



N
A
C

MEMO

W.F.C.A.
RESOURCE CENTRE

NATIONAL ACTION COMMITTEE
on the status of women

LE COMITÉ NATIONAL D'ACTION
sur le statut de la femme

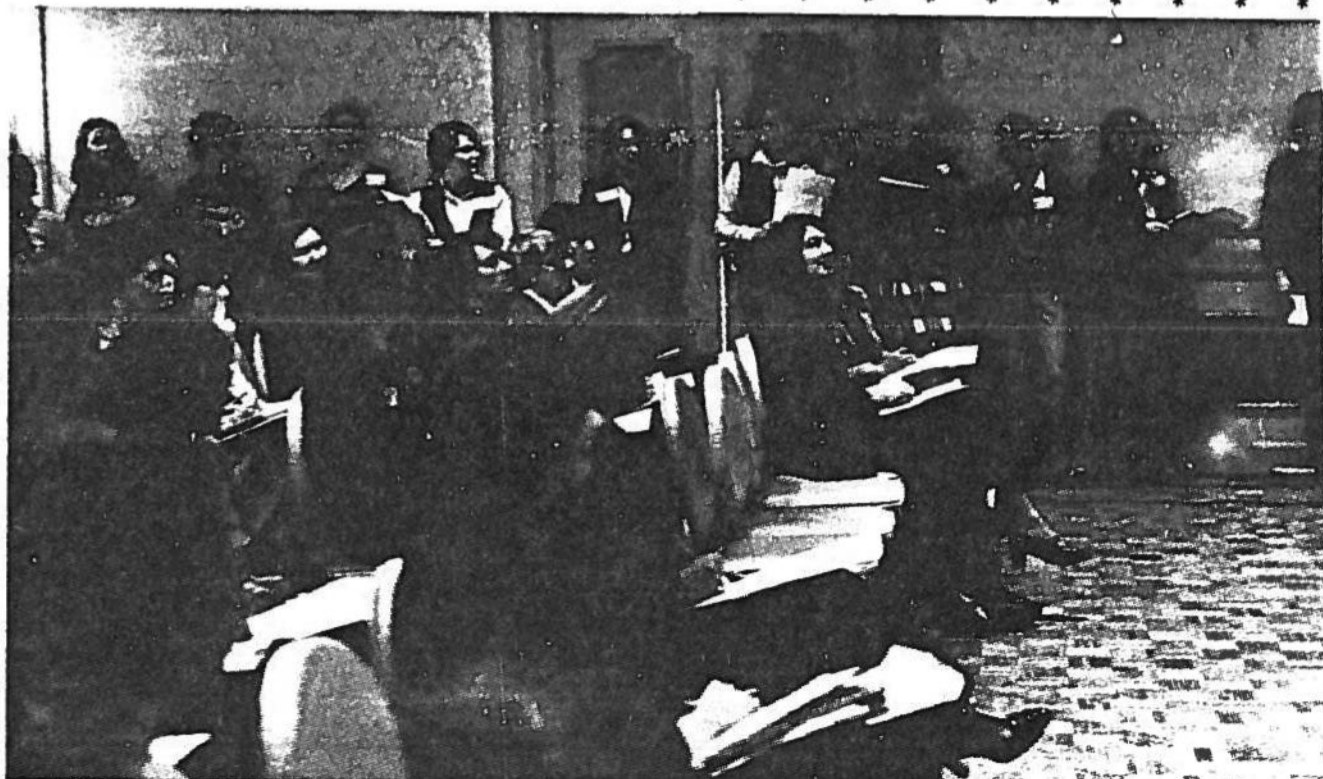
Suite 306
40 av. St-Clair est
40 St. Clair Ave. E.
Toronto M4T 1M9
(416) 922-3246

MARCH/APRIL 1980

FOR REFERENCE ONLY

* * * * * N A C ' S A N N U A L M E E T I N G * * * * *

- * FEMINIST VISIONS OF THE 80's - THE FAMILY was the theme of the Annual Meeting of NAC held in Ottawa March 14th to 17th. *
- * More than 400 women from across Canada attended the meeting which opened Friday night with an address by Rosemary Brown, MLA, Legislative Assembly of British Columbia. Women, said Brown, must have independence - economic, political & psychological, and must resist government, social and media pressure to become simply the mindless consumers needed by an ailing economy. It is 65 years, she said, since the suffragettes, yielding to public pressure at the inception of World War I declared that their movement hadn't been abandoned, it was just in abeyance. "I implore us," said Brown, "not to fall into the same trap, and forget our priorities ... "They use the threat of disintegration of the family to entrap us, and I refuse to be conned." "There is a conspiracy to get us out of the work force, back into the home, and the obstetrical ward, and consuming again." "If the family cannot accommodate to us as independent people, then the family, as it has existed, has got to go." *
- * Delegates to the Annual Meeting, in workshop sessions, drafted resolutions dealing with Child Care, Health & Welfare, Employment, Indian Rights for Indian Women, Human Rights, Domestic Labour, Reproductive Rights, Women's Programs, and National Film Board Studio D budget increase. *
- * Delegates heard from Mary O'Brien ("the personal is political") at the Saturday Banquet and were entertained hilariously by the Nellie McClung Players of Winnipeg. A feminist bus tour of Ottawa and the showing of the NFB film "No Place for a Woman" occupied Sunday, besides the Annual Meeting Resolutions and lobby preparation. *
- * Monday morning, about half of the women attending the meeting, divided into lobby groups to meet with senior government officials in the Departments of Justice, Indian Affairs, Secretary of State, the Human Rights Commission, and members of the Conservative and NDP caucuses. The largest delegation - 32 women - met Lloyd Axworthy, newly appointed Minister Responsible for the Status of Women in NAC's first meeting with him since the election. *



Photographer - Moira Armour

REPORT OF SPEECH MADE BY ROSEMARY BROWN, NDP MLA IN THE B.C. LEGISLATURE,
TO THE NAC ANNUAL MEETING, MARCH 14, 1980, OTTAWA, ONTARIO.

