

2008

Children Imprisoned in the UK

Submitted by: The Prison Reform Trust

The National Council of Women, concerned that:

- we imprison over 6000 children (under 18s) in England and Wales each year, some as young as ten,
- the number of children imprisoned has more than doubled since 1989,
- of these children, a third have committed non-violent offences
- the children we imprison are some of the most socially excluded; a quarter have literacy and numeracy levels of an average seven year old; half have a history of being in care, and at least a quarter have experienced violence at home.

urges her Majesty's Government:

- 1) to treat children in trouble as children in need and address their welfare needs as well as their offending behaviour
- 2) to promote community sentences for children who have committed non-violent offences

Electric Mobility Vehicles

Submitted by: NCW Transport Committee

The National Council of Women in conference assembled, aware that:

- the popularity of electric mobility vehicles is growing and will increase
- they are of great benefit to their users
- they are now part of the traffic of an area but have no special provision
- they can be dangerous in the hands of an inexperienced driver

calls upon HMG to publish, and publicise, a code of practice for the use of, and provision for, Electric Mobility Vehicles.

Children's Television

Submitted by: NCW Media Committee

The National Council of Women of Great Britain, concerned about the dearth of high quality British

TV programmes for children aged 5- 13+

urges Her Majesty's Government:

- 1) to provide funding and resources for British TV programmes for children aged 5-13+ in order to enable them to make high quality British TV programmes for children of this age
- 2) to take appropriate action to ensure the setting up and support of organisations to promote and produce British Children's TV
- 3) to provide funding to re-invigorate the Children's Film and Television Foundation

Assistance for Vulnerable People

Submitted by: NCW South West Midland Region

Aware of the growing difficulties of vulnerable people in the United Kingdom and of the efforts of

Government to solve these, the National Council of Women

requests HM Government to improve the present situation by initiating legislation along the following lines:

- 1) the establishment and development of partnerships such as the system pioneered by Birmingham City Council, which involves a Civil Justice system alongside the established Criminal Justice system. whereby City Councils may prosecute perpetrators;
- 2) the establishment of refuge accommodation for trafficked women, providing interpreters, health services and long term help on site, and employment more women in these services;
- 3) the provision of funding to provide qualitative research into elder abuse problems.

Land Use: The Importance of UK Food Production.

Submitted by: NCW Science and Technology Committee

The National Council of Women in conference assembled, aware that the availability of adequate and affordable food is essential and acknowledging that:

- the effect on food production from climate change, both here and in the rest of the world, is unknown
- the growing of bio-fuel crops appears to be adversely affecting food prices worldwide
- currently only 60% of the food consumed in the UK is produced here
- the average weekly deficit in the UK balance of payments in 2007 was £1.1 billion

urges Her Majesty's Government to produce a comprehensive plan for UK land-use which has regard to the points given above and ensures:-

- 1) that all regulations are fair, necessary and supportive, and
- 2) that retailers, consumers and Government Departments and Institutions are encouraged to buy British produce.

Trafficking in Children

Submitted by: NCW Foreign Affairs Committee

The National Council of Women in Conference assembled,

- aware that children continue to be trafficked for both sexual exploitation and forced labour;
- noting from the International Labour Organisation report in 2002 that an estimated eight million children were working in slavery-like practices

around the world, of which more than one million were trafficked, and that there is no sign of diminution of these numbers,
calls upon Her Majesty's Government to withdraw the UK 's general reservation on immigration and nationality to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and to ratify the Council of Europe's Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings without delay.

60th Anniversary of the Declaration on Human Rights – 2008

Submitted by: NCW Management Committee

The National Council of Women, on the 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, draws attention to the many abuses of human rights still affecting men, women and children, and urges HMG

(i) to promote and contribute to the advancement of human rights, involving all sectors of society in work towards greater racial and religious tolerance and understanding, and in effective teaching and implementation of the principles and safeguards enshrined in the Universal Declaration;

and

(ii) to work within Europe and international institutions to seek solutions to the many current abuses of human rights arising from:

- Conditions of acute poverty affecting health, welfare and education in large sectors of society in many countries;
- trafficking in human beings, and all forms of slavery;
- crimes against children, including the use of child labour and child soldiers, and sexual abuse arising from misuse of the internet and pornography;
- suffering of women, children and all vulnerable people in areas of armed conflict and refugee
- camps, contrary to the principles of UN Security Council Resolution 1325;
- harmful traditional practices which affect the Human Rights of many women and girls;
- arbitrary arrest and imprisonment.

Dental contracts

Submitted by: NCW Hereford Branch

The National Council of Women of Great Britain, concerned that

- 2.5 million people in England are currently unable to access NHS dentistry and
- that they will have little chance of doing so unless Her Majesty's Government takes action to address the problems with the new dental contract

urges Her Majesty's Government to make adequate levels of funding available for this purpose.

