

WAZ
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WHAT CAN ONE PERSON DO?

There are many actions you can take on your own.
There are even more that you can take with others.
If you've done something yourself you can often encourage others to try doing the same sort of thing. It's important to do things effectively so that results can be seen and progress made.

Here are some ideas:-

Letter-writing to politicians and officials

Letters influence politicians a great deal. They give them an idea of how the voters feel. Make sure they are well reasoned and to the point.

- Remember:-
1. Don't be longwinded.
 2. Be logical, accurate and have your facts straight.
 3. Be specific in the action you urge.
 4. If you get a reply, acknowledge it. It pays to be polite and to praise action you approve.

If the Federal Parliament is in session no stamp is needed when writing to an M.P.

Mr. John Doe, M.P., The House of Commons, Ottawa
The Right Honourable Pierre Elliott Trudeau, Prime Minister,
House of Commons, or Rt. Hon. John Diefenbaker;
all the other Cabinet members are plain Honourable (we hope!)

Mr. John Doe, M.P.P. (or M.L.A.), Provincial Government Bldgs.
Stamp required.

Municipal officials and politicians can be written to, or reached by telephone.

Telephone calls

Make notes - before, during and immediately after, so you have an accurate record. LISTEN to what is said to you. Don't just keep your own points in mind.

Telegrams

These often get a better and quicker response. Night letters are not very expensive for urgent and immediate matters.

Letters to editors of newspapers

Keep the above points in mind. If your letter can be tied to a specific article (refer to date and title) or another letter (ditto) you may have a better chance of getting it printed.

Hot-line programmes (radio and TV)

If you listen to radio this is a good opportunity to get subjects of interest discussed, and reaches a wide audience. By phoning in you can get practice in discussing effectively and organizing your arguments. You can also suggest topics for discussion.

Interviews with M.P.'s and officials

These can be arranged for one or more women 1) to obtain information on a specific subject or policy or 2) to present your views.

1. Be sure to have questions on the information you require. Take notes. A tape recorder is often very useful indeed. (Make sure you can operate one efficiently and with minimum disruption.)
2. If you are presenting your views or urging a policy, a brief or statement is essential, so that the politician may have a clear idea of what is required. Make enough copies for the press and everyone present. For a formal delegation additional actions should be taken to involve press, opposition politicians, the public and one's own colleagues and sympathizers. Remember you will need French translations if you are to reach all Federal M.P.'s.

Other ways of getting your point of view accepted

1. Invite a few neighbours in for coffee to discuss a specific subject. It helps to have someone who has some detailed knowledge, or slides or a film or other "audio-visual aid". Try to end the session with some definite action arising from the discussion - going to find out more information, writing to M.P.s, or other action.
2. Knock on doors - usually on your own or nearby street, bringing up whatever point that concerns you, and again with a specific action that someone might take - signing a petition, coming to a meeting, having a discussion group, etc.
3. Distribute notices or pertinent material, or fact sheets, etc. door to door, or at supermarkets, etc. Be careful of local by-laws about trespass and be ready with good well reasoned arguments.
4. Form a small committee with women from other groups. Find out how other groups of women feel about your concerns. Maybe some will have done work on the whole question.

How to obtain facts

Apart from those already suggested:

1. Clip articles from newspapers and magazines. (Don't forget to add name and date.)
2. Use public and reference libraries. Librarians are very helpful.
3. Don't be afraid to ask people at the top for their advice and help.

Holdng meetings

Make a list of nearby halls with rental costs - if any. Many schools, church halls, Ys, and other community buildings may be available either for regular or one-night meetings.

Television - Investigate cable TV for community programs. Try CBC and independent stations for interviews, etc.