V I S I O N F O R T H E E I G H T I E S

Rosemary Brown painted a bleak picture for women for the next decade. She said the economic system is in deep trouble, and that it cannot work to meet human needs. Women will be called upon to fit into this system, to fit into a system over which they have no control. The eighties will bring high unemployment, productivity will be maximized but technological change will make wage labour redundant. The disadvantaged position of women will be further consolidated. Welfare programmes, health programmes, educational opportunities, the chance to enter non-traditional jobs, transition houses, day care centres, will be cut back and eventually disappear. This economic system assaults all programmes which seek to alleviate problems. Women will find themselves forced back to the home, the kitchen and the obstetrical wards. They will be pressured to seek solace in dependency. They will find dependency in drugs and alcohol, and they will retreat into insanity. Women's struggle for liberation will be constrained, hard times mean less activity, there will be a turning inward and a lack of sharing. The movement will be in retreat. Hierarchical structures will be emphasized. We must intervene to change these forces.

Big business will ask us to welcome in the "We" decade, it will appeal to our emotions. Instead of the self-assertiveness of the seventies advertisements in the eighties will depict the family, babies, puppies, grandmothers, friends. The virtues of motherhood will be extolled, but motherhood is the entrapping of women. Women's right to decide whether or not to have children will be further eroded. There will be no laws against women, but there will be no equal pay laws, and the blame for unemployment will be put on women.

However, Rosemary said, the goals of the past must remain the vision for the future - full equality and justice for all women. The struggle to create a better world must go on, by women alone if necessary. In the past the women's movement has had many setbacks. Women have been used, given jobs in wartime and sent back to the home when men returned from war. We must not allow this to happen again. Economic problems must be solved without sacrificing women. Our goal is independence or we will retreat into mindless consumerism. There must be evolution towards the dignity of equality and freedom. Women must become decision makers with power. Power would allow women to create a world without domination and of quality.

Governments are using the disintegration of the family to entrap us. The rejection of children is not necessarily the result of alternate families. The family is not breaking down, it is changing. It has infinite flexibility. It will survive in a restructured form with women equal and independent; a structure which will give dignity to both sexes.

"Stick your neck out," said Rosemary, "They're not going to grind you under."

Vi Thompson

Feminist sees 'con' of working women

OTTAWA (CP) — Feminist politician Rosemary Brown says governments, employers and advertisers are trying to lure women away from the liberation movement by accusing them of destroying the so-called traditional family — working dad, housewife mom and 2.5 children.

Mrs. Brown, a New Democratic Party member of the British Columbia legislature, termed this accusation against feminists a con and a trap aimed at undermining the strides women have made toward equality with men, particularly in the work force.

It is aimed at creating "a stampede of women back into the home, the kitchen, the obstetrical wards."

She told the recent seventh annual meeting of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women:

"I implore you, I beg of you, let us not

be conned into accepting the responsibility for the breakdown of the family," Mrs. Brown said.

"The family is not breaking down; it is changing. The goal of feminism has never been to destroy the family but to reform its structure."

Her description of the feminist family was one in which the female partner is equal to the male partner: independent, free to choose if she wants to or has to work outside the home, and free to choose whether she will have children.

"It's what separates us really from slaves — being able to choose," Mrs. Brown added.

She said governments and other institutions hope to solve the unemployment problem by driving women out of the work force where they should have just as much right as men to be. She said that while the women's liberation movement

has succeeded in making it unacceptable for governments to pass laws outrightly forbidding women to work, more subtle restrictions have emerged.

She cited weak enforcement of equal-pay laws, removal of women as a target group in government employment-finding programs, cuts in funds for day care and other support services. More women than ever have turned to alcohol and drugs, she said.

She quoted major advertising executives who say they plan to switch their emphasis toward women in this decade from independence and assertiveness to dependence and motherhood. The major symbols will be babies, puppies and grandmothers.

This will be in the guise of promoting "the rescue of the family from extinction but in reality the rescue of an ailing economy from expiration."

MPs today to hear complaints, concerns from women's group

By Paul Rodway
JOURNAL REPORTER

Members of a national women's group will meet MPs and senior public servants today to present women's concerns discussed during a weekend convention.

Over 400 women from all parts of the country participated in the annual convention of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC) held in the Skyline Hotel. The theme of this year's conference was the family as the focus of the feminist vision of the 80s.

To-meet officials

NAC will meet Lloyd Axworthy, the minister responsible for the status of women, Flora MacDonald of the Conservatives, and New Democratic Party MP Stanley Knowles, as well as senior officials in the departments of Indian Affairs, justice and finance.

In the slate of resolutions hammered out over the weekend are calls on the federal government to provide pensions for housewives paid for by publicly funded premiums, to institute a federal child care act and to include sexual orientation as a prohibited ground for discrimination in the Human Rights Code.

It also asked for the Unemployment Insurance program to be extended to cover part-time workers.



Rosemary Brown was guest speaker at conference.

The convention sent a telegram to the Ontario government urging that Bill 3 (equal pay for work of equal value) be given third reading in the current session.

Standing ovation

In the final general meeting yesterday an Indian woman, Mary Two-Ax Early spoke movingly about Indian women's rights and received a standing ovation from the participants.

The NAC also resolved to oppose all policies which "coerce women back into the home and into job ghettos." Guest speaker in the opening session of the conference was

LOCAL

Rosemary Brown, member of the British Columbia legislature who also touched on this issue.

