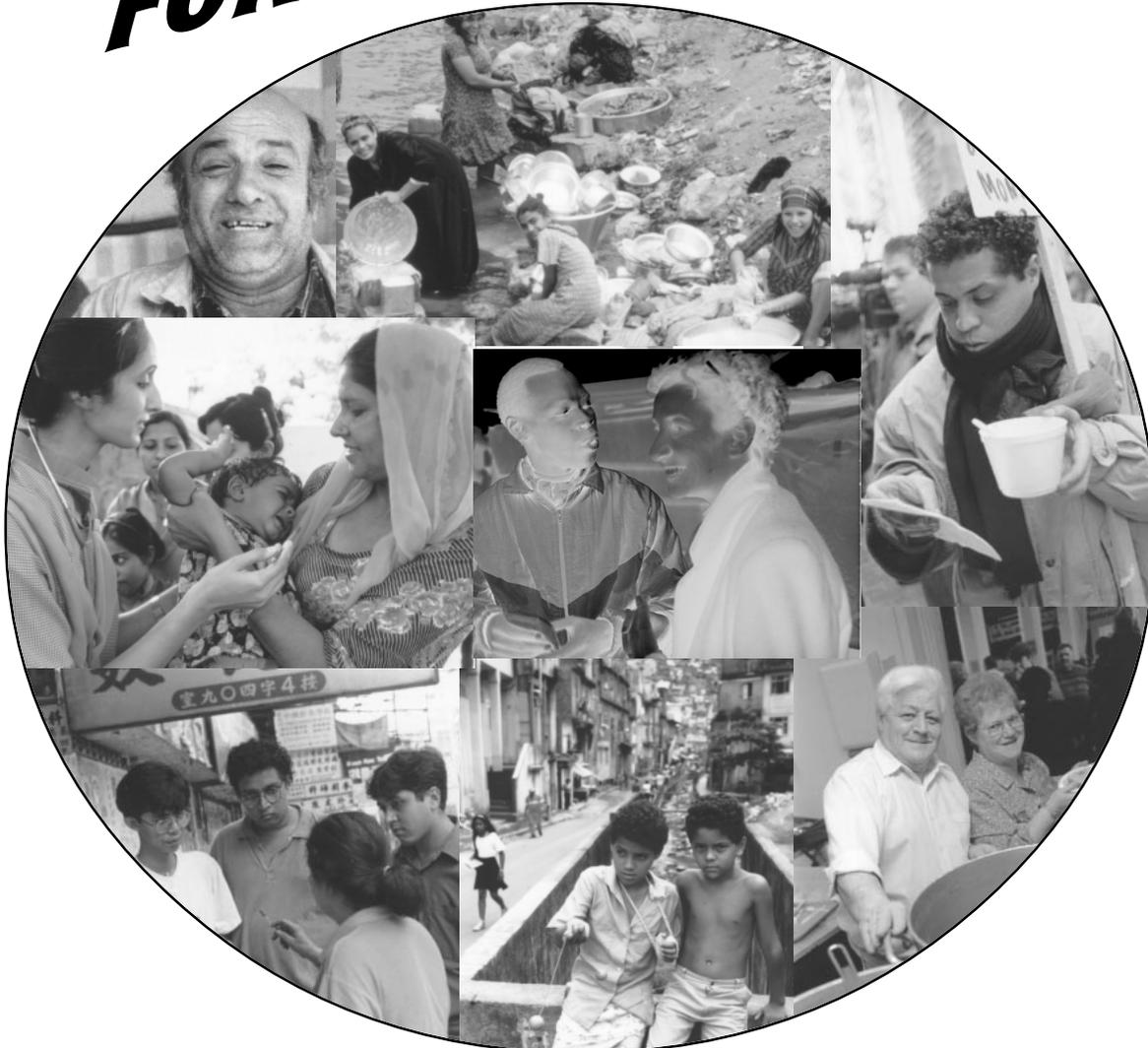


TAKING STOCK FOR ACTION



Taking Stock and Looking Ahead

Report to the General Assembly on the Activities of Alternatives

August 1998

 **Alternatives**
... for a different world

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Board of Directors
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The past twelve months have been a busy time for Alternatives. We started off at full speed with the momentum of the General Assembly and the Summer retreat in August, with their excellent participation and stimulating discussions.

