

## **POLICIES ADOPTED 1981**

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### **81.1 Pension Reform Retirement Income**

**Whereas,** Continuing inflation has caused serious problems in the retirement income of Canadians, and,

**Whereas,** The pension system of Canada is in need of reform; and,

**Whereas,** The Task Force on Retirement Income Policy presented its report to the federal government in April 1980; therefore be it,

**RESOLVED,** That The National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada to undertake a major reform of the public and private pension programs in Canada, to ensure an adequate retirement income for all Canadians.

### **81.2 Improving Pensions for Women**

**Whereas,** A number of studies along with the 1978 NCWC survey on 'The Financial Situation of Older Women' have shown that women of retirement age are generally financially disadvantaged; and,

**Whereas,** Under present Registered Retirement Savings Plan annual limits, many working women do not have sufficient earning years to build up RRSP funds to provide an adequate annuity; and,

**Whereas,** The spouse of an employee in the public service or of a company under federal jurisdiction, does not share the spouse's pension, if divorced; and,

**Whereas,** Homemakers cannot participate in public pension plans; therefore be it,

**RESOLVED,** That the National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada:

1. To open the Canada Pension Plan to non-earning spouses including homemakers inputting an income, through the application for pension purposes of 50% of the earning spouse to the non-earning spouse, the total contributions to be allowed as a tax deduction from the higher income spouse;
2. To increase Registered Retirement Savings Plan annual limits for any person over forty-five years of age, who has an incomplete or non-existent Canada/Quebec Pension Plan record; and,
3. To amend legislation governing the pensions of public service employees and those employees of companies under federal jurisdiction so that 50% of pension entitlements be apportioned to the divorced spouse for each year of marriage, prior to the dissolution of that marriage.

### **81.3 Enforcement of Family Law/Support and Maintenance Orders**

**Whereas,** The various systems of enforcing Family Law support and maintenance orders across Canada have proven blatantly ineffective; and,

**Whereas,** This problem now is acute due to the mobility of Canadian society, the growing incidence of family breakdown; and,

**Whereas,** The result is a heavy expenditure of public (federal and provincial) funds for public assistance to families whose social and health problems are increased by income irregularity and uncertainty about the future; and,

**Whereas,** Both family life and free movement within the country are recognized mainstays of Canadian society; therefore be it,

**RESOLVED,** That the National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada to seek jurisdiction in concert with the Provinces and Territories for that part of Family Law which concerns collection in accordance with support and maintenance orders, so that collection of those orders can be made universal throughout Canada.

**RESOLVED,** That the National Council of Women of Canada request the Provincials Councils of Women to urge their respective Governments to give serious consideration to this matter.

#### **81.4 Income Tax Amendments/Donation to Funds**

**Whereas,** Nationally organized societies of volunteers contribute to the improvement of understanding amongst Canadians; and,

**Whereas,** Many nationally organized societies of volunteers approach government to urge social change; and,

**Whereas,** Increased costs due to inflation are jeopardizing the existence of nationally organized societies of volunteers; and,

**Whereas,** The Department of National Revenue permits Charitable Trust Funds to be set up by organizations for cultural and educational purposes; therefore be it,

**RESOLVED,** That the National Council of Women of Canada:

1. Urge the Government of Canada to amend the Income Tax Act to allow deduction for income tax purposes of donations to funds established by registered nationally organized societies of volunteers, the revenue from which must be used for operating costs.

2. Reiterate to the Government of Canada the support given by Council to recommendations relating to the Income Tax Act and Charitable giving in Canada; submitted to the Secretary of State in June 1978 and included in the NCWC Brief presented to the Government of Canada in January 1979 as the NCWC Response to the 1978 Report of the National Advisory Council on Voluntary Action.

3. Maintain a watching brief on continuing consultations between the federal government and voluntary organizations relating to the Income Tax Act and charitable giving in Canada; especially as the consultations relate to:

1. A redefinition of Charity;
2. Allowable political activity by voluntary organizations;
3. Tax incentives for individual giving to voluntary organizations;
4. Bill C 10: An Act respecting non-profit organizations.