She said the call for women to get out of the work force to prop up the traditional family is a "con job."

"It's a response to the economic situation. In tough economic times, there's an upsurge in the call for women to get out of the labor force and leave the jobs to men. Every time this has happened, for example after the war, it has retarded our struggle for equality."

Brown said increased funding for arms draws money away from social programs that benefit women.

No objection

She had no objection if a woman wants to be a housewife and raise the traditional two-and-a-half kids, but she should be aware of the facts behind the debate.

"When there are fewer jobs, the ad industry needs more consumers and fewer workers. And nobody is a better consumer than a housewife."

The National Action Committee is a voluntary affiliation of more than 140 women's groups in Canada and it developed out of the Committee for the Equality of Women in Canada.

Women's group demands protection for domestics

OTTAWA (CP) — Government protection of foreign nannies, housekeepers and other domestic workers from exploitation by Canadians is among the demands that the National Action Committee on the Status of Women takes to federal politicians today.

The demands are the result of a resolution passed by the Toronto-based umbrella group's annual two-day meeting which ended yesterday. It was attended by about 300 representatives of 94 women's organizations from across the country.

Other demands include better rights for Indian women, a free child care system, lifting of restrictions on pregnant women in

the unemployment insurance program and reversal of spending cuts in employment, health and social service budgets.

In keeping with the theme of the meeting — a feminist vision of the family in the 1980s — participants also agreed to tell the politicians that federal policies should reflect the value of housework, the independence of women from husbands and the increasing numbers of single parents.

"All economic and social policies adopted by the Government of Canada should reflect the fact that only a small minority of Canadian families in 1980 consist of the traditional two-parent, one earner with dependant children model," the resolution said.

The conference was told that domestic workers have virtually no protection under federal or provincial laws. They were described as overworked and underpaid and often victims of racism, psychological abuse and sexual pressure from Canadian employers.

Representatives of the organization plan to raise this and other issues today with Employment and Immigration Minister Lloyd Axworthy during a private meeting.

They also are scheduled to meet MPs from the Progressive Conservative and New Democratic Parties and officials of the Department of Indian Affairs and the Canadian Human Rights Commission.

They want protection of homosexuals entrenched in

the federal human rights law which bars discrimination on such grounds as age, sex and marital status, but does not cover homosexuals.

The organization said it opposes the use of family income as a basis for income tax programs "because it treats the family as a single economic unit, thereby forcing women into the role of so-called secondary workers in the labor force, strengthening sex-stereotyped division of labor in the home."

It said the Liberal Government should keep its election promise to provide Canada Pension Plan benefits to homemakers who have not joined the paid labor force. Premiums into the plan should be publicly-financed, it said.

Ottawa Journal, March 18, 1980

Women's leader warns militancy will combat neglect

By Paula McLaughlin
JOURNAL REPORTER

Women across Canada are going to become increasingly militant in 1980 if the federal government doesn't act soon on basic women's issues, the president of the largest women's organization in the country predicted yesterday.

Lynn McDonald, head of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women (NAC), said the time for talk is over "and the time for action is overdue."

"There's a growing sentiment of militancy among women in Canada and it's going to erupt if there's no action soon," she warned.

At the end of an annual one-day lobbying session in which more than 200 NAC members representing 142 organizations spoke to MPs and top-ranking bureaucrats, McDonald said women are "getting a little tired" of repeatedly asking for the same changes.

"More and more women are talk-

ing about tax boycotts, demonstrations and sit-ins," she said. "We've got to give the new government a chance, but we'll be watching for change terribly closely over the next year or so."

NAC has conducted its yearly lobbying effort for the past five years, she said, and some of the same issues such as Indian women's rights and the accessibility to child care crop up each session.

"We're at the stage now where everybody agrees that women's issues are important and worthy of action," she said. "Now they're asking how much is it going to cost?"

McDonald said the lobbyists generally received a sympathetic hearing from government and opposition members yesterday, but there were few promises.

Optimistic view

She said Lloyd Axworthy, minister responsible for the status of women, "expressed a generally more optimistic view of the economy than we hold. He said he's expecting more skilled jobs to open up, especially in the West. We're not knocking that if it comes about, but in the meantime, women are still making only 60 per cent of what men earn and the 'ghettoization' of women workers is not decreasing."

The committee repeated earlier resolutions which urged that Indian



NAC's Lynn McDonald.

women who marry non-Indian men not lose their Indian status, she said. They also asked that more money be available for reservation housing for Indian women. According to NAC, 12,000 more housing units are needed on reserves across Canada.

Other often-repeated demands included: Inclusion of housewives in the Canada Pension Plan; more funding for rape crisis centres; and adequate, free child care centres, particularly for single-parent families.

NAC members urged that women employed as domestic workers be able to accumulate points towards their landed immigrant status for every year of service in this country.

photo by Moira Armour



C O M M E N T

"Silence is golden - but sometimes ... it's just plain yellow" - Rosemary Brown (1980)

This quote from Rosemary Brown's introductory speech at the NAC Annual Meeting echoes through my head during the three days of workshops, strategy sessions and coffee shop conversations.

Certainly, there were not many quiet moments during those three days, however one special moment during the workshop on #1 "Reconceptions of Reproduction" conducted by Betsy Carr, comes to mind.

Silence descended on the gathering of 40 as we were confronted with the frightening realities of genital mutilation of African women. This silence was not the silence of quiet acceptance, but of anger and frustration. A time to pause and question ourselves about possible strategy. A time to reel back a bit in the face of evidence that the work of other women and indeed our own has only gone so far.

The silence is essential. Knowledge itself is quiet.

