

7/3 Setald.

3 May 1981. Meeting of strategies group. @ Grandview Co-op.

IWDC (Toronto) basis of unity passed out, along with a draft of the b/u of this group. Frances will have the minutes of 5 april 81 done for 24 may. (note 26 april meeting was cancelled). Nancy J has xeroxed articles and will bring to next meeting.

present. Maggie T., Bet, Marian, Helen, Susan C, Frances, Maureen, Linda G, Jackie.

Agenda: proposals on work on the 'rise of the right.' 45 mins
b/u 45 mins
name (briefly), other business 20 mins
try to end @ 10pm
Helen to chair, ~~minutes~~ - Frances.

HELEN Daphne and I met some months ago, Sara, Frances and I met. I have compiled the results. (Helen then read the attached proposal). My position is that as super-exploitation of the third world becomes more difficult, there is more and more super-exploitation in Canada, there is a shrinking imperialist market. Frances, Sara and I have position that it is important to put forward the positions of the women's movement in other groups and to deal with the problems of those positions as they arise. In the research section it is important to deal with the question of exploitation and superexploitation. (Helen here explained that there are two positions in this debate, one which says that Canadian workers profit from the super-exploitation of the third world worker; and the other which says that the Canadian workers' lifestyle does not depend on the super-exploitation of those in 3rd world, but is reflective of the productive forces within Canada).

FRANCES then described how the Lesbians Organizing Against the Right workshop would be put together. (I don't have my notes anymore, but the workshop had an introductory section on the importance of lesbian's understanding the political and economic crisis, and the perspectives of lesbians on that crisis; there was a description of the ways in which the right is organizing in canada now, and the complicity of the state; and a description of the organizing that has been done in opposition to the right, in both the us and canada.)

-we then proceeded to discuss the proposal Helen had presented.

JACKIE- I question the carrot/stick metaphor. Rise of the right can't be attributed directly to bourgeois action/choice, but groups tied into disintegration of social fabric and people's increasing fear. On the 3rd world ~~think~~ and shrinking imperialist market, could be an important meeting to have to present positions. I'm not sure market is shrinking. Capitalist crisis is endemic to system itself, the crisis in the auto ~~industry~~ is not the product of shrinking overseas market, but of overproduction. On the proposals, I want to hear what it's like in BCOFR. I agree with the stuff on research. Initiatives would have to relate through the CCCA to the hospital board question (fw, i think this means that if we took initiative on certain questions we'd have to work through already existing groups.) About the women from T.O. We should get information from them and in detail; get someone from BCOFR, too. Discuss whether or not there should be a mixed or women's only meeting (referring to the public meeting).

LINDA G. We have to see the rise of the right in relation to the economy. It is important to include in the analysis 1) the development of micro-chip technology, important because of the effect on women. & 2) nuclear war. (the left and women's movement in England are convinced that will happen in Europe in the next 2 years). ((Linda then described the internal workings of BCOFR, the notes for which are in the possession of the minute-taker)).

SSSAN C. CCCA is having a public meeting next week to pull together those

working on pro-choice. We have to include the questions of the ideology of the right, and understanding what they're doing. What began as an anti-soviet ideology is now anti-communist. Should be challenged. We can look to what's being done in the states, closer to fighting the right than we are, also in europe.

HELEN, re the BCOFR, I agree with a lot of what Linda said. There is a real problem with democracy in the organization. There's an idea that all the problems are solved and now people will just go out in the world. Reverse racism. Distrust of people. Friend told me that people go snaky when i talk, they don't listen. At last membership meeting i was most vocal about pushing democracy committee ('helen's committee'), they see me as representing all that threatens them. On the other hand, it is the only mass organization in this work presently. there are good people involved. If women get involved we could have some effect in organization. If we remain a few individuals we could be scapegoated.

All we pushed for passed. So there is a 'guarded' openness to our point of view. Issues; ~~democracy~~ democracy in organization, extending from racism equals violence in the street - to other attacks.

MAGGIE 1) I have concern about going back to links between this group and the BCOFR. Not clear how to go from building this group to working in other organizations. 2) Like the idea of public meeting along the lines of one in T.O., useful because generally raised the issue for people. With a goal like that in mind would be possible to discuss and build analysis.

HELEN, in response - My position, at this point we should encourage women to go and do the work and to discuss what's happening here. We don't have experience to tackle the questions, we need experience to see what the problems are. We need people out there to see that others doing work now aren't being scapegoated.

SUSAN C. Are you going to encourage people in Lesbian Conference to join BCOFR.

HELEN & FRANCES ??? we don't know.

MAUREEN. I don't feel motivated to join you in BCOFR. Would opt for building coalition which would include BCOFR, instead of transforming it.

We should try to build our own group, not deplete our energies into BCOFR. There's the Klan, but there's also Renaissance and anti-abortionists. To build a coalition -- We should build our work around attacks on women. A meeting which brought together all working against the right would be a step to building a coalition.

