

NAC CAMPAIGN PROPOSALS

STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE: PART II

NATIONAL
ACTION
COMMITTEE
ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

*20th ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE
and
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING*

FRIDAY, JUNE 5, to SUNDAY, JUNE 7th, 1992
Carleton University, Ottawa

NAC CAMPAIGN PROPOSALS

The Executive is proposing three campaigns to focus the work of NAC over the coming year. Most of NAC's resources at the national and regional level will be devoted to carrying out these campaigns. The campaigns represent our major themes for this year - our primary areas of work. At different times during the year they will include high-energy, country-wide action plans.

At the AGM delegates will break into workshops to discuss the feasibility of the campaigns, and to strategize based on the realities of various regions and constituencies.

The Executive proposes that the Women's Agenda developed by last year's 52% Solution Campaign provide a framework for all of our work this year, and in particular, that it be the basis of policy used during the Women's Agenda campaign. The Women's Agenda will be adopted at the 1992 Annual General Meeting.

THE WOMEN'S AGENDA CAMPAIGN

PURPOSE: To ensure that women's issues are strongly raised in upcoming constitutional discussions or in a referendum. To ensure that NAC is prepared for the next federal election, to publicize the positions of the various political parties on women's concerns, and to oppose those parties and candidates that promote a neo-Conservative agenda.

MOTIVATION: It is critical that women participate in the historic federal political events this year that could i) re-shape our governments and possibly our electoral process and ii) re-shape the social and economic direction of the country. Public debate on the Constitution will continue into the fall of 1992. It is possible that a federal referendum on the constitution will be called in that period. A federal election will be called before the fall of 1993, and may be focused on national unity.

ACTIVITIES:

1. Participate in Constitutional Process

NAC will ensure the maximum participation of women in the constitutional process by organizing and lobbying for issues of concern to women and putting forward our constitutional perspective, with particular emphasis on support for self-determination for Quebec and aboriginal peoples.

NAC will work with interested member groups and our coalition partners in developing an alternative constitutional perspective, participation in local consultation or debate, and developing action plans.

The campaign committee will initiate country-wide education and/or action campaigns as the process develops, particularly in the event of a federal referendum.

2. Develop Plan for the Federal Election

The committee will develop an election preparation plan that includes identification of key issues, fundraising and budget, and the involvement of members and Friends of NAC groups. This plan will go into effect when the election is called.

RESOURCES: The Women's Agenda Campaign will become fully active during a referendum or federal election. During the public campaigns leading up to both of these events, all of NAC's financial, volunteer, membership and staff resources will be drawn upon. Planning and fundraising will start immediately, and carry on all year. Special funding will be sought for both events. If fundraising makes it possible, a field worker should be hired to assist with advance organizing, and then with the full campaign.

THE FUTURE OF WOMEN'S WORK CAMPAIGN

PURPOSE: To involve women across Canada in identifying the effects of the changing economy on women's lives and to develop political strategies to change the present conditions.

MOTIVATION: The economic restructuring policies that have followed in the aftermath of the signing of the Free Trade Agreement between Canada and the United States, and that are part of a global economic restructuring, have plunged Canadian women into the most serious economic and social problems that we have faced in the last forty years. Women's work outside of the home is becoming alarmingly more precarious with the increase in part-time labour, contract work, low-paying jobs in the service sector, and homeworking. Changes in the health care and social services sector are putting more expectations on women as unpaid care givers for the elderly and chronically ill. Women are losing in the struggle to gain wage parity with men as well as in the support services needed whether women work inside or outside of the home.

There is a need to bring these experiences together in order for women to develop new strategies for economic equality and to strengthen the political voice of women in bringing change to federal economic and social policies.

ACTIVITIES

1. Involve more interested groups

The national and local committees will identify new local/regional groups interested in undertaking the campaign. They will also provide support and help develop resources for these groups as they undertake participatory research. Work will continue on the resource/research kit that is an essential part of the participatory research. From **June to September** fundraising efforts will continue on both the regional and national level.

2. Develop analysis and strategize for federal election

From **September to December** the national and local committees will begin public meetings as part of the participatory research. These will take place in British Columbia, Northern Manitoba, Ontario, and Newfoundland and Labrador. A Conference on Homeworking will take place in Toronto in **November**.

The national committee will meet to assess the project and refine strategies in **October** in Flin Flon. In **March 1993** a national meeting of a sample of participants and partners in the participatory research will be held to bring the analysis and strategizing together.

3. Connect with women in other countries

The committee will encourage links, especially with women in Mexico, to broaden the analysis, education, networking and action on the impact of free trade and global restructuring on Canadian women. The Vancouver committee will sponsor a visit by a trade unionist from Mexico in **June**.

RESOURCES: Partial funding for the maintenance of the national committee is needed from the NAC budget. Staff time for the national coordination is being donated by the Ecumenical Coalition for Economic Justice. The local/regional groups are undertaking provincial fundraising. Fundraising on the national level must also be undertaken to support the regional efforts and the work of the national committee.

UNITED AGAINST MALE VIOLENCE

PURPOSE: To fight for the elimination of male violence against women and children. To ensure the leadership of the women's movement in the fight against male violence.

MOTIVATION: Over the last two years there has been an explosion of public and government awareness of the epidemic proportions of male violence against women and children. The government has declared December 6 as a Day of Commemoration and Action Against Violence Against Women, proposed a strong new rape law, set up a panel on violence against women and freed up money for funding projects.

All of these are a measure of the success of NAC's campaign and the work of thousands of feminists at the grass roots and national level. The danger is that all efforts will be devoted to band-aid solutions, not solutions that deal with the causes of male violence. We are further concerned that the front line workers who have waged the battle against male violence for twenty years will be marginalized in the process and that solutions proposed will not address the needs of doubly oppressed women.

STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES: We recognize that we live in a patriarchal society which is misogynist, and we recognize that racism, classism, sexism, heterosexism, ableism, ageism and other forms of oppression are violence contributing to emotional, physical, psychological and sexual abuse of women.

ACTIVITIES:**1. Legal Reform**

NAC will continue to work with the national women's coalition to press for amendments to strengthen the rape bill. We will further organize a campaign in coalition with other groups to press for federal and provincial judicial reform with the following elements:

- a) Mandatory judicial education with content approved by the Canadian Association of Rape Crisis Centres, the National Association of Transition Houses, LEAF, NAWL, NOIVM, NWAC, Congress of Black Women, Fédération nationale des femmes canadiennes-françaises, Elizabeth Fry Society and NAC.
- b) Mandatory affirmative action to place more women and minorities on the bench.
- c) Reform of the judicial councils (which approve appointment of judges and discipline judges): to be composed of a majority of lay people, 52% women and representative of the community they serve, to implement progressive discipline, and to develop a more public process.
- d) Public process and criteria for selecting judges.

2. Feminist Strategy Towards Zero Violence

NAC, in conjunction with other national women's organizations, will seek funding for further roundtables on male violence using the model of the April 1992 roundtable. NAC will actively intervene to ensure that the recommendations developed by the Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women, or whatever follows it, reflects the strategies developed by the women's movement. Through consultations, the NAC campaign committee will lay the basis for a campaign to seek funding for services to survivors of child sexual abuse and incest.

In all our anti-violence work NAC will continue to work in coalition and consultation with the groups named above, integrating the Statement of Principles into all of our work. NAC will lobby for funding for national organizations of rape crisis centres, transition houses and women's centres.

RESOURCES: Activities will be partially funded from the NAC budget. The committee will apply for both federal and provincial grants for parts of the campaign. Staff, committee and executive resources will be needed particularly around the judicial reform campaign and the policy development roundtable.