But now, as we are the generation "best equipped", as Rosemary Brown stated, to deal with the challenges - those pauses must be brief.

In Workshop #1, as in every workshop, the silent pause was brown with intense questions and firm resolutions which express our concern and our resolve.

Resolutions cannot speak for themselves; on paper they are silent.

If they remain only the written word, we are yellow.

Catherine Devlin

"Feminism is the best thing that has happened to the family in half a million years", said Mary O'Brien of the Department of Sociology, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, speaking at the Conference banquet of NAC's 7th Annual Meeting. "The movement challenges the ravages of the politics of reproduction which 'privatize' and isolate women. Social change must begin where life begins", she added.

Feminist Visions of the Future: The Family was the theme, introduced by Keynote speaker Rosemary Brown at the public meeting on Friday, March 14th. She warned women to be on guard during times of economic downturn, when they are apt to be scapegoated. By various means, gains in status can be withdrawn.

True, the 6 workshops could have been split up to enable greater individual participation; the unscheduled period late Saturday afternoon and the same Friday for early arrivals, made for informal exchanges, but they were perhaps less useful than "reports from the regions" at previous meetings.

The banquet arrangements and program were superb. They included Prof. O'Brien and the Nellie McClung Players from Winnipeg who presented "the role-reversing skit, Votes for Men" and other feminist items.

My third Annual General Meeting was less controversial and more harmonious than the other two. The reason I see is not a dimming of resolve among feminists, but more likely growing confidence in each others' convictions, unity of objective, compatibility of thought. While lively debate preceded voting on some of the 35 resolutions, the real determination of more than 300 attending was focussed on the indifference around us, particularly in government to whom we address the same demands year after year. Women in Canada are the "51 percent minority" that Doris Anderson referred to in January 28th, 1980 Maclean's. At the closing press conference on March 17th, President Lynn McDonald hinted that women are being driven to adopt more assertive means against discrimination, and for equality and justice.

Altogether, a smooth, cohesive conference, where women were in accord with their principles and each other. One that could inspire!

Betsy Carr

NAC's 7th Annual Meeting has come and gone. On the whole delegates were happy about the weekend and there were some satisfying high points: Rosemary Brown's vision of women's situation and the place of the family in our future set everyone thinking, and Mary O'Brien's comments later following this up.

Some criticisms were balanced by praise ("the food was awful" - "the food was great"). We have to reorganize the workshop-information exchange and resolution procedure since delegates were faced with too much to accomplish

COMMENT

(continued)

in too short a time. Perhaps NAC's policy proposals (in areas where something new is needed) should be developed during the year. Then, at the Annual Meeting, a policy statement could be discussed, amended or rejected - in whole or piece by piece - during the Annual Meeting workshops and discussions. This will be for the new Executive to decide.

The other request is for time - more time to get to know each other. Let's try to compensate for some of this lack by keeping in touch and following up all the contacts made in Ottawa, during the course of 1980. This could lead to greater involvement in NAC, particularly by those who stood for office but didn't make it this time.

Welcome to the Network - we need you all. Keep in touch. *Kay Macpherson*

W E L C O M E T O N A C ' S N E W E X E C U T I V E

- President: Lynn McDonald, Toronto, Ont.
- Immediate Past President: Kay Macpherson, Toronto, Ont.
- Vice Presidents: Lee Grills, Vancouver, B.C.
Eleanor Wright Pelrine, Toronto, Ont.
Patricia Preston, Calgary, Alta.
- Secretary: Chaviva Hosek, Toronto, Ont.
- Treasurer: Jean Wood, Toronto, Ont.
- Chairperson -
Editorial Committee: Catherine Devlin, Toronto, Ont.
- Regional Representatives: Ann Bell, Corner Brook, Nfld.
Kathy Kuusisto, Halifax, N.S.
Marie-Claire Boucher, Montreal, Que.
Anna Bors, Marengo, Sask.
Dorothy Richardson, Edmonton, Alta.
- Members-at-Large: Penny Allderdice, St. John's, Nfld.
Rosemary Billings, Ottawa, Ont.
Betsy Carr, Don Mills, Ont.
Lorenne Clark, Sandy Cove, N.S.
Jeanne Gariepy, Montreal, Que.
Jill Porter, Ottawa, Ont.
Sally Schrofel, Winnipeg, Man.
Gerda Wekerle, Toronto, Ont.

An urgent plea for all those who were unsuccessful this time to keep in touch with us. Women outside Toronto are particularly welcome to work with NAC's regional representatives and committees. Toronto women will be welcome in the office to assist the Toronto based women's section.

The NAC office can provide names of "Friends of NAC", past members of the Executive and nominees for the 1980-81 Executive.

SOME OF NAC'S COMMITTEES:

- OPERATIONAL: Finance
Membership
Media Relations
- POLICY: Housing, etc.
Employment
Media
Social Services
Immigration/Domestic Workers
- AD HOC: e.g. Fund raising dinner
Friends of NAC

ANYONE INTERESTED IN JOINING ONE OF NAC'S COMMITTEES, NO MATTER WHERE YOU LIVE, LET US KNOW. IF YOU HAVE ANY PARTICULAR CONCERNS - LET US KNOW THAT TOO.

EQUAL RIGHTS FOR INDIAN WOMEN ----

MARY TWO-AXE EARLY SPEAKS TO THE NAC ANNUAL MEETING

"When in the course of human events a people are excluded from the mainstream of social, political and judicial equality, it becomes evident that certain changes are necessary, if the majority are hopeful of retaining their rights and privileges. Whenever a minority are subject to the deprivations or the losses of the inalienable rights of the majority, it becomes a responsibility of that majority to ensure that the least member of their society be assured the recognition and protection of the laws governing the majority.