Dangerous breeds of dog

Submitted by: NCW Great Ayton Branch

The National Council of Women in Conference assembled, concerned that dogs of certain breeds

have been responsible for deaths and serious injuries in domestic situations,

urges her Majesty's

Government to undertake a reappraisal of the Dangerous Dogs legislation, especially with regard to:

- 1) the unsuitability of domestic premises for such breeds: both for the welfare of the dog and for the safety of the public
- 2) the desirability of permitting ownership of such breeds only on the granting of a licence, subject to stringent conditions including official regular monitoring of the dog's health and behaviour.

Reaffirmed 2010

2009

Severn Tidal Options

Submitted by: South West and Midland Region NCW

The National Council of Women, aware of the need to support the production of sustainable carbon-free energy for the UK

urges HM Government

- to promote this from viable natural sources giving due regard to environmental impact and, with reference to the Severn Estuary
- to include for further consideration, along with the other five schemes, the Tidal Reef option

The Effect of the Global Economic Crisis on Women

Submitted by: the Management Committee

The National Council of Women:

aware of the adverse impact of the global economic crisis on women's employment, affecting rights to maternity leave, part-time work, family-friendly policies and flexible working hours,

aware, too, of the widening pay differentials between women and men,

calls upon HMG to safeguard the hard-won rights of women to equal treatment in all aspects of employment, and

the legal provisions recognising employment rights related to pregnancy and child-care.

Righting Previous Wrongs - the Importance of hindsight

Submitted by: NCW Science and Technology Committee

The National Council of Women is aware

- that decisions, some of which became legally binding, have been made in the past, which proved to be damaging to public health, or the environment or the economy
- that decision-making bodies are now encouraged to take part in horizon-scanning to anticipate future problems or changes. and that it is also important to review past decisions; some of which have caused serious problems and
- that wrongs must be righted.

and **urges** HMG, the EU and those responsible for the implementation of their decisions to:

- recognise that previous decisions may have been wrong
- re-introduce the Precautionary Principle into decision-making
- seek all available evidence, including comments and criticism, concerning adverse outcomes resulting from past decisions and legislation
- re-assess their effects and outcomes

- take immediate action to annul those decisions which cause harm rather than the predicted benefits.

Fishing Policy - the Advantages of Nets with Larger Mesh

Submitted by: NCW Consumer Affairs Committee

The National Council of Women in Conference assembled:

aware that Norway, using nets with a large mesh, is able to carry on a successful fishing industry and is seeing its fish stocks multiplying,

urges HMG to petition Europe to review the quota system for fishing boats and promote the introduction of nets with a larger mesh.

Service Personnel and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

Submitted by: NCW Health Committee

The National Council of Women, in Conference assembled,

mindful of the emotional distress suffered by returning service personnel and their families,

urges the Ministry of Defence to:

1. take steps to remove any stigma from acknowledging post-traumatic stress;
2. take the necessary action to treat Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder early (however late it may manifest)
3. note the high success rate claimed by the charitable organisation *Resolution*, staffed by civilians and some ex-soldiers who have trained as counsellors, and
4. recommend the inclusion, in the funding of community mental health initiatives, of some funding for a small and closely-monitored pilot study into *Resolution*.

The needs of widows in conflict and post-conflict scenarios

Submitted by: Widows for Peace through Democracy

The National Council of Women

calls upon Her Majesty's Government, and in particular the Department for International Development and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office

- a. to ensure that widows have full equality within society, by removing all forms of discrimination against widows and their families, including harmful traditional practices; and by providing them with full rights to ownership of land and inheritance rights, and with equal rights to social support and financial benefits;
- b. to support the call for the Secretary-General of the United Nations to commission a Special Report on the Situation of Widows in Conflict and Post-Conflict Scenarios, and for the United Nations to establish mechanisms to fill the gap in data and ensure that the voices of widows are heard in peace-building and reconstruction deliberations, in the spirit of UN SCR 1325 and also SCR 1820 and the Millennium Development Goals.

Vulnerable Women - a better outcome for their children

Submitted by: Royal College of Midwives and NCW Health Committee

The National Council of Women, in conference assembled:

1. notes with concern that, in 2009, women living in disadvantaged or minority groups and communities are still experiencing worse outcomes for their own and their babies' health than women in the rest of the population;
2. believes: that preventative health begins with the mother and her unborn child; that all women should have early and equal access to high quality maternity services; and that midwives have a crucial role to play in improving the complex health and social care needs of socially excluded women, thus reducing health inequalities;
3. welcomes the involvement of midwives in innovative programmes of support such as the Family Nurse Partnership which provides intensive parenting support to families living in some of the most socially deprived communities in England;
4. further welcomes the deployment of midwifery services in children's centres, which provide a more accessible location for socially excluded women to find care .

Conference therefore **calls on** the Government to ensure sufficient resources are made available to:

1. facilitate initiatives such as the Family Nurse Partnership and having midwives working in children's centres; and
2. ensure there are sufficient midwives in post to allow them to play a leading role in promoting public health and tackling health inequalities.

