

NAC 244

NATIONAL ACTION COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN
 COMITÉ CANADIEN D'ACTION SUR LE STATUT DE LA FEMME
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May 24, 1989.

Dear Friends,

In the name of making Canada safe for entrepreneurship, the recent federal budget makes a frontal attack on virtually every fibre of our social and cultural life. Proposed legislation to restructure our Unemployment Insurance system, promises of regressive child care legislation and further erosion of funding for health, education and social service programming will threaten our quality of life. Combined with the impacts of privatization of significant portions of our communications and transportation networks, these action mean we will soon be able to starve to death in most parts of the country with even less public notice than we currently visit on much of the Third World.

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The Campaign

At its recent Annual General Meeting in Ottawa, delegates of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women voted overwhelmingly to take the initiative for maintaining the federal budget on the public agenda through a national mobilization campaign. In the week since members returned home, Transport 2000 and members of the Pro-Canada Network have joined in co-sponsoring the campaign. Other national groups who have endorsed and offered assistance in mobilizing their own networks include the Canadian Labour Congress and their transportation and communication affiliates, Rural Dignity, the National Anti-Poverty Organization, as well as advocacy and consumer groups affected directly and indirectly by the latest attempt to rearrange spending priorities to accommodate the "free trade" deal signed by our government at the beginning of the year.

We are enclosing copies of the statement **Breaking the Social Contract**, for your endorsement. As well, we encourage your participation in the national campaign from June 4th to June 12th. The broad plan is for local rallies and actions to centre on national VIA Rail trips from East and West (copy of the master schedule and samples of the local schedules are enclosed). The VIA passengers will converge on Ottawa to coincide with scheduled



actions of the Pro-Canada Network and the Assembly of First Nations on June 12th. The national schedule provides for an overnight stop in Sudbury Saturday, June 10th and in Toronto Sunday, June 11th before an early-morning departure for Ottawa Monday, June 12th. Local organizing meetings are being initiated through NAC regional representatives in each of those centres, with a view to coordinating actions throughout the respective regions.

The involvement opportunity

If you live outside the centres where train passengers will overnight, you can be a central player in organizing support actions to meet the national train and report on local impacts of the proposed budget on the particular consumer and advocacy groups you know the best. With the assistance of local member groups of NAC, of the Pro-Canada Network, and of Transport 2000, local labour councils and other advocacy and consumer groups, take on one or more of the following:

- * devise a creative and entertaining way to bring friends together in a town hall meeting or public forum where groups can inform each other on what this budget will mean for the community.

- * have one or more delegates with information on your rally travel (preferably by VIA) to be part of the greeting committee for the train at the next station or major event--and let them and your local media know about your plans well in advance.

- * meet the train and say hello to the passengers. Wish them well on their trip.

- * when the train arrives in your town and on June 12th, wear a green ribbon in solidarity with Canadians across the country who can't afford to live with this budget.

- * reproduce and distribute materials from the sponsoring groups at your local events; local unions and advocacy groups who do their own printing can generally help you to find the most effective and economical way to get this kind of work done.

- * endorse the campaign statement of objectives and let the government and campaign sponsors know about it.

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In addition, **if you live in or near a centre where train passengers will overnight**, see what you and your group can do to contribute in the following ways:

* assist in billeting passengers from the trains and getting them back to the train by the time they are scheduled to depart

* get involved in organizing local events --

spread the word to everyone in your network

join a local organizing committee

distribute and wear green ribbons

offer money, in kind contributions, or connections with groups who may have resources to increase our ability to reach all sectors of the community

call local affiliates of the sponsoring groups to see how you can help increase the visibility of the events in other ways

* if you are involved in another provincial or national coalition, work with them to join our campaign.

* Toronto organizing meetings are tentatively scheduled for this evening, Wednesday, May 24th, 7.00 p.m. and Thursday, June 1st, at 7.30 p.m. at the Community Room of the Charles Hastings Coop, 175 Elm Street (1 block west of University Avenue and north of Dundas Street).