We Indian women stand before you as THE LEAST MEMBERS OF YOUR SOCIETY. You may ask yourself why? First, we are excluded from the protection of the Canadian Bill of Rights or the intercession of any Human Rights Commission as the Indian Act supercedes the laws governing the majority. Second, we are subject to a law wherein the only equality is the inequality of treatment of both status and non status women. Third, we are subject to the punitive actions of dictatorial chiefs half-crazed with newly acquired powers recently bestowed by a government concerned with their self-determinism. Fourth, we are stripped naked of any legal protection and raped by those who would take advantage of the inequities afforded by the Indian Act;

- raped because we cannot be buried beside the mothers who bore us and the fathers who begot us;
- Because we are subject to eviction from the domiciles of our families and expulsion from the tribal roles;
- Because we must forfeit any inheritance or ownership of property;
- Because we are divested of the right to vote;
- Because we are ruled by chiefs steeped in chauvinistic patriarchy who are supported by the Indian Act drafted by the rulers of this great democratic country over 100 years ago
- Because we are unable to pass our Indianness and the Indian culture that is engendered by a mother to her children;
- Because we live in a country acclaimed to be one of the greatest cradles for democracy on earth offering asylum to Viet Nam refugees and other suppressed peoples while within its borders its native sisters are experiencing the same suppression that has caused these peoples to seek refuge by the great mother known as "Canada".

Three score and ten years ago I started my life's journey. I have seen man land on the moon, the development of air travel, a nation linked by modern highways, the advent of radio and television, the age of cybernetics, the development of a body of scientists so vast that there are more scientists alive today than in the whole of man's past development. There has never been a better or more exciting time to live on this earth or in this country. I am excited for having lived during a period that has witnessed the greatest socio political, technical and scientific advances than in all the previous history of mankind combined. I am excited that this is a time of great social change for women, and with your help it could be a time of great social change for we Indian women - "the least members of your society".

Perhaps tomorrow the best of the free world will look upon the great mother "Canada" with respect and admiration for she will have responded to our cries, amended the Indian Act, created a Human Rights Commission that would affect we Indian women.

I have the utmost confidence that the great mother "Canada" with her new leadership will engender the leadership and afford the courage to effect these changes."

NOTE TO DELEGATES/OBSERVERS TO THE NAC ANNUAL MEETING.....

IF ANY OF YOU HAVE ASSESSMENT SHEETS STILL TO BE WRITTEN OR SENT IN - WE NEED THEM!

FRIENDS OF NAC

WE WANT FRIENDS OF NAC to be a large, vibrant, imaginative group of women from coast to coast, who believe in NAC and what it's doing -- and whose support - financial, moral, etc., will help us to act independently and forcefully in achieving NAC's aims.

Please send in ideas, names (and \$\$\$\$) to the NAC office, attention of Kay Macpherson, Chairperson, Friends of NAC Committee.

FROM THE REGIONS.....

SASKATCHEWAN ACTION COMMITTEE STATUS OF WOMEN has protested that "the legal system values property more than people". A Regina man got 8 months in prison for possession of stolen property - 6 months for sexually assaulting a feeble-minded 17 year old woman.....

NAC'S PRESENTATION ON MEDICARE to the HALL COMMISSION:

TUESDAY, APRIL 8th, 1980 - 1:30 p.m.
at the CHATEAU HALIFAX, HALIFAX, N.S.

S T R I K E S S E T T L E D

Bell Operators
Radio Shack, Barrie

Congratulations to the women who stuck it out and won!

Blue Cross - - - continues

STOP PRESS
RADIO SHACK NOW FIRING
UNION EXECUTIVES!
Toronto Star
April 8, 1980

C.R.I.A.W.

NAC Executive report of December 1979 mentioned the CRIAW Annual Meeting, attended by 2 NAC Executive members. They reported "CRLAW seems to be tending to group activity rather than research".

NAC received a letter from CRIAW's Executive Director, Marion Porter, taking issue with this assessment. She refers to the 40 papers presented at their Annual Meeting and we quote from her letter:

"As our name implies "The Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women", it never has been CRIAW's intention to be solely concerned with research. A major goal has been to make research on women's experience undertaken by academics accessible to women who are working to promote change within their communities."

We hope this sets the record straight - and thanks to Marion Porter for writing.

NB: The CRIAW Annual Meeting will be held
in Toronto Nov. 14-16, 1980

FOR ACTION

OTTAWA CITY - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES OFFICER

NAC delegates were told of the firing of the city's Equal Opportunities Officer, Helen Slater. The Annual Meeting passed a motion... "that NAC urge its members to boycott the position of Director - Equal Opportunities, City of Ottawa and that the Mayor of Ottawa be 'advised' of this decision".

The Citizen, Ottawa, Saturday, March 15, 1980, Page 7

HELEN SLATER FIRED! DO NOT APPLY FOR THIS JOB. *A tiger thrown to the wolves*

I was astonished to learn from your editorial (March 11) that I have been married these past 22 years to a tiger.

Helen Slater's concern to assure equal opportunities for women should not be deflected by unfounded speculation about her personal qualities. What is often true is that, when we men are faced with the inescapable logic of arguments against discrimination, we tend to react emotionally, maligning the messenger in an attempt to ignore the message.

In the end, deeds speak louder than words, and by its actions, city council must be judged, in this and many other matters.

Peter Slater
Ottawa

So city hall has done it again. Let one person try to make sense out of the bureaucracy and what happens? She has to go.

Helen Slater has been thrown to the wolves because she was too outspoken in trying to get some kind of affirmative action program going in the male-dominated hierarchy, a program that would do other than use women as a token gesture for glib, liberal politicians.

