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*From the desk of Doris Anderson*

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Dear friend,

- **Do you and I want women to continue working for sub-minimum wages under sub-standard working conditions?**
- **Are we prepared to accept the social and economic inequality that still exists and is growing for women in this country?**

As a President of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women in the 1980's, I know about many of the gains that women have fought for and won in this country. But I also know how precarious some of these victories are, and just how far we have to go to achieve real equality for women in Canada.

**That's why I think the role of NAC today is more important than ever.**

Don't be fooled by media attacks and critics who say that the fight for women's rights has been won, and that NAC is no longer needed.

I can tell you, after having been involved in the women's movement for over 30 years, that NAC has never been stronger, more focused — and more needed — than it is today. That's why I urge you to join me in marking "Yes" on your Ballot for Women's Equality and sending a generous donation to NAC today.

Without NAC and the women's movement doing everything in its power to fight this backlash, we really could be sent back to an era when women were expected to get less pay, fewer promotions, put up with sexual innuendos and harassment, and to do it all with smiles on our faces.

Since 1950 women have won many rights. It is alarming to contemplate, but nevertheless true, that all these rights you and I thought we'd won for good are now up for grabs again.

Look how quickly Mike Harris, Ontario's new Premier, has slashed welfare payments to single mothers, eroded laws ensuring that women and men are paid equally for work of equal value, and moved to cancel child care spaces.

In Alberta, it's the same story. And across Canada even the Liberals, who used to be counted on to support women's programs, are now putting forward social service cuts that will hurt women and children, the sick, the poor and the most vulnerable.

I know that, like me, you are not prepared to see the rights we fought for — along with our mothers and grandmothers — ripped away from us.

That's why I urge you to give your support to the National Action Committee on the Status of Women.

*please turn over...*



Since the National Action Committee on the Status of Women was founded 23 years ago, it has become one of the most powerful and effective women's organizations in the country.

Now, with its 600 member organizations behind it, NAC is leading the fight to stop the dismantling of social programs that women and children rely on.

Over the next six months, NAC will battle valiantly to stop the social program cuts that will cause the underfunding and closing down of child care facilities, houses for battered women, and rape crisis centres. NAC will battle for our reproductive rights, and for every woman's right to equal pay, economic security, and a life free from poverty.

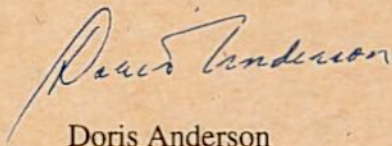
And while it is doing all this, NAC will go farther than ever before to fight for the rights of *all women* — minority women, disabled women, Native women, all those who are truly the poorest, most vulnerable, and most in need of advocacy for equality.

You can be part of this work by filling in the Ballot For Women's Equality, and by giving a donation of \$35, \$50, \$75 — whatever you can best afford — to help NAC fight for all of our rights.

**We need a public show of support for NAC and the work it is doing.** That's why filling in your ballot and sending it to us with your contribution is so important.

I know I feel immensely proud to be represented by NAC, and to be involved in their current work. I am deeply committed to the work of this organization, and I know you will feel the same way when you mark your ballot and send in your donation today.

Sincerely,



Doris Anderson



P.S. It's really shameful that a country like Canada that has prided itself on its compassion is now singling out the poor, the disabled, women, kids, and old people to suffer the loss of social services. Thank heavens for the crucial work of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women toward ending these injustices. So please, show your support for NAC by marking your ballot and by sending a contribution in today. Thank you.





# NATIONAL BALLOT FOR WOMEN'S EQUALITY

NATIONAL ACTION COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN (NAC)



September 18, 1995

Dear friend,

Some people say women have achieved everything we need.

They say you and I no longer need to raise our voices for social and economic justice, reproductive rights, child care, equal pay, or an end to poverty, discrimination, violence and harassment.

Women have it good, these critics say. It's time we stopped being so demanding.

For many of them, the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, Canada's largest women's group, is the main problem. Critics ranging from the Reform Party to REAL Women have accused NAC of being too forceful and too strident. Globe and Mail columnist Margaret Wente recently wrote, "We can only hope (NAC) will be put out of its misery soon."

But the story I'm hearing is a very different one.

Every day, women from many different backgrounds come up to me on the street or phone us at the office to say how glad they are that NAC is there to represent them. Especially now, when the government is making decisions that affect our lives so drastically.

But these women, like so many others, don't have access to the national media, they don't write columns in the Globe and Mail, and they don't have the ear of the Reform Party on Parliament Hill.

That's why I'm writing to you today. For too long, you and I have been listening to critics telling us the women's movement should stop fighting for equality.

**Well, now it's your turn to have a say.**

In the face of this anti-feminist backlash, NAC is circulating a NATIONAL BALLOT FOR WOMEN'S EQUALITY nationwide. Your ballot is enclosed.

The ballot asks what you think. Should NAC keep fighting for social and economic justice? Should we wage our fight nationally and internationally? Or should we do what our critics say - demand less and be content with what we get?

*please turn over...*

I hope you'll take a moment now, while you've got this ballot in front of you, to mark your response.

Your ballot, part of our new campaign for Social Justice and Equality, will be tabulated along with thousands of others. The results will be delivered to Prime Minister Jean Chrétien and Finance Minister Paul Martin, who are working right now to cut back the social programs that women need.

The results will also be delivered to Sheila Finestone, the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women, who over the next year is reviewing the financial support the government gives to all national women's organizations. We at NAC are gravely concerned that this review may lead to cutbacks to these organizations - including NAC itself - or even the wholesale dismantling of them.