Activities were many and varied, both with our partners from all over the world and in Québec and Canada. The various projects carried out made it possible to enhance Alternatives' presence with the grassroots organizations we support and to strengthen our ability to speak out and raise awareness of the major political and social issues of the times.

We were very involved in the major debates on the globalization of the economy and its harmful effects on the peoples of the world. At the same time, we organized a very successful international conference on the rise of both religious and economic fundamentalism. The past year has also enabled us to increase our expertise in conflict resolution and to make concrete contributions to a redefinition of the notion of humanitarian assistance, to make it become a tool for reconstruction rather than a temporary crutch for peoples suffering because of conflict.

Rapid growth created its own share of problems for us. Welcoming and integrating several new employees into our team and the increased number of themes and projects subjected our political and administrative structures to a great degree of stress.

But the staff and the elected bodies rose to the situation and initiated a process of thought and action which enabled us to identify the strong and weak points of our organization and



arrive at a new internal dynamic allowing us to consolidate our gains and respond to new challenges so Alternatives may remain as relevant as ever. Special attention was given to administrative procedures and to refining our management tools. During the coming General Assembly we will have the opportunity to discuss these new organizational modalities and share our common vision of the future.

The various chapters of this report will not only give you an appreciation of the progress made by Alternatives over the past year, but also inform you of the new political situations we must face as an international solidarity organization.

I would like to thank everyone who, through their reliability and generosity, contributed to the progress of our organization in one way or another. Together, we can build a different world.

Pierre Beudet
Director

1- Alternatives in the world

Our world is both a stage for conflicts, oppression and injustice and a space for struggle, hope and renewal. In the shadow of economic neoliberalism, political giants continue to exclude, exploit and dominate, leading to the worst excesses which in turn degenerate into conflict. Even if the mass media tend to deny any causal-effect relationship, the massacres in Rwanda and in Algeria must at least partially be explained by the senseless economic policies imposed by the IMF and major financial institutions, with the support of the major powers, which leave poor countries crushed and cornered.

At the same time, peoples resist, get organized and dare to speak out. There has never been as much resistance developed over the past ten years as there is now, for example, in South Korea, Indonesia, Mexico, Brazil, France and - closer to home - in Ontario. From this resistance there emerge new projects, new initiatives and, above all, new alliances. Without lapsing into abstract romanticism, the question arises, Is the wind turning? This is the ever-moving, fluid context in which we work.

1.1 Latin America

• Major areas of action: Cuba, Chile, Brazil, Panama, Mexico and the economic integration of the Americas

To our eyes, the situation of the Cuban people seems difficult. Cuba is trapped between the unremitting hostility of the United States and the vagaries of the transition towards a society that does not want to deny its past but must change. Alternatives has long supported the strengthening of Cuban civil society, which tries to protect its achievements while at the same time it opens the door to the world. A new initiative is taking shape with Cuban popular organizations focused on the theme of local development. These efforts will converge at a meeting in Havana in September 1998.

In Brazil, the spectacular struggle of the Landless Movement (MST) for the right to land attracted not only our attention, but that of unions and popular groups to the need to redefine the goals of economic integration. This is a major process which generally does not take the needs and the rights of peoples into account. In this context, we participated in the People's Summit of the Americas, organized in Santiago de Chile in early 1998, which brought together hundreds of grassroots and union organizations of the Americas.

In Chile and Mexico, on the theme of economic integration, our links with various grassroots organizations (youth, women, indigenous peoples, unions) were strengthened thanks to the work of young Alternatives trainees, among others.

Following an initiative of the Environment Committee, Alternatives is supporting a project which is making it possible for indigenous communities in Panama, heavily affected by the war in neighbouring Colombia, to rehabilitate their village.

1.2 Sub-Saharan Africa

• Major areas of action: South Africa, Nigeria, Sudan, Angola, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and the rehabilitation of peace and democracy in the Great Lakes region.