FRANCES I am of two minds on this. 1) It is important to remember that the proposal is not to have the whole group joining BCOFR. Not necessary to transform it, but to raise issues around racism and particularly against the east indians. We can work in the trade unions in the same way. This group could do it successfully. 2) Also would be to organize a meeting to build a coalition, but I don't know enough yet. We need to get our feet wet before we try to build a meeting or a coalition. Don't have enough practical experience yet.

JACKIE I want to be able to build this group, that's why I'm here. To build a feminist socialist group which wants to be active. Agree with the 2 areas of work, the group would both build activities and also be a support to women working in the areas. We have to do both. The group will get smaller unless we start building something. So agree with Maureen about discouraging-ness of BCOFR. Important for feminists to be in BCOFR. Our joining wouldn't change it. We're white. East Indian women should be there. Women should be doing the work to make the connections between women and racism. On the public meeting, information meeting which looks at the rise of the right, the links between racism, the attacks on women, lesbians and gay men. Get someone from BCOFR, us and somewhere else to begin the discussion. Important to form a small women's caucus in BCOFR.

LINDA G. Feminists should participate in BCOFR not just for BCORF but for the women's movement. The women's movement in Vancouver is overwhelmingly white. Numbers of non-white women are not increasing. BCOFR includes lots of non-feminists or non-lefties. Meeting on rise of the right will draw out the usual crowd. So also important to work where consciousness is low. Fight against racism should be constructed as a coalition, BCOFR not a coalition. BCOFR brings people out who we don't ever reach, people who wouldn't hear otherwise. Role of women here would be to draw women into BCOFR. No one but feminists have stood up and spoken about democracy. Women's caucas could be dangerous. White women would participate, would head east ~~xxxxxx~~ indian women ~~wx~~ or run the danger of serious isolation. Approach other women's groups and get the to send women along.

JACKIE What's there to prevent formation of a women's committee to bring more women in, instead of a caucas?

LINDA I want to push BCOFR to holding a one-day conferenee ~~x~~ on related issues. Could be a way to broaden themselves.

MARION - don't~~thx~~ think the purpose of this group is to join BCOFR. Our fight is to fight the right. How to get women to join BCOFR is a problem. An open meeting to draw women in the women's movement should be our primary goal. ~~xxxxxxx~~ otherwise the tensions in the women's movement will be reproduced. It is important to look at the level of consciousness, all women in BCOFR are not socialist-feminists. All feminists in the group will not join us. Whole question has to be - how do we work in mass organizations. ~~wx~~ I see such a meeting happening in late November. Relationship of us to women in BCOFR, should provide forum for debate and discussion, don't see us as a group intervening in the organization. Have to realize BCOFR not only organization fighting against the right, CCCA, some unions, some sections of the immigrant community. If we only talk about BCOFR we ~~xxxx~~ make the same mistake they do. As far as bringing in east indian women - there's culture and language. We have to look at what kind of women participate, young, single, no children. See in terms of whole womens' movement, not just east indian women.

SUSAN C another reason to have a public meeting is g to guage support and interest there is. ~~k~~Don't think it would be just the women's movement. A way to give a feminist analysis, i want a public meeting sooner rather than later.

MAUREEN. In responce to linda. Most compelling ~~xxx~~ is the opportunity to speak to non-white, not-left people. Both of you said those people were limited in #. Always I come from the point of view of building the women's movement, not the BCOFR. Re public meeting; note of caution, T.O.'s experience is radically different since the attack on baths, and organizing around Albert Johnson murder. Plus, ~~xxx~~ none of us know a great deal about how the klan or other groups are organized. We shouldn't count too haavily on other knowing much more than we do.

HELEN as a point of information, frances and sara and i will know a fair amount about the organization of the right by the time of the lesbian conference. It's 9:20 pm. There are two major questions under discussion 1) our role in BCOFR, and 2) a public meeting.

JACKIE propose no concrete decisions; next meeting is the weekend after ~~xx~~ the lesbian conference. Things will be clearer.

MARION first thing on agenda next meeting to be a discussion and a vote on the question of a public meeting.

Here my notes and the discussion break down a little bit. It was agreed that an assessment of the discussion at the Lesbian conference would be presented, and a summary of the minutes here, with specific reference to the BCOFR. We were asked to think about what a public meeting would look like or why not to have one.

MARION pub forward the name BREAD AND ROSES for consideration.

Other business: Marion will get room for 24 May meeting at Britannia. Maggie will get Nancy to arrange to get phone tree to work for next meeting.

JACKIE will prepare report for trade union work.

MARION suggests putting that off to 31 may meeting (for which she will also book space at Brittania).

JACKIE needs list of women in tu's who have been coming to meetings so can do some advance work. Also asked what we will do about new women.

MARION suggested 10 minutes on the history of the group.

(these are notes of the discussion at this meeting. I have tried to present the sense of women's remarks. Direct quotations are indicated by " ". If there are disagreements or additions please let me know.)