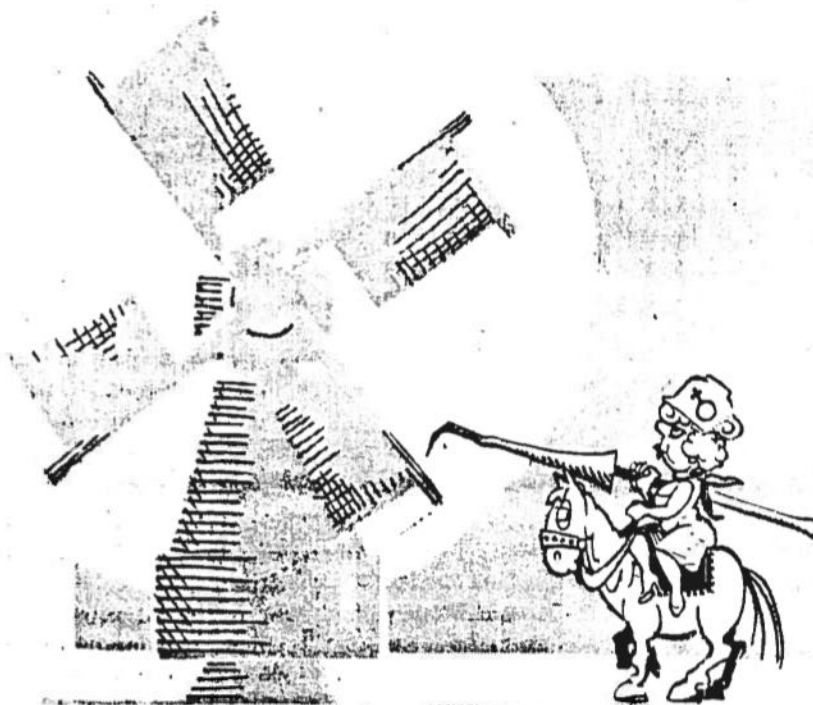
These politicians, including the mayor herself, should take a second look at this erroneous judgment and compliment rather than fire one of the few public servants around who is giving some solid realistic advice.

Louise Leclair
Ottawa

It is interesting that the director of a program to provide equal opportunities for women at city hall was dismissed by a council of which the majority are men.

Helen Sallmen
Ottawa

We are writing to express our shock and anger at the recent firing of Helen Slater, Ottawa equal opportunities for women co-ordinator.



RUSINS the Citizen

We are angered that a woman of Ms. Slater's exceptional calibre and demonstrated commitment to women's equality has been treated in such a shabby manner.

We demand that Ottawa city council institute a public inquiry to make clear the reasons for Ms. Slater's unprincipled dismissal. And we challenge city council to explain to Ottawa women why we should trust our elected representatives' promises of commitment to women in the face of their arrogant treatment of Helen Slater.

Esther Shannon
for *UpStream*
A Canadian Women's Publication
Ottawa

City equal opportunities director Helen Slater was dismissed for being "ineffective" by a city council which had previously rejected the principle of equal pay for work of equal value anyway (March 3).

Given council's attitude, it seems highly unlikely they would have fired someone for failure to implement principles to which they are apparently opposed.

One can only suspect that Slater, far from being "ineffective," was giving city hall the shaking it has long deserved.

Slater has been in limbo from the start. Her mandate, always left vague, has been altered whenever she tried to act; council has opposed almost every proposal for change she has made; and city hall management, sensing her lack of council support, has stonewalled every inch of the way.

Despite all this, she has been successful at least in bringing (usually unwelcome) attention to discriminatory city hall employment practices. Her firing merely illustrates the size of the problem she so capably exposed.

John Baglow
Ottawa

from NEW DIRECTIONS FOR WOMEN - march/april 1980 CALENDAR

July 14-18, 21-24. **MID-DECADE FORUM**, international public meeting concurrent with 1980 World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women. Amager University, Copenhagen, Denmark. For information, send self-addressed stamped business-size envelope to Mid-Decade Forum, Room 574, 600 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10022.

Aug. 24-Sept. 7. **GREECE THROUGH NEW EYES**. To be organized by The Women's Union of Greece. Athens, Cape Sounion, Isle of Hydra, Delphi, villages of Northern Greece, etc. Seminars by prominent Greek women; craft demonstrations. \$574 plus airfare; \$287 deposit by May 30. For brochure, write The Women's Union of Greece, 34 Panepistimiou St., Athens 143, Greece; telephone 360-2692.

July 14-30. **THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF WOMEN ARTISTS** will be held in Copenhagen, Denmark, coinciding with the World Conference of the UN Decade for Women. For further information, write Susan Schwalb, Project Director, 233 East 21 St., New York, NY 10010.

Come to New Haven ... and see the world !

"You will if you visit New Haven from August 19-23 and participate in WILPF's 21st Triennial Congress. While voting delegates are limited to 10 from each of our national WILPF Sections, all members of WILPF (as well as nonmembers) are entitled to come and participate in all sessions, all discussions, all workshops and parties, and all the excitement of meeting with our Asian, African, European and Latin American sisters."

Lucille Mair of Jamaica will be the keynote speaker. Ms Mair is the Secretary-General of the World Conference of the UN Decade for Women. A distinguished international panel of speakers will also participate.

Place: Quinnipiac College, Hamden, Connecticut

Fee: \$135. for 5 days - 6 nights (for room, board, everything!) Child care provided. Booking forms - further information, available from:

Women's International League for Peace & Freedom, 1213 Race St. Philadelphia, Pa. 19107, U.S.A.

REQUEST FOR BRIEFS.....