Representation of Women in Parliamentary Elections

Submitted by: Management Committee

The National Council of Women

- (a) concerned about the relatively small number of female candidates presented by the Political Parties as candidates in Parliamentary elections, including the European Parliament; and
- (b) aware of the importance attached by European-wide women's organisations to the need for better representation of women in the European Parliamentary elections.

urges HMG and all the British Parliamentary Parties to take measures to ensure the selection of Parliamentary candidates on a more equal basis between men and women, and to recognise the need for Parliament to be a more representative body of the population as a whole.

2010

The Sexualisation and Exploitation of Children

Submitted by: Management Committee NCW

The National Council of Women in Conference assembled:

1. noting with concern that our children are growing up in a culture which is pre-occupied with sexualising the experience of childhood,
2. aware that the world of entertainment and celebrity encourages girls to believe their sexual attractiveness is paramount,
3. conscious that commercial forces turn children into consumers and sexualised commodities,
4. aware too that of the obsession of today's children with clothing and the right look, fuelled by the visual media advertising, peer pressure and the child's overriding desire to fit in,

calls upon the government to ensure:

that, recognising the importance of childhood, the regulations relating to children are strengthened and improved, halting the excessive commercialisation of children by banning manipulative marketing techniques; and that an open dialogue with the Advertising Standards Agency (ASA) and the Committee of Advertising Practice (CAP) is maintained.

Funding of Museums and Galleries

Submitted by: Arts Committee NCW

The National Council of Women (GB), concerned about the funding of museums and galleries in the present economic climate,

urges Her Majesty's Government to prioritise funding of existing museums and galleries, and of their collections, which may be considered part of our national heritage.

Protection of Women and Children from Rape in Post-disaster and Post-conflict Situations

Submitted by: ICWGB

The National Council of Women (GB) **calls upon** HMG to:

- recognise the prevalence of rape of women and children in post-disaster and post-conflict situations
- recognise the serious effects of Rape on the physical and mental health and future well-being of Rape victims
- make the protection of women and children from Rape and all other forms of sexual abuse as high a priority as the provision of food and medical assistance in post-disaster and post-conflict situations

- make the education of men in the consequences of Rape and other forms of sexual violence an integral part of the training of military and UN personnel.

Malnutrition in Hospitals

Submitted by: The Health Committee NCW

NCW in Conference assembled, **calls upon** the Department of Health to require all hospitals to check patients' weight on admission and to monitor it throughout their stay using the MUST (Malnutrition Universal Screening Tool.) which should be made mandatory in England as it is in Scotland thus malnutrition could be identified and supervised. Appropriate nutrition and hydration should then be addressed. In the event of insufficient staffing levels, consideration could be given to the involvement of relatives.

Protecting the Health and Welfare of Consumers, Animals and the Environment

Submitted by: Science and Technology Committee NCW

NCW, concerned at the proliferation of new substances which may affect life in all its forms,

urges HMG and decision-makers to protect humans, animals and the environment by refusing or revoking licences for the production and use of these substances when there is evidence from doctors, scientists and/or consumers showing serious concerns and doubts as to their safety. The health and welfare of current and future life must take priority over commercial and political interests.

Gender Equality in Parliamentary Representation

Submitted by: Management Committee

The National Council of Women

- concerned that political parties in the United Kingdom have taken few steps to ensure greater representation of women in Parliamentary democracy;
- noting that the UK is lagging behind many other countries in the representation of women in Parliament;
- aware, too, that no significant improvement in the representation of women has resulted from the recent Parliamentary elections in the United Kingdom; **calls upon** Her Majesty's Government and all political parties in the UK to take immediate steps to rectify this position, to ensure greater representation of women in Parliament and all decision-making bodies, and to introduce the concept of gender equality into all Parliamentary Committees.

Badgers and the Protection of Cattle

Submitted by: South West and Midland Region NCW

The National Council of Women, aware of the recent economic and personal problems arising from Tuberculosis in cattle, welcomes the proposals, set out in a public consultation exercise which ends in December, whereby farmers in areas of heavy TB infestation would be allowed to apply for licences to cull badgers by cage-trapping and shooting them, or – a much cheaper option – by “free shooting” as animals emerge from their setts in the evening, in an attempt to halt the serious and growing problems of this disease in badgers and its spread from them to a worrying range of other wild and domestic animals, as well as pets.

Providing More Affordable Homes

Submitted by: Housing Committee NCW

The National Council of Women (GB) **urges** Her Majesty’s Government to address the shortage of affordable housing

- (i) by encouraging the refurbishment of empty homes and the conversion of redundant commercial property into homes
- (ii) by the removal of VAT from renovation and conversion work in order to withdraw the effective subsidy given to new-build housing by its VAT-free status

Withdrawal of Cheques

Submitted by: Sevenoaks Branch NCW

The National Council of Women **urges** HMG to ensure that transactions by cheque will be continued.