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The success of this campaign, and the allied campaigns being undertaken by the Assembly of First Nations, the Labour Movement, Child Care and Environmental advocates will be measured by the size of the constituency we mobilize collectively and the length of time we can keep the federal budget on the public agenda. If we hope to have any impact over the next few years in securing pay equity and employment equity, and in defeating the proposed national sales tax, the work must begin now.

For further information or contacts in the women's movement in Southern Ontario call Janet Maher at 416-652-1459.

In sisterhood,



Janet Maher.

Encl.: Campaign Statement **Breaking the Social Contract**
National and Ontario Train Schedules

Regional Representatives:

Southern: Maureen Reilly, 601-103 Avenue Road, Toronto M5R 2G9
Phone: 416-922-4099 fax 416-921-9749

Northern: Andrea Levan, 232 Walford Road, Sudbury P3E 2H3
Phone 705-673-1730 (b) 522-1828 (r) fax 705-673-6519

NATIONAL VIA SCHEDULE, WITH ONTARIO BRANCH SERVICE

WESTERN LEG:

Sun. June 4	17.15	Vancouver Dep.	
	18.10	Port Coquitlam/New Westminster	
	19.12	Matsqui	
	19.40	Chilliwack	
	20.20	Hope	
	21.45	Boston Bar	
Mon. June 5	00.02	Ashcroft	
Mon. June 5	01.45	Kamloops Arr.	
Mon. June 5	02.05	Kamloops Dep.	
	03.50	Clearwater	
	06.05	Blue River	
	07.47	Valemount	
	10.50	Jasper Arr.	
	12.10	Jasper Dep.	
	13.21	Hinton	
	14.58	Edson	
	16.06	Evansburg	
Mon. June 5	17.35	Edmonton Arr	
Tue. June 6	17.55	Edmonton Dep.	
	19.30	Viking	
	20.27	Wainwright	
	21.48	Unity	
	22.53	Biggar	
Tue. June 6	23.45	Saskatoon Arr.	
Wed. June 7	23.59	Saskatoon Dep.	
Thu. June 8	01.15	Watrous	
	03.34	Melville Arr.	2 to overnight in
	03.54	Melville Dep.	Melville instead
	07.30	Rivers	of Saskatoon
	07.51	Brandon North	
	08.55	Portage-la-Prairie	
Thu. June 8	09.55	Winnipeg Arr.	
Fri. June 9	10.35	Winnipeg Dep.	
	11.45	Whitemouth	
	13.25	Kenora Arr.	
	13.35	Kenora Dep.	
	15.20	Dryden	
	16.40	Ignace	
	20.40	Thunder Bay Arr	
	21.00	Thunder Bay Dep.	
	22.20	Red Rock	
	22.30	Nipigon	

Sat. June 10	00.20	Schreiber
	00.30	Terrace Bay
	01.50	Marathon
	02.00	Heron Bay
	02.45	Mobert
	03.20	White River Arr.
	03.30	White River Dep.
	05.05	Missanabie
	07.05	Chapleau
	10.35	Cartier
Sat. June 10	11.30	Sudbury Arr.
Sun. June 11	11.50	Sudbury Dep.
	12.35	Rutter
	14.25	Parry Sound
	16.10	Washago
	16.25	Orillia
	16.54	Barrie (Base Borden)
	17.26	Newmarket
Sun. June 11	18.30	Toronto Arr.
Mon. June 12	07.25	Toronto Dep.
	07.41	Guildwood
	08.00	Oshawa
	09.05	Belleville
	09.40	Kingston Arr.
	09.55	Kingston Dep.
	10.41	Brockville
	11.10	Smiths Falls
Mon. June 12	11.57	Ottawa Arr.