Post-apartheid South Africa seems to be sinking into a political and economic accommodation which increasingly excludes the poorest of the poor. We specially support the campaign of landless communities for the recognition of their rights. Networking between the various South African grassroots organizations is also an important goal for Alternatives. By sending young trainees who are well-versed in information technology, we intend to continue our project to strengthen the Internet network with SANGONET, a Johannesburg NGO.

In Angola, major rehabilitation and reconstruction projects for several communities affected by war are under way in cooperation with ADRA, a local NGO, and Development Workshop.

In Nigeria and Sudan, our work is focused on support for popular democratic movements fighting against the dictatorship. For both these countries struggling with war and repression, our efforts have also been directed at the adoption of policies by the government of Canada which could lead change the situation over the long term.

The Great Lakes region is still a tinderbox. Interminable wars, fed by the destabilizing intervention of some foreign powers who target ethnic differences and intercommunity conflicts, threaten the well-being of peoples. We have given a lot of thought to understanding and helping to understand the issues which fuel the struggles destabilizing countries in the region. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaire), specific projects are being carried out with the Groupe d'étude et d'action pour un développement bien défini (GEAD), a large coalition of grassroots organizations, and with Promotion et appui aux initiatives féminines (PAIF), a women's group in Goma.

1.3 Middle East and North Africa

- **Major areas of action: Egypt, Morocco, Algeria, Palestine, Lebanon and human rights advocacy**

Under the coordination of the Centre d'études arabes pour le développement (CEAD), a member of Alternatives, we continued to support the struggle of grassroots organizations in Palestine and Lebanon, a difficult context where Israeli and American forces of domination try to stifle the legitimate demands of the Palestinian people. These efforts unfold in continuous dialogue with other Canadian NGOs, with an aim to promote a real peace process for the Middle East, based on rights and justice.

In this spirit, a new program was launched to strengthen groups working on the issue of human rights. Representatives from organizations in Palestine, Lebanon, Jordan and Egypt were invited to several training, discussion and strategizing sessions here in Canada or in other Middle Eastern countries.

In Egypt, we diversified our links with several organizations while continuing our work with the Women's Forum, a coalition of some twenty groups and NGOs working to promote women's rights.

With l'Espace associatif, a coalition of over thirty Moroccan women's and human rights groups, we support the development of a network working for the protection of social rights and the improvement of living conditions. Also in Morocco, a project to support street youth is taking shape with a local organization.

In Algeria, still wrecked with conflict, we supported groups of women and youth who are struggling against both the fundamentalism of fanatical groups and the authoritarian military regime which is sliding towards a dictatorship.

1.4 South Asia

- **Major areas of action: India, Pakistan and networking with the various grassroots organizations in the region**

Under the coordination of the South Asia Research and Resource Centre, a member of Alternatives, there have been many initiatives to raise awareness on the theme of forced sterilization of women, and more broadly on the question of women's rights and child labour in the region.

After the nuclear tests and the coming to power of a government of the intransigent right in India, tensions have been on the rise. Our partners in India and Pakistan try to counter the upsurge of jingoism and militarism. Our projects contributed to this effort by supporting many groups in their networking and use of electronic communication. Since its inception, we have participated in meetings organized by the Pakistan-India People's Forum for Peace and Democracy. Its objective is to bring together leaders of civil society in India and Pakistan and unify their efforts towards pacifying the region and stemming the upsurge of intercommunity violence.

We also contributed, in concertation with several partner groups, among others Inter Pares, South Asia Partnership and the South Asian Women's Community Centre - three Canadian NGOs - to generate awareness of the realities and hopes of the Indian subcontinent in Québec and Canadian public opinion, fifty years after the independence of India and Pakistan.

1.5 East Asia

- **Major areas of action: Philippines, China and campaign on the social and political effects of major economic blocs (APEC)**

Progressive groups are springing up in China. They support the development of grass-roots organizations struggling against the pernicious effects of globalization. The fourth Summit of Heads of Member States of Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) in Vancouver last autumn encouraged us to establish closer links with organizations campaigning for an Asia-Pacific region which is democratic and open to the demands of the people. This made it possible for us to hold a parallel popular conference in Montréal and to participate more actively in the conference held in Vancouver.

