

NATIONAL WOMEN'S CAUCUS
JANUARY 12 1980 LONDON

IMG

X: Wendy, Andre

This mailing should be read out in all branch meetings and brought to the attention of all women comrades. This is the responsibility of the branch organiser/committee. Financing of attendance at the national caucus should be treated like that for all national fraction meetings etc. Pooled fare will operate.

This national caucus has been called by the women's commission to discuss the integration of women into the organisation since the last IMG conference. We hope that on the basis of the discussion and experience of the organisation over the last eighteen months will enable us to bring forward further proposals on any special measures to meet the particular needs of women comrades. All individual comrades, women's caucuses or branches are invited to submit written contributions for this discussion. However because of the restrictions placed on us by our limited resources these should be short and sent in by the first weekend in January ie received in the centre on or before 5th January.

We had hoped to hold the national caucus outside London but this proved impossible. The exact venue will be announced later through National Briefings. The following day will be a NAC fraction also in London.

In order for comrades to prepare for the discussion we have prepared the following guidelines for the area of discussion.

- i. Contact work and recruitment: do we discuss our positions on women's liberation with all contacts? do we ensure we involve contacts from the wlm in other political debates and activities? have we had a specific drive to recruit women from our work in the abortion campaign? do we ensure women comrades are at all contact and recruitment meetings?
- ii. Education: how is education organised in the branch? are there candidate members educationals? what format is used for educationals? does it succeed in involving all comrades? do comrades feel they benefit from formal educationals?
- iii. Political responsibility and leadership bodies: does the branch have a conscious policy of positive discrimination towards women comrades? do you feel this has been successful? have women comrades become branch leaders through leading women's liberation work only? what areas of responsibility do women comrades have in your branch? is there a problem of 'ghettoization' for women comrades into women's liberation work?
- iv. Women's caucuses: have there been women's caucuses in your branch? how useful do you feel they have been? have reportbacks been discussed by the branch and branch committee? what proposals have been made from these discussions?
- v. Situation of women comrades in the IMG: what do you feel are the outstanding problems we should discuss? is it possible to define this or is it a more subtle question of atmosphere, style etc of comrades in political debates? Do you feel the branch (or other unit) is supportive and collective? if not has this been discussed? how can we change it?
- vi. Childcare: Is this a problem for any comrades in your branch? What discussion has there been on it and what proposals have been adopted? Do you regularly organise creches (or other forms of childcare) for internal and/or external events? Who takes responsibility for doing this? If it has not been discussed why not?

We hope that consideration of these questions will enable us to have an overall picture of the situation in the organisation.

Apologies for the previous postponements of the national caucus. These were caused by circumstances beyond our control, ie the Scottish trades union conference on abortion was arranged for Dec 1st and the North west one for December 15th!

Harlow for Women's Commission

3.X11.79

For Comrades responsible for Work on Womens Oppression (Or Branch Organisers)

We are sending out this questionnaire to attempt to get together some picture of the state of the Womens Movement and the IMGs participation in it. We may not have asked questions which are relevant to whats going on in your area, in which case please give what information you think is useful. If your branch didnt attend the recent Abortion Fraction give details of this area of work, otherwise we will assume we have a local report already.

Please send the completed report to Harlowe at the centre BEFORE XMAS

Is the womens movemnt centralised in your particular area? Is there a womens centre? Regular forums?

How do the majority of active feminists define themselves? (Soc Fem, Revolutionary feminists, radical feminists, nothing in particular?)

What political campaigns have feminists been involved in since the summer?

Are there particular groups around specific issues? Which?

Is there a local lesbain group? How does it see its relationship with the WLM? Gay Movement?

Are socialist feminist organised locally? How? What differentiates them from rest of WLM?

Are Women particularly active in local TUs? Through what structures? What issues are they particularly concerned with?

Are women particularly active in local LP? Through what structures? Around what issues?

How does the IMG relate to all this? What groups do comrades participate in?

What are our specific local perspectives?

Does the branch/Branch Committee take regular discussions on this?

Do comrades feel there is an adequate flow of information to and from the centre about all this? What can we do about it?

(Mea culpa, Ive just realised Ive left out students and youth - please insert at obvious place)

PLEASE PLEASE PLEASE FILL THIS IN NOW AND SEND IT BACK TO US SO WE CAN PREPARE CONFERENCE DOCUMENT THAT REALLY REFLECTS NATIONAL SITUATION NOT JUST LONDON.