EASTERN LEG:

Thu. June 8	08.22	Sydney Dep.
	08.50	North Sydney
3 each on	10.47	Port Hawkesbury
Ocean and	11.06	Havre Boucher
Atlantic	11.44	Antigonish
	12.46	New Glasgow
Thu. June 8	13.38	Truro Arr.
Thu. June 8	12.30	Halifax Dep.
	12.49	Windsor Jct.
Thu. June 8	13.57	Truro Arr.
Thu. June 8	14.07	Truro Dep.
	15.31	Springhill Jct.
	15.56	Amherst
	16.14	Sackville
Thu. June 8	17.15	Moncton Arr.

Fri. June 9	17.55	Moncton Dep. Ocean/Northern
	18.57	Rogersville
	19.29	Newcastle
	20.28	Bathurst
	21.49	Campbellton Arr.
	22.05	Campbellton Dep.
	21.29 ET	Matapedia Arr.
	22.00	Matapedia Dep.
	22.49	Causapscal
	23.11	Amqui
Fri. June 9	23.32	Sayabec
Sat. June 10	00.10	Mont-Joli Arr.
	00.30	Mont-Joli Dep.
	00.54	Rimouski
	01.53	Trois Pistoles
	02.32	Riviere Du Loup
	03.55	Montmagny
Sat. June 10	04.44	Levis Arr.
Sun. June 11	05.10	Levis Dep.
	05.35	Charny
	07.21	Drummondville
	08.11	St. Hyacinthe
	08.47	St. Lambert
Sun. June 11	09.05	Montreal Arr.
Fri. June 9	17.40	Moncton Dep. Atlantic/Southern
	18.37	Sussex
	19.30	Saint John Arr.
	19.50	Saint John Dep.
	20.47	Fredericton Jct. Arr.
	21.00	Fredericton Jct. Dep. Bus
Fri. June 9	22.05	Fredericton Downtown Arr.
Sat. June 10	19.15	Fredericton Downtown Dep.
	20.20	Fredericton Jct. Arr.
	20.47	Fredericton Jct. Dep.
	21.40	McAdam Arr.
	21.50	McAdam Dep.
Sun. June 11	03.25	Megantic
	05.42	Sherbrooke
	06.25	Richmond
Sun. June 11	08.10	Montreal Arr.
Mon. June 12	07.50	Montreal Dep.
	08.10	Dorval
	08.55	Alexandria
	09.53	Ottawa Arr.

ONTARIO BRANCH SERVICE

Sun. June 11	12.05	Sudbury Dep.
	13.05	Sturgeon Falls/Field
	13.43	North Bay Arr.
	13.53	North Bay Dep.
	14.51	Mattawa
	16.35	Chalk river
	16.50	Petawawa
	17.05	Pembroke
	17.45	Renfrew
	18.09	Arnrior
Sun. June 11	18.45	Carleton Place
	19.40	Ottawa Arr.
Sun. June 11	07.37	Peterborough
	09.16	Agincourt
Sun. June 11	09.40	Toronto Arr.
Sun. June 11	13.10	Niagara Falls Dep.
	13.30	St. Catharines
	13.47	Grimsby
	14.13	Hamilton
	14.26	Burlington
	14.37	Oakville
	15.05	Toronto Arr.
Sun. June 11	09.35	Windsor Dep.
	10.25	Chatham
	11.30	London Arr.
	11.35	London Dep.
	12.04	Woodstock
	12.34	Brantford
	12.54	Dundas
	13.12	Burlington
	13.27	Oakville
	Sun. June 11	14.00
Sun. June 11	10.45	Sarnia Dep.
	11.25	Strathroy
	11.50	London Arr.
	11.55	London Dep.
	12.25	St. Mary's
	12.44	Stratford
	13.15	Kitchener/Waterloo
	13.40	Guelph
	14.15	Georgetown
	14.28	Brampton
Sun. June 11	15.05	Toronto Arr.

BREAKING THE SOCIAL CONTRACT

Past and present generations of Canadians have developed a unique social contract with their government. Through this social contract Canadians have claimed their basic democratic rights as citizens to a system of social programs designed to ensure decent employment, education, health care, income security, public services, consumer protection, cultural development and fair taxation.

