with Mexico. The conference entitled "Solidarity and Diversity" is the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC), Canada's largest feminist organization. Organizers say that registration for the conference is very high due to the urgency of the issues facing women today. Delegates from all provinces and the territories will be in attendance.

Solidarity and diversity among women is the theme of this year's AGM, referring to the fact that differences among women are a strength to build upon. While recent events have prompted a great deal of attention on conflicts among feminists, NAC welcomes the debates as a sign that the women's movement is maturing. "The efforts of women of colour, lesbians, disabled and poor women to be recognized and included in women's organizations is a healthy sign of a strong and growing movement. Diversity sometimes bring conflict, but we are determined that different approaches will strengthen our movement", said NAC President Judy Rebick.

The Constitution will be a major topic of debate throughout the weekend. Women representing the interests of the First Nations, Québec and other parts of Canada are featured on a Friday panel (2:00-4:30 pm) on "Constitution and Self-Determination", chaired by Doris Anderson. This will mark the first time since the failure of the Meech Lake Accord that feminists from across Canada have come together to debate the national unity issue. Among the key resolutions to be presented to AGM delegates is one submitted by the group, "Women for a New Canada", urging NAC to support a new arrangement within Canada based on the principle of self-determination for Aboriginal peoples and Québec, but also ensuring a major role for the federal government.

The AGM begins Friday morning with an opening plenary featuring Judy Rebick, CSN Vice-President Monique Simard, Reanna Erasmus of NAC's Aboriginal Committee, Eunadie Johnson, President of the National Organization of Immigrant and Visible Minority Women, and Nancy Riche, Executive Vice-President, CLC. Saturday and Sunday feature discussions and voting on NAC policy resolutions and organizational change. Monday morning's traditional lobby on Parliament Hill will close the weekend events. A media conference will be held at 1 pm Monday following the lobby in Room 130 S, Centre Block, Parliament Hill.

-30-

For further information, please call the NAC Office at 416-922-3246. After Thursday (June 13), please call the NAC AGM Conference Office at 613-731-7172, or the Media Room at Carleton University, 613-731-7251 (from Thursday to Sunday).