1.6 Eastern Europe

- **Major areas of action: Russia, the former Yugoslavia**

In Eastern Europe, where the implosion of the Stalinist system of domination and uncontrolled economic liberalization have led to the creation of a Third World situation, we continued to collaborate in several popular initiatives, mainly in Russia, in the union sector. We explored what could be done to support the women's groups who decry the loss of major achievements and the deterioration of their living and working conditions.

In the former Yugoslavia, with pacifist and democratic groups in Bosnia and Serbia, we work in the struggle against proponents of ethnic cleansing and war. This work was accompanied by many regular exchanges between union and grassroots organizations from the region and their local counterparts.

1.7 International Networking

Around the world, many popular, feminist, pacifist and democratic groups seek to create alliances, form networks and coordinate their actions. Alternatives participates in these efforts, which are indispensable in responding to the challenges of neoliberal globalization.

Alternatives is a member of the World Forum of Alternatives (FMA), a network of networks which brings together activists and researchers from all five continents. We also participate in many international meetings, such as the Sao Paulo Forum (a forum for the progressive movements of Latin America) or organize conferences here which make exchanges, discussions and the forming of new alliances possible.

The purpose of all this is simple: to create a broad front of all those fighting neoliberalism and suggesting alternatives. For, unlike those who say nothing can be done, there are working experiments in popular and sustainable development all over the world. For example, in Porto Alegre, a major Brazilian city, popular groups in cooperation with the Workers' Party (PT) are building a municipal participatory democracy which not only responds to people's needs, but goes even farther with the organization of an active and responsible citizenry.

2- Alternatives in Québec and Canada

From the outset, Alternatives has stood out for its constant efforts to show the connections between world events and what is happening here. This is not being done to appear exotic. On our globalized Earth, daily life anywhere is influenced, molded and shaped by events elsewhere in the world. Dominant groups, whether political or economic, know this all too well. But a lot still has to be done at the grassroots.

2.1 Information

With 100,000 copies circulating in Montréal and 50,000 in Québec, the Alternatives newsletter insert in VOIR magazine is an extraordinary tool for information and awareness building. It allows us to reach an impressive number of people who otherwise would not be reached. The full-scale issue of the newsletter, with a circulation of 2,000, is another way of reaching members, subscribers and donors. Alternatives also publishes an English page in HOUR magazine (60,000 copies) and a page for student publications in Québec.

We have also set up a Website where a myriad of relevant information on the current international scene and our work is available. Also, a group of Alternatives activists in Québec broadcast a weekly program of international and regional news linked with the work of Alternatives.

The development and strengthening of communication tools through resources which are mainly based on volunteer work is a challenge to which we have risen and to which we intend to successfully continue to respond next year.

2.2 Public Activities

We organize an average of one public activity per week, and to draw up a list would be tiresome. These activities have various formats: workshops, seminars or large lectures. They attract thousands of people each year. Subjects are varied (the situation in Algeria, forced sterilization in South Asia, the union movement in Russia, etc.). The public is of all ages and comes from all walks of life.

We rely on these activities to get across the viewpoint of the South, by inviting repre-

sentatives of our partner groups or well-known international figures who have interesting expertise and analyses. These activities generally conclude with constructive discussions and exchanges.

Some of the major events worth mentioning which we organized this year are:

Against Fundamentalisms, a three-day symposium which brought together Monsignor Gaillot of France, Aicha Benabdelmounene, founder of the Human Rights League in Algeria, Paula Xanthopoulou, of U.S. Christian Watch, François Houtard from the Centre Tricontinental of Belgium, Ayesha Iman, a Nigerian member of Women Under Islamic Law, Michel Chossudovski, Professor, Department of Economics, Ottawa University, and many other speakers.

The *APEC People's Forum* with guests from China, East Timor, Mexico, Malaysia, the Philippines, Canada and Québec.

The *50th anniversary of independence of India and Pakistan*, with a broad program of political and cultural activities starting with an evening talk on child labour by Vithal Rajan, the leader of an Indian NGO which is very active on this issue.