The current government is now breaking that social contract. The Free Trade Agreement has set the stage for harmonizing an economy and social programs with that of the United States. The recent Wilson budget service to accelerate this process. Together, these economic strategies will destroy the investment of past generations in our national and democratic future.

The Wilson budget assaults Canada's distinctive social programs, increases income insecurity for both working people and poor people, and turns its back on the needs of our children. Social programs are not a mortgage on our children but an investment in their future. Old age security for our seniors is not a burden to be shrugged off but a repayment of their past investment in our country. People are entitled to basic social programs as a right of citizenship in a democratic society.

We maintain that continuing unemployment and social inequities, not the deficit, are the number one problems facing Canada today. The primary causes of the current federal deficit are continuing high levels of unemployment, high interest rates, and multi-billion dollar hand outs to large corporations that produce comparatively few jobs in return.

It is not surprising that the federal deficit has failed to decline significantly despite repeated cuts in social spending and constant tax hikes for working people. After all, the federal government continues to allow tax write-offs for wealthy individuals and large corporations, tax holidays for the banks and major oil companies and increases in the rate of military spending. Only by putting people back to work, re-organizing our economic priorities and developing a fair and progressive tax system can we be effective in reducing the deficit.

Today the federal deficit is being used as a smokescreen for carrying out the Mulroney government's free trade agenda. By weakening many of our social programs, the Wilson budget effectively breaks the social contract the poses obstacles to the implementation of the free trade deal. We therefore oppose the following series of assaults on the social contract in the Wilson budget.

1. Cutbacks to Unemployment Insurance

Because we need new adjustment policies - not cuts - to an essential income security program. What happened to government promises on this issue?

2. The Erosion of Family Allowances and Old Age Security

Because the "clawback" of benefits fundamentally contradicts the principle of universality, the continued deindexation of the tax system, child tax credits and the rest of the tax system is an attack on the security of families and seniors. What happened to the government promises to protect the integrity of the universality principle?

3. Cutbacks in Nationally Funded Child Care Programs

Because we badly need new child care spaces to help create equality of employment opportunity. When will the government develop a serious child care program?

4. Cutbacks in Federal Transfer Payments for Health and (Postsecondary) Education

Because cuts to the EPF program result in the erosion of social and education programs under provincial jurisdiction. The right to quality education and health services for all Canadians must not be diminished.

5. Privatization and Cuts to the CBC, VIA Rail and the Post Office

Because these Crown Corporations provide vital national services which bind Canadians together.

6. Reductions in Federal Support for Regional Economic Development and the Development of Native Communities

Because the federal government has a responsibility to ensure that all regions and communities share national prosperity.

7. Cuts to Farm Programs

Because these programs are essential if the social fabric of rural Canada is to be maintained intact.

8. Cuts to the Funding of Social Advocacy Groups

Because cuts in funding for women, native and multicultural organizations would be a fundamental setback in the fight for equality.

9. Cuts to Foreign Aid

Because these cuts will further erode Canada's commitments to development in Third World countries by undercutting essential services and basic needs of people who are even less able to absorb reductions than ourselves here in Canada.

10. The Abandonment of a Progressive Tax System

Because billions of dollars in government revenues are lost every year when thousand of profitable companies and wealthy individuals get away with paying little or no taxes at all. Our tax system should be based on the ability to pay.

11. The Introduction of a Goods and Services Tax

Because this tax is regressive, inflates the cost of living, hits low and middle income people the hardest and restructures the tax system in a way which will place a heavy burden on the next generation.

12. The Maintenance of High Interest Rates

Because a high interest rate contributes to inflation, keeps the dollar artificially high and is a major cause of the federal deficit.

The time has come to stop undercutting our social contract! The time has come to start negotiating a new social contract that guarantees Canadians real jobs, income security, quality social services and a fair and progressive tax system! the time has com to stand together for the sake of future generations!