

Appendix VII

Implementation Evaluation/Suggestions from the Secretariat

1. Office Structure - The Summit Secretariat suffered greatly from a lack of staff and resources. As a stand-alone office, with no administrative or support services, staff were dependent on volunteers to undertake significant projects that would normally be assigned to paid staff. In addition, staff time was eaten up by the vast number of administrative and information dissemination tasks that are inherent to an operation this size.

It is important to ensure a solid foundation beginning with the basics such as proper telephone system and office equipment as well as adequate staff and staff time to carry out the job. While volunteers will always be an essential part of staging an event such as the People's Summit, there are tasks that should not fall under the responsibility of volunteers

One-time projects such as these could be housed under the auspices of a large well-established organization that can provide much-needed support both in terms of equipment and resources (both financial and human). Without question, the Secretariat's role would have been far easier and more efficient had this been the case.

2. Organizational Structure - Canadian Advisory Board/ Vancouver Steering Committee/Issue Forums/Secretariat. This decentralized structure, in addition to supporting the mistaken view that the Summit and Issue Forums were separate entities, led to the feeling, that somehow the Issue Forums, the CAB/VSC and the Secretariat were separate entities, rather than a coalition working together to implement this project. Had the Issue Forums been more directly involved in policy decisions and given a greater stake in the execution of the overall event, we may have avoided many of the problems that arose during the lead-up period as well as during the Summit itself. Registration is an example, where the high Issue Forum registration numbers compared with low People's Summit registration may have reflected the lack of ownership on behalf of the Issue Forums in promoting the Summit in addition to their own forums. These problems were only partly addressed by the invitation, given to Issue Forum coordinators, to become part of the VSC.

3. Fee Structure - An additional difficulty of the registration process involved the differing fee structures between the Summit and the various Issue Forums. This complicated the registration process and confusing registrants. Many people were not entirely sure as to the difference between the forums and the Summit: who they were supposed to pay, how much, and for what. Separate fee structures also resulted in an unnecessarily complicated accounting process for the Summit. Therefore, it is suggested that a one-time all-inclusive registration fee would have made things far simpler for both the organizers as well as the participants. In addition, a Registration Coordinator should be hired well advance of the Summit to liaise with the Issue Forums and oversee the process.

4. Volunteer Coordination - A volunteer coordinator was hired only 2 weeks prior to the event, due to budget restrictions. Understandably, this was insufficient time for the coordinator to acquaint himself with the project, recruit sufficient volunteers and orient them in time for the event. As it was, a brief orientation was provided, and volunteers were simply slotted into positions as they arrived on-site, with the exception of key volunteers such as those staffing the Secretariat office on-site, and those doing registration. Therefore,