There was a talk on *Chile* in Montréal and Québec, another on the *Middle East peace process* in Ottawa and Montréal, and a third in Montréal, Ottawa and Québec on the political situation in the *Great Lakes region* with Colette Braekman, a Belgian journalist, Elise Muhimuzi, coordinator of the Collective for providing information and support to women in the Congo, and Father Aloys Tegera, a sociologist working with repatriated Rwandans and refugees.

2.3 Intercultural Work

Alternatives and its member groups (CERAS and CEAD) advocate principles of rights and citizenship for our recently arrived fellow citizens and tries to highlight the diversity and wealth of various cultures. Several cultural and/or social activities have been organized to combat prejudice and discrimination and show how cultural communities contribute to the development of our society.

Among the activities organized this year by CEAD and CERAS were the “Journées du Maghreb” (music, films and discussions with youth from Montréal’s North African community), an evening of Indian classical music, and the Punjabi by Nature show given by a group of young Toronto musicians of South Asian origin.

The Fourth “Images du monde arabe” Festival should also be mentioned (films, an exhibition of paintings and a concert by performers of Arab origin). The next festival, to take place next autumn, will highlight the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, with a series of documentaries on Palestine and the fate awaiting children.

On another note, in the framework of the program of support and employability subsidized by the provincial government, the CEAD offers employability services to immigrants of Arab origin in order to facilitate their transition and job entry, help them understand the mechanisms, rules and workings of the labour market, allow them to acquire work experience and facilitate the accessibility and use of collective services in this field. This led us to participate in the work of many community groups or coalitions working to integrate immigrants.

2.4 Women

The women’s committee of Alternatives also organized several activities, focused in particular on the presence of Algerian and Russian guests, which made exchanges on the situation of women in those societies possible. The committee also collaborated closely in the organization of the symposium on Fundamentalisms, by contributing to exchanges between international guests and representatives of Québec women’s organizations. Finally, we should also mention the participation of Alternatives in the International Conference of Women held in Cuba last spring at the initiative of the Federation of Cuban Women.

2.5 Youth

This year, more than forty young people participated in the overseas training courses offered by Alternatives. This training includes a course lasting several months here and a stay with partner groups abroad in order to familiarize trainees with the day-to-day reality of development. These programs encourage exchanges between young people from Québec and people or organizations working for development in their own countries, showing how they promote appropriate solutions, and above all to understand what they can do here in order to support initiatives abroad. The same number of young people should be travelling to Morocco, Chile, Brazil and South Africa in 1998-1999.

Along the same lines, former trainees organized two speaking tours in Québec for representatives of groups from Chile and Morocco they had previously met.

2.6 Alternatives in Québec City

Alternatives broadened its horizons by putting down roots in the provincial capital, thanks to the work of a group of activists from the Québec region. Many activities and conferences were organized, each one of which attracted from 100 to 400 people. Several themes were covered: exclusion with Monsignor Gaillot, human rights in Algeria, Tunisia, Chile and Chiapas, the political situation in the Great Lakes area, and of course the repercussions of the MAI. A first Festival of “Images du monde arabe” attracted almost 600 people at the Musée de la civilisation.

The production of a weekly program on Radio Basse-Ville and the publication of the Alternatives newsletter in Voir-Québec magazine made our organization better known and maximized the impact and results of our actions.

Alternatives also collaborated with various groups and events of the Québec City scene. These valuable linkages allowed us to be in touch with the city’s action and energy.

2.7 Links with Local Organizations

Over the past year, Alternatives worked with a multitude of popular, union, women’s and youth groups. Our efforts were concentrated on the formation of broad alliances on issues linked to globalization, economic integration, and the adoption of policies and mechanisms to confront major economic blocs like NAFTA (in the Americas) or APEC (Asia-Pacific). We supported the Canadian and Québec campaign against the MAI, in order to increase the general public’s awareness of globalization, which is often presented as inevitable and promising process by the mass media though the reality is much more complex.

We also worked for the development of solidarity links between grassroots groups in Québec and the rest of Canada by organizing some workshops in Montréal and Toronto on topics such as the privatization of public services, especially water, the right to education, and the new realities of social programs after the cuts to social aid made by Québec City and Toronto.