The Strategic Planning Committee, an advisory group to the Commissioner of Corrections, is calling for briefs on "Factors Affecting the Long-Term Future of the Correctional Service of Canada". For further information call or write to the NAC office, or: Dr. J.A. Vantour, Chairman, Strategic Planning Committee, 340 Laurier Ave. West, Room 1037, Ottawa, Ont. K1A 0P9. (613) 995-1383. Deadline for submission: May 31st, 1980.

DEMONSTRATIONS, RALLIES, AND CELEBRATIONS OF ALL KINDS TOOK PLACE ACROSS THE COUNTRY TO MARK MARCH 8TH, INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY...

TORONTO, MARCH 8, 1980
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY MARCH



photo by Moira Armour

RESOLUTIONS FROM WORKSHOPS
ANNUAL MEETING, MARCH 1980

A. CHILD CARE

1. BE IT RESOLVED that NAC pressure governments to institute a Canada Child Care Act; to ensure the adequate funding of a system of non-profit, affordable, accessible, non-compulsory, high quality child care facilities responsive to the varied values and needs of parents and children across Canada. (Workshop #1)
2. BE IT RESOLVED that NAC reaffirm its previous positions on child care and that NAC launch a strong Canada wide campaign for free and adequate child care services. (Workshop #3)
3. BE IT RESOLVED that all provincial work incentives programs aimed at encouraging women and other family benefits recipients to enter the paid labour force, include provisions for the extension of part, full-time and extended child-care services, for both school-age and pre-school children, to allow mothers to take positions on a part, full-time or shift work basis. (Workshop #4)

B. HEALTH AND WELFARE

1. * BE IT RESOLVED that NAC request that the Health and Welfare Canada Conference on Social Policies in the 80's include the following topics: child care, a Canada Child Care Act, genetic counselling, reproductive freedom, and the choice of method of child birth; and that delegates from NAC be invited to attend. (Workshop #1)

* This resolution was based on inaccurate information. "Social Policies for the 80's" is being organized by the Canadian Council on Social Development and its agenda includes the subjects of concern.
2. BE IT RESOLVED that NAC urge the government of Canada to endorse publicly the 1979 Khartoum Resolutions whereby African women asked countries to support their efforts to deal with the human rights/health care issue of genital mutilation of females. (Workshop #1)
3. BE IT RESOLVED that NAC and its members urge the federal and provincial governments respectively to:
 - a) stop the cut-backs in health and social services and allocate funds for improving these services and for preventive services in health education and mental health;
 - b) provide extra services for our Native peoples in order to reduce the scandalous infant mortality rates of Northern Canada and improve the housing and health conditions. (Workshop #4)

C. EMPLOYMENT

1. RESOLVED that NAC oppose all strategies and policies which coerce women back into the home and into job ghettos and in particular, that NAC call upon the government to immediately remove existing provisions in the U.I. Act which prohibit fisher women with their spouses from claiming U.I. benefits in their own right and that this applies to other women working with their spouses. (Workshop #4)
2. RESOLVED that information be sent to the mayors in NAC's members' communities on "affirmative action", "equal opportunities", "equal pay for work of equal value"; that the mayors be asked for a status report on the implementation of these programs and policies in their communities; and that as a matter of urgency, this action be taken first with the cities of Vancouver and Ottawa. (Workshop #4)
3. That all special qualifying conditions for maternity benefits under the Unemployment Insurance Act including sections 46 and 30 (1) be rescinded; furthermore, that section 30 (2) be rescinded so that maternity benefits would be available at any point in a claim. (Workshop #4)
4. RESOLVED that protection from garnishment of federal public servants' salaries be ended forthwith, for the purpose of enforcement of maintenance orders. (Workshop #5)

C. EMPLOYMENT - continued -

5. BE IT RESOLVED that

- a) Women's Outreach counselling centres, sponsored by Employment and Immigration Canada receive priority in terms of funding and expansion of all services required in the effort to assist women who were homemakers, to integrate into Canadian society;
- b) funding cut-backs end;
- c) funding be increased in recognition of the vital assistance provided by these centres to those re-entering the labour force and especially after marriage breakdown. (Workshop #5)

6. RESOLVED that NAC press the federal government:

- a) as employer to lead the way by strengthening the maternity leave provisions for women in the federal public service, and
- b) to press the government as policy maker to strengthen the existing voluntary contracts program to a mandatory one with effective contract compliance enforcement measures. (Workshop #4)

7. RESOLVED that NAC, during the coming year strike a committee to investigate the occupational health and safety needs of women; that NAC support women's right to a workplace that is free from hazards to themselves or their future children; that NAC oppose the exclusion of women from any job or occupation on the grounds that it is hazardous to reproduction; and that NAC support the principle that where it is temporarily not feasible for a woman who intends to bear children to be assured a safe work environment, she be guaranteed the right to be transferred to a safe job without loss of pay, seniority, or benefits. (Workshop #4)

8. RESOLVED

- a) that Unemployment Insurance continue to be based on individual, rather than family, attachment to the labour force;
- b) that the repeater and re-entrant - new-entrant provisions, introduced in 1978 amendments be rescinded;
- c) that all part-time workers be covered under the Unemployment Insurance scheme;
- d) that the reduction in benefit rate, introduced January 1, 1979, be rescinded; that benefit rate be equal for all workers and not based on having/not having dependents;
- e) that there be no further cut-backs in government financing of U.I. programme. (Workshop #4)

9. RESOLVED

- a) that the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission cease to interpret the restrictive work permits of domestic workers as a bar to employment availability and therefore a bar to the collection of unemployment insurance benefits;
- b) that domestic servants who come to Canada on a work permit be awarded points toward attaining landed immigrant status for the time they have spent in Canada;
- c) that all domestic workers - whether they be on work permits or have other status - be extended the full protection and rights of all provincial labour standards including minimum wage provisions and human rights legislation;
- d) that the National Action Committee urge as an interim measure that the Minister of Employment and Immigration ensure that existing regulations requiring working conditions and wages "suitable to Canadians"* in contracts for domestics on work permits be fully implemented and consistently enforced across the country. (*wording approximate to legislation). (Workshop #3)