So when you send us your ballot, please also enclose the most generous contribution you can to NAC.

**By voting now, you'll show whether you think the fight for women's equality is over -**

- At a time when the Liberals are preparing historically unprecedented cuts to Medicare, post-secondary education, welfare and unemployment insurance - cuts that will hurt women dreadfully...
- At a time when women are harassed and intimidated with violence in front of abortion clinics, pro-choice doctors are shot in their homes, and many women still don't have access to clinics because of lack of facilities...
- At a time when violence against women is rampant, when three women are killed every week by a male spouse or boyfriend...
- At a time when almost half of all single women over the age of 65 are poor, where 60% of single mothers are raising their children in poverty, and when women still earn less than men doing the same jobs...
- At a time when immigrants are forced to pay a racist head tax, lesbians are faced with a dramatic increase in homophobic violence, aboriginal women die years earlier than other women...

**We must wage a national campaign to fight back for women's reproductive and economic rights, and for equality and justice for all our sisters.**

*next page, please ...*



With the swing to power of the Klein government in Alberta and Mike Harris' election in Ontario, we no longer have to look south of the border to find governments passing laws which throw single mothers off welfare, repeal abortion rights and reverse employment equity legislation.

**The backlash is so powerful that even politicians and parties that once claimed to support women's rights are now changing their tune.**

The Liberal government, elected with promises of nationwide child care and many other commitments on policies affecting women, is now busy cutting the most basic social programs - programs that provide women with medical care, education, housing and a way to feed their children and themselves.

The government has also cut back funding for rape crisis centres and shelters for women who experience domestic abuse. And recently it completely dismantled the Canadian Advisory Committee on the Status of Women, the Crown committee set up to advise and monitor the impact of government policies on women.

**For all these reasons, your support is crucial.**

When you fill out your ballot, I hope you will also make a donation of \$35, \$50, \$75, or whatever you can afford to NAC.

Please also consider joining NAC's Action Fund, a group of people who've dedicated a small, monthly amount of \$10, \$15, or \$25 to fight for women's rights all year round. This gift can be made by sending us a cheque for your first month's amount, marked void, or by making an ongoing donation through your credit card.

But however you decide to contribute, you'll help us keep challenging the government at a time when Paul Martin's cutbacks pose the largest setback to women's economic and social equality in recent history.

And you will know that all of us at NAC deeply appreciate your generous support because **with our own funding cut back so much by the government, we rely on your support to succeed.**

As a progressive person, I know you believe in the women's movement, in its history and victories.

But as our grandmothers and mothers will tell us, the gains women have made aren't won once, for all time. They're won again and again every day, because groups like NAC are vigilant and keep insisting on defending them.

*please turn over...*

And just as feminists today are reviled by some media and politicians, so throughout history women have been ridiculed and told to "back off and accept what you've got."

But you and I know something they don't. Together we can move mountains. With your financial support I believe we can and will win again, that we will build on the victories of past generations and chart a new and exciting direction for feminism in the future.

So take up your pen when you're done reading this letter, send your contribution and mark your vote for women's equality, for NAC, and for a just and equal society for all.

Sincerely,

Sunera Thobani

Sunera Thobani

President



P. S. With cutbacks to social programs and women's organizations, you and I face the worst setback in recent history in the struggle for women's equality. But just as past generations fought hard and prevailed, we can win this battle too! By joining NAC and voting on the NATIONAL BALLOT FOR WOMEN'S EQUALITY, you and I will send a powerful message to government that we intend to keep raising our voices and fighting for all women's rights.





# NATIONAL BALLOT FOR WOMEN'S EQUALITY

## NATIONAL ACTION COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN (NAC)

Your ballot is part of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women's Campaign for Social Justice and Equality. All ballots will be delivered to Prime Minister Jean Chrétien and Finance Minister Paul Martin to show women are as determined as ever to fight for equality.

The results will also be delivered to Sheila Finestone, the Minister Responsible for the Status of Women, who over the next year is reviewing the support the government gives to all national women's organizations.

**Should NAC keep working for social justice and equality for women? (Mark your choice)**

**YES...**

I believe the role of NAC is more important than ever to fight for women's equality, reproductive rights, child care, equal pay, and freedom from violence, harassment, and racial and sexual discrimination.

**NO...**

I believe that the goals of the women's movement have been substantially achieved. Canada no longer needs the National Action Committee on the Status of Women.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Full Name (Please Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

Province \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

DO NOT DETACH (PLEASE RETURN TO NAC)

### YES! I'LL SUPPORT NAC!

I'll become a supporter of NAC and help Canada's national women's organization keep fighting for women's equality.

Enclosed is my contribution of:

\$35  \$50  \$60  \$75  \$100

\$150  \$200  Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\* by giving \$60 or more, you'll get a Barbara Klunder T-shirt.

I'll pay by cheque

**OR**

VISA  MasterCard

Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

### ACTION FUND

Action Fund members pledge an ongoing **monthly** amount to help NAC. I/We authorize NAC to draw on my chequing account the amount of:

\$10  \$15  \$20  \$30  Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I've enclosed my first month's cheque, marked "void", to start monthly deductions — **OR** —

I will make my monthly contributions through:

VISA  MasterCard

Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

I've joined the ACTION FUND or given \$60 or more. Please send me my Barbara Klunder T-shirt in \_\_\_\_ large, \_\_\_\_ extra large, \_\_\_\_ supersize (please check one).

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Nellie Langford Rowell  
Nellie Langford Rowell Library  
204 Founders College  
York University 4700 Keele St  
North York ON Q  
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