Alternatives continues to be part of several associative networks in Québec and Canada,

in particular Solidarité populaire Québec (SPQ), the Association québécoise des organismes de coopération internationale (AQOCI), the Canadian Council for International Cooperation (CCIC), and the Réseau québécois sur l'intégration continentale (RQIC).

More specific and concrete partnerships also exist with:

- International solidarity groups, specifically: Inter Church Coalition on Africa (Toronto), Inter Pares (Ottawa), Middle East Working Group (MEWG), South Asia Partnership (SAP), Partenariat Afrique Canada (PAC), COCAMO, Development and Peace, OXFAM-Canada, Solidarité Canada-Sahel, Cuba Sí Coalition, Salut le Monde!, International Center for Human Rights and Democratic Development
- Community and grassroots organizations, especially with: Council of Canadians, Regroupement de solidarité avec les peuples autochtones, Opération SalAmi, Table de concertation des organismes de Montréal au service des réfugiés, CEDEC-Centre-Sud, South Asian Women's Community Centre, Comité d'adaptation de la main-d'oeuvre pour personnes immigrantes (CAMO), Regroupement des organismes de services aux nouveaux arrivants du Québec (ROSNA), Fédération des femmes du Québec (FFQ), etc.
- The labour movement, specifically: CSN, CEQ, FTQ, FAC, Canadian Labour Congress, the Canadian Autoworkers Social Justice Fund;
- Religious organizations, especially with Cardinal Léger's Works and the Missionaries Oblate of Mary Immaculate.
- Teaching institutions were also sources of support and cooperation, especially: Université du Québec à Montréal, Université de Montréal, Concordia University, Carleton University (Ottawa) and McGill University.

2.8 Lobbying Governments

Through its many activities, and especially through periodic statements in major newspapers and electronic media, Alternatives contributed to alerting public opinion on hot topics such as the repression in Algeria, American attacks on Iraq, militarization in South Asia, the American blockade of Cuba and human rights violations in Nigeria.

We joined many coalitions to put pressure on governments to change or improve their international policies. This work was also reflected in our approach to funding agencies, chiefly with the Canadian Agency for International Development (CIDA), either within the framework of our projects or as part of public or private consultations on the major orientations of international aid or current events.

3. Associative Life

As in previous years, Alternatives experienced an expansion and diversification of its associative life. A large number of people of all origins, ages and callings gave their time and skills to ensure the proper progress of projects. This diversity is important and allows us to be a forum for debate and discussion which lead to action in several fields.

3.1 Structures

In May 1997, the General Assembly with the theme of “Hooking up with the World” took place over two days. The first evening had interactive multimedia with several international guests with whom the audience could dialogue by telephone. With more than 300 participants, it was a great success. The workshops and plenary of the following day featured discussions of several aspects of Alternatives’ programs, the adoption of statutes, bylaws and financial reports.

The Board of Directors and the Executive Council met regularly to follow up on Alternatives’ programs. These two bodies participated in the drawing up and adoption of new budget standards in January and initiated a broad consultation on the restructuring of Alternatives to improve its operations.

The work of the committees continued on a regular basis and gave rise to several new initiatives such as, for example, more formal meetings on the intercultural theme, concrete solidarity activities by former trainees of the Youth Program, and a study of the environment and international development.

The staff underwent many changes both on the human resource and the task sharing levels. In spite of the increased tasks assigned to each member, the vitality of the team did not diminish. The continuing training plan at lunchtime worked well and should continue this year.

Major efforts were made to stay in touch with the membership, which remained at the level of some 400 persons. The “Lettre du vendredi”, an internal newsletter, was sent out regularly along with the newsletter and major documents regarding our activities.

Donors are a key element in the development and expansion of Alternatives’ work.

Their generosity contributes greatly to the viability of our programs. The number of monthly donations tripled this year, and we shall continue to develop our program to maintain donor loyalty in the months to come.

3.2 Funding

Our relations with the various funding agencies remained excellent, especially with the Canadian Agency for International Development (CIDA), which renewed our funding by its NGO Division for the third consecutive year.