D. INDIAN RIGHTS FOR INDIAN WOMEN

1. BE IT RESOLVED that NAC pressure governments for the right of native Indian children to be nurtured in a native Indian home. Blood relatives should be eligible for financial support the same as other foster parents. (Workshop #1)
2. BE IT RESOLVED that NAC support Indian Rights for Indian Women's complaint to the United Nations on the lack of Indian rights, and reaffirm the three resolutions of 1979 concerning the rights of Indian women deleting the word "non-status" from the second of those resolutions and replace with "native". (Workshop #5)
3. BE IT RESOLVED that
 - a) the executive committee of NAC plan a strategy for a national concerted program in the interest of effecting the acceptance of Indian Rights for Indian Women;
 - b) consideration be given that such a day coincide with the date of the Recognition of Women as Persons in Canada, and that such action be started October 18th, 1980. (Workshop #5)

E. HUMAN RIGHTS

1. BE IT RESOLVED that NAC supports the elimination of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. We urge that NAC lobby for the inclusion of sexual orientation as a prohibited ground for discrimination in the federal Human Rights Code and that NAC member groups lobby for the inclusion of sexual orientation as a prohibited ground for discrimination in provincial Human Rights Codes where not yet included. (Workshop #2)
2. BE IT RESOLVED that all economic and social policies adopted by the government of Canada reflect the fact that only a small minority of Canadian families in 1980 consist of the traditional two-parent, one earner with dependent children model, and the vast majority live in other groupings commonly referred to as "alternative life styles", and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the federal and provincial Human Rights Codes be amended to prohibit discrimination on the basis of family and marital status and lifestyles. (Workshop #2)
3. BE IT RESOLVED that in awarding custody of child/children to a parent upon separation and/or divorce, that sexual orientation not be used as a criteria for such custody. (Workshop #5)
4. BE IT RESOLVED that provincial and federal Human Rights laws be amended to provide protection against sexual harassment on the job, and that NAC suggest to women in unions to propose to their respective unions a contract clause which would promote protection against sexual harassment, for example: a "No Discrimination" clause which could read: "there shall be no discrimination, interference, restriction or coercion exercised or practiced with respect to any member of the bargaining unit in any matter concerning the application of the provisions of this agreement by reason of race, creed, colour, age, sex, marital status, nationality, ancestry, place of origin, political or religious affiliations, sexual preference and whether or not he/she has children". (Workshop #

F. DOMESTIC LABOUR

1. BE IT RESOLVED that the Minister Responsible for Statistics Canada review the Labour Force Survey to ensure that discrimination be eliminated from questionnaires. Example: instead of asking "How many hours did you work last week?" (excluding work in the home) be replaced with "how many hours did you work for pay last week?". (Workshop #3)
2. That NAC oppose the concept of "family income" in the Income Tax Act and all other legislation because it treats the family as a single economic unit, thereby forcing women into the role of so-called "secondary workers" in the labour force, strengthening sex-stereotyped division of labour in the home and forcing women back into the home or into ghettoized jobs in the labour force. (Workshop #3)

F. DOMESTIC LABOUR - continued -

3. RESOLVED that NAC urge the federal government to provide universal pension coverage to homemakers, under the Canada Pension Plan by means of publicly funded premiums. (Workshop #3)

G. OTHER

1. BE IT RESOLVED that NAC pressure the government to pass legislation which will lower the prices on basic foodstuff. Such a law would be aimed specifically at large food processing and retailing businesses. NAC should also encourage member groups to support this issue.
2. RESOLVED that NAC urge the federal government to acknowledge the principle that priorities and allocation of funding for women's groups should be established by women's groups; and that the government establish a working committee of representatives of these groups to investigate and make recommendations on how to achieve this. (Workshop #4)
3. BE IT RESOLVED that NAC take into account the existence of 500,000 French-speaking women living outside the province of Quebec; that services pertaining to counselling, re-entry programs and interval houses take particular care to identify and serve this invisible population so that speaking English not be our only access to improving our situation. (Workshop #4)
4. BE IT RESOLVED that the NAC executive give priority in the coming year to devising a strong and creative lobby strategy. (Workshop #5)
5. BE IT RESOLVED that NAC lobby and encourage its member groups to lobby the provincial authorities regulating insurance companies and actuaries to require them to eliminate sex as a basis for calculating actuarial tables, but instead use one mortality table only for men and women in order that the premiums paid and the benefits payable to men and women earning equal salaries are equal. (Workshop #6)
6. BE IT RESOLVED that we reaffirm reproductive rights resolution previously endorsed by NAC for freedom of choice, and that NAC address this matter in its upcoming meeting with the Justice Minister. (Workshop #1)
7. BE IT RESOLVED that NAC strike a committee to formulate proposals to improve the housing situation for women in rental accommodation, credit for purchase, renovations, etc. (Workshop #6)
8. BE IT RESOLVED that
 - a) NAC lobby the federal government to increase the budget of the National Film Board and
 - b) that NAC urge the National Film Board to increase the budget of Studio D, Montreal, for the production of films promoting women's perspectives. (Workshop #2)
9. RESOLVED that NAC urge the federal government to act immediately to increase the budget of Women's Programs at Secretary of State to at least \$2 million annually. (Workshop #4)

NOTE: These resolutions will be included in the Summer issue of STATUS OF WOMEN NEWS.