#### **81.5 Battered Wives**

**Whereas,** Thousands of Canadian women are battered by their spouses every year; and,

**Whereas,** The majority of women do not seek formal aid for the problem, nor do they press charges against their spouses; and,

**Whereas,** The law now states that a married woman is not compellable to testify against her spouse; therefore be it,

**RESOLVED,** That the National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada to amend the Canada Evidence Act to provide that married women are both competent and compellable witnesses against their spouses in cases of marital assaults.

#### **81.6 Child Abuse – Preventative Teams**

**Whereas,** There is a need to give high priority to the development of a comprehensive program to prevent child abuse and to provide a better mechanism to aid potential perpetrators of child abuse, as well as their victims; and,

**Whereas,** Highly-trained and competent persons are required to carry out a total program in an effective manner; and,

**Whereas,** Funding is required to ensure training of specialists in the detection, cause and treatment of child abuse; and,

**Whereas,** The Federal Government role, in respect of child abuse includes cost sharing arrangements for preventative services under the Canada Assistance Plan; therefore be it,

**RESOLVED,** That The National Council of Women of Canada petition the Government of Canada:

1. To work through Provincial and Territorial cost-sharing arrangements to finance the establishment and training of "Preventative Teams" to deal with the battered child syndrome.
2. To encourage children's aid societies and other agencies with legal authority to provide such teams.
3. To ensure that "Preventative Teams" consist of lay people and professional specialists including, but not

limiting, social workers, clergy, teachers, pediatricians and/or family doctors, psychologists, psychiatrists, and registered nurses, using hospitals as bases, wherever possible.

## **81.7 Rape Legislation**

**Whereas,** The Department of Justice is currently considering alterations to the Criminal Code, pertaining to rape; therefore be it,

**RESOLVED,** That The National Council of Women of Canada express to the Government of Canada its strong opposition to any proposed legislation which would allow a defence lawyer, at trial to claim consent, or to use as evidence a victim's past sexual history.

Long-term policy of the National Council of Women is developed over a period of years by the adoption of resolutions on issues of concern. At the time that the 1981 resolutions were submitted to the membership for study, Bill C-53 had not yet been tabled.

As there was concern that forthcoming legislation might considerably lessen penalties for rape, a resolution on rape legislation was submitted to the Council and affiliated associations.

At the 1981 Annual Meeting, the Council adopted the following resolved clause, in addition to the clause above, keeping in mind that long-term policy was being developed and that the particular clauses were not relevant at the moment because of the provisions in Bill C-53. The text is included for information.

**RESOLVED,** That The National Council of Women of Canada express to the Government of Canada its strong opposition to any proposed legislation which would:

1. Decrease the penalties associated with rape; and,
2. Reclassify the crime of rape to sexual assault if such reclassification would mean that this act would be decriminalized.

## **81.8 Welfare of Women Prisoners**

**Whereas,** There is only one federal penal institution for women in Canada; and

**Whereas,** Correctional leaders consider it unsuitable for women; and

**Whereas,** The female inmates in the federal institution do not have adequate education and rehabilitation programs, recreation, nor space for an activity centre; therefore be it,

**RESOLVED,** That The National Council of Women of Canada request the Government of Canada to provide:

1. Improved education, rehabilitation and recreation programs for female prisoners;
2. improved facilities, in regional areas, for female prisoners;
3. Immediately move towards the construction of regional prisons or institutions.

## **EMERGENCY RESOLUTIONS**

### **81.9EM Emergency Resolution: Mortgage Interest Rates**

**Whereas,** Inflation and high mortgage interest rates are causing great hardship, particularly to the homeowners who are faced with the task of renewing home mortgages at close to 20%, resulting in many losing their homes; and,

**Whereas,** In the speech from the Throne a year ago the Government promised it would "act to assist those unable to bear the burden of renegotiating their home mortgages in the present abnormal situation so that the spectre of foreclosure will be avoided;" and,

**Whereas,** Current high mortgage interest rates are pricing potential homeowners out of the market, making rental construction impossible and completely removing the opportunity and choice of the consumer to find suitable accommodation; therefore be it,

**RESOLVED,** That The National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada to amend the Income Tax Act to permit homeowners to deduct from income, for tax purposes, mortgage interest payments on their principal residences above a realistic rate.