At the internal level, the new budget standards adopted in January made it possible to strengthen and stabilize Alternatives' activities as a whole. A special effort was made to broaden funding sources. We also succeeded in significantly increasing the percentage of self-financing through donations, simultaneous interpretation services, consulting services, etc. At the same time, we diversified linkages with government organizations at the federal, provincial or municipal level and independent organizations (NGO, unions, religious communities, etc.)

Long-term consolidation work should continue over the coming year, with, inter alia, the purchase of a building to which Alternatives is to move in September 1999. The costs linked to the rental of premises would decrease and we would no longer be at the mercy of fluctuations in the rental market.

4. Prospects for 1998-1999

Alternatives' program for the next twelve months is far-reaching and daring. On all fronts, we will try to continue with what we started and open new doors, following the orientation of struggle for the social justice and democracy.

4.1 Development of Overseas Programs

Latin America

Work with Brazilian grassroots organizations, particularly the Landless Movement, will increase, especially in the framework of a speaking tour of the movement's leaders and a photo exhibit to take place in September. In Cuba, we are co-organizing a major consultation on solidarity work with Cuban NGOs. This will take place in Havana itself in early autumn. We hope this Cuban initiative will lead to a major program of cooperation in Cuba by Alternatives.

We will carefully study the results of the ongoing project of support to communities of Panamanian indigenous peoples in order to see how this new partnership can take shape in the long term. Along with this, we will undertake a new Internet training program with "logged-on" youth who will work in Brazil and Chile.

Sub-Saharan Africa

We will continue support for grassroots organizations in Congo and Rwanda, but due to current events (the return of war) we will have to dedicate more attention to the urgent needs of the most vulnerable peoples. We also plan to extend our activities in Burundi. In the Horn of Africa, we will concentrate even more on Sudan. There, the opposition in liberated areas is trying to reconstruct what should become the democratic and secular Sudan of tomorrow.

In West Africa, we shall take into account the new dynamics in Nigeria after the death of its dictator Abacha, while working with our colleagues of Development Workshop to support self-organization activities in the Sahel. Also with Development Workshop, we shall maintain and broaden our activities in Angola. In South Africa, we

shall take advantage of Nelson Mandela's upcoming visit to Canada to put the South African problematic back on the map, especially as regards the struggle of the landless.

North Africa and Middle East

CEAD will continue its work on Palestine, especially in the framework of a new support program for grassroots organizations promoting peace and democracy. In Egypt, we shall try to maintain our program with the Women's Forum if CIDA accepts the extension. In Algeria, new ways are opening of support for the associative movement in spite of the ongoing crisis. In Morocco, the work with l'Espace associatif, composed of several NGOs and women's groups, should be reinforced.

South Asia

CERAS will continue its campaign against the arms race and intercommunity violence by organizing several awareness raising and lobbying activities here. In India and Pakistan, in partnership with grassroots organizations, the priority will be to support initiatives aimed at encouraging dialogue and regional cooperation. We will try to develop projects with grassroots organizations in Bangladesh, especially in cooperation with Inter Pares.

East Asia

We will contribute to the organization of the next People's Summit on APEC called by Malaysian popular groups (the summit will take place in Kuala Lumpur). With the Asia Monitor Resource Center (AMRC), a Hong Kong NGO which does research and training on the union level, we will try to organize an investigative trip on grassroots organizations in China. We will keep our linkages with groups in the Philippines, especially IBON, a Manila-based socio-political research and training organization.

Eastern Europe

We will continue to support union initiatives in Russia. We will try to initiate a new program with women's organizations. In the former Yugoslavia, we intend to undertake new activities with community and pacifist groups.

International Networking

Priorities will be to continue participating in the World Forum of Alternatives, especially in the organization of a People's Summit. We will also support the Sao Paulo Forum, which will hold its next meeting in Mexico City in October.

4.2 Strengthening our local actions

Major youth and intercultural activities have already been program to break the silence about discrimination against immigrant youth. Generally speaking, the education and information program will give particular attention to the entire issue of globalization, in particular by opposing the uncontrolled restructuring process and the devastating impact of the mechanisms set up by power blocs such as the MAI, NAFTA and APEC.