3 May 81

Proposal for doing ~~workxxxxxx~~ feminist work around the rise of the right:

We're assuming that we're agreed that the right is on the rise and this has serious implications for women and working people. The right is rising because capitalism is in crisis both in Canada and the rest of the world. The bourgeoisie can no longer afford to quiet people with the carrot so they are hauling out the old stick. And they are attempting to use this stick against minorities; against women, lesbians, gays, immigrants in an attempt to divide those groups most effected by the crisis while stirring up a furor against these groups rather than the state itself. This is a complicated process which we have to analyze. Scapegoating.

At any rate, we're facing a situation where there's drastic cut backs in social services, abortions are extremely hard to get, racism is more overt and on the rise, the rights or trade unions are under attack, violence against women, against lesbians, against gay men has all increased. And all this in a situation where the Canadian state has retained its police state powers, the War Measures Act.

There are many women within the women's movement and not who want to work against this right wing onslaught and are uncertain about how. The B.C.O.F.R. is the only group providing overall leadership and it is unclear at this point the extent of democracy and openness to women's issues in that group. More experience is necessary in working with them. Other groups are taking initiatives around their own specific concerns.

As a group of anti-capitalist, anti-imperialist feminists we should take leadership in taking up the following work:

1) Work in existing organizations. This includes the BCOFR, immigrant groups, CCCA. Put forward ~~xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx~~ the position of women, try to draw the links between various struggles. Only more experience in these organizations can give us an understanding of how to work there.

2) Do research:

- i. why is the right on the rise (economic/pol. trends)
- ii. what specifically is the right doing? What campaigns are they involved in. What are the links between their various organizations. How are they organized financially and politically.
- iii. The state. What repressive measures can they invoke. What forms of protections do we have or not have. (e.g. no ~~xxxxxx~~ legal protection vs. discrimination based on sexual preference)
- iv.

3) Take our own initiatives to draw women in, collect their information.

- Lesbian conference
- possible public meeting around hospital board elections.
- ~~Rise of the right to life to + ...~~

*organize mtg

N.B. The reproductive rights movement in the States is a group of groups organized across the country to draw the links between

the attacks vs. women and fight back.

Read, Read

DRAFT OF A BASIS OF UNITY STATEMENT

Note: This statement would be intended for internal use only. It would not be used on leaflets that would be handed out to a larger audience.

Our Goal

We stand for the complete economic, social, sexual political, psychological and cultural liberation of women. We stand opposed to the oppression of women in all its manifestations.

Our Enemy

We see our oppression coming from the dual but mutually reinforcing systems of capitalism and patriarchy. The system of patriarchy is rooted in the sexual division of labour and in the patriarchal family of class society. These structures together with male privilege and patriarchal attitudes have been incorporated into capitalism forming a particular oppression for women. Under capitalism, our labour, and our sexuality is privatized within the domestic sphere. In the paid labour force, our labour functions either in job ghettos or as a reserve army of labour. Because these two systems of patriarchy and capitalism reinforce and legitimize each other there is within our society both a class based and gender based oppression and working class women have a double oppression. Thus the liberation of women in the long run must involve not only an attack on patriarchal ideas but also profound and radical changes in the very structure of our society.

Our Goal

In order to end the oppression of women we seek to build a genuinely democratic, socialist and feminist society. Such a society would be organized to meet the need of the vast majority of people rather than to create profits for the few. Such a society would put an end to the domestic servitude of women and a sexual division of labour. As women we would have economic independence, control of our bodies and of our sexuality.

The only effective way to defend what limited gains we have made in the last decade and to advance our goals is to rely on our own mass mobilization rather than upon governmental lobbying. To advance our goals in the present and to build a new society over the long run, we need to build a strong autonomous women's movement. We also want to ally ourselves with all those who challenge the economic, social and governmental forces which promote our oppression. We see the trade union movement, movements against the right, racism, anti-imperialist

→ movements and the gay and lesbian liberation movements as important allies and potential forces for the liberation of women

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INDC BASIS OF UNITY STATEMENT *Part 4*

Our Goal

The International Women's Day Committee stands for the complete social, political, economic, sexual, psychological and cultural liberation of women. We stand opposed to the oppression of women in all its manifestations.

Our Enemy

We find the oppression of women rooted in the patriarchal capitalist system. Our oppression is determined by the mutual interdependence of the capitalist relations of production and the relations of patriarchal domination, particularly the institution of the family and the sexual division of labour. Male privilege and patriarchal ideas have been incorporated into the structure of capitalism and act to support it and legitimize its practices. Thus, the liberation of women in the long run must involve not only an attack on these ideas, but also profound and radical changes in the very structure of our society.

Furthermore, we cannot see the Canadian government as a neutral bystander in our struggle. Government structures at all levels are component parts of the capitalist system charged with the task of defending and maintaining this system and the values and practices that are central to it. Government must be seen as part of the problem - not part of the solution.

Can. Sta.

Our Task

It is clear from this that we have little to gain by lobbying the government. Rather, we must put our energies into building mass actions and a mass, united movement of women which can begin to challenge the system in a more direct and serious way. We will need allies for this battle. Our primary allies are to be found in the various groups which presently form the women's movement. We also want to work with all those who challenge the economic, social and governmental forces which promote our oppression. In particular, the trade union movement can become an important and powerful force for the liberation of women.

autonomous

movement...