With our friends from Development Workshop, we plan to organize a series of activities on popular dynamics in cities, with our partners in Angola, Brazil and India as witnesses.

The Québec group will continue to move forward with several cultural and political activities. The committees (Women, Latin America, Eastern Europe, Africa, Morocco, Chile, etc.) have also planned speaking tours and seminars.

We shall continue to be present and active within coalitions such as AQOCI and CCIC, while deepening our links with grassroots, union, women's and youth organizations.

4.3 Organizational and Financial Challenges

The priority will be to follow up on the proposals and recommendations of the Special Committee on Restructuring, especially through systematic, careful work to strengthen the various bodies such as the Board of Directors and the Executive Council.

Also at the internal level, more space will be given to training and information for members (meetings, publications, etc.), in order to strengthen the appropriation by members of Alternatives' life as a whole. The donor base will also be broadened. Efforts to diversify sources of funding will be intensified, especially through photocopying services, computer graphics, translation, etc.

In terms of logistics, we intend to move to the new offices in September 1999, which will make operations easier with more space and improve our financial performance through lower rent.

Financially, the new budget standards will help us to reach a financial surplus for the fiscal year 1998-99. With CIDA, we will undertake to renegotiate the triannual contribution intended to cover the 1999-2001 period by persuading it to increase its funding.

Conclusion

We cannot think of success as an automatic guarantee for the future, but rather as a basis for moving forward. For the world is in constant change, and so are the challenges which organizations such as ours must face.

We are active players in a very broad, extraordinarily creative movement which at the same time is dispersed, fragmented and still in search of its identity and prospects for transformation. We must be patient, persistent and innovative.

Internally, we will have to work on what brings us together and rallies us, knowing that these constructive debates will allow us to become more democratic, inclusive and relevant. We will have to invent and adopt a new organizational culture which will wed activism and democracy to professionalism and efficiency.

Our organization, which has grown well but is still a minute drop in the ocean, is still valuable, fragile and necessary. Through our debates, questioning and even our uncertainties, we contribute to building a different world.

And all of this motivates each and every one of us to go on.

Who's who

Board of Directors 1997-1998

*** Rachad Antonius, professor of college-level mathematics and researcher at the Institut interculturel de Montréal**

Peter Bakvis, responsible for international relations for the CSN

*** Robert David (since November 1997), professional fundraiser (Impact +)**

Mino Gundevia, professor of French as a second language at the South Asian Women's Community Centre

Ratiba Hadj-Moussa, professor at Kingston University (Ontario)

Jean Guy Loranger, professor at the Economics Department of the Université de Montréal

Jean Ménard, activist of the Organization populaire de défense des droits sociaux (OPDS)

Elisabeth Morey (till May 1998), responsible for student life at Marianopolis College

*** Shree Mulay, director of the Centre for Research and Teaching on Women at McGill University**

Dominique Payette, journalist and instructor of communications at the Université de Montréal

*** Bernard Schutze, Ph.D student of communications**

Jawad Sqalli (till November 1997), journalist and activist on international issues

The * preceding a person's name indicates that he or she is also a member of the Executive Committee.

Staff

Gavin Andrew (youth programs)

Pierre Beaudet (Director-General)

Yamina Bessar (accounting/women's committee)

Carole Boucher (administration/information)

Stéphan Corriveau (fundraising)

Isabelle Dahan (cultural activities - Images du monde arabe)

Abdelkrim Debhi (activities coordinator, CEAD)

Josée Desharnais (Alternatives-Québec City)

Marcela Escribano (Latin America)

Marjorie Gagnon (accounting)

France-Isabelle Langlois (intercultural programs)

Michel Lambert (Eastern Europe, East Asia)

Yves Lavallée (technical support)

Jimmy Linch (technical support)

Feroz Mehdi (activities coordinator, CERAS)

Yasmina Moudda Azzem (fundraising)

Khadija Mounib (access-to-work support programs for the Arab community)

Charles Mugiraneza (Sub-Saharan Africa)

Hamouda Soubhi (North Africa/Middle East)

Stéphane Tourangeau (information technology)