

### 1990

Council chairperson Maude Barlow and former chairperson John Trent appear before the Royal Commission on Electoral Reform and Party Financing. They ask for a reduction and monitoring of third-party advocacy and advertising during elections, to make it difficult for a group to dominate debate due to financial power.

### 1991

The Council, along with Friends of Canadian Broadcasting and the Canadian Union of Public Employees, forms a coalition called “100 Days of Action” to try to stop drastic cuts to the CBC. More than 1,000 employees and 11 regional production centres were to be cut in the 1991 budget. The public outcry forces the government to back off on some of the planned cuts.



### 1992

The Council takes over the signing ceremony for the new North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Activists hold up an American flag behind Prime Minister Brian Mulroney in a photo that is flashed around the world. Maude Barlow yells to Mulroney, “You promised to protect basic democracy. You have failed to keep your promise.”

### 1993

The Council brings Carlos Heredia – a former opposition leader in Mexico who had his 1988 election victory stolen by president Carlos Salinas – to Canada to “testify” against NAFTA when the CBC’s *The National* puts the deal “on trial.” Salinas steps down a year later to campaign for the position of head of the World Trade Organization.

### 1994

Maude Barlow writes a letter to the Council’s membership asking for their advice: “We have lost twice now (the passage of the FTA and NAFTA), and perhaps it is time to accept defeat and move on.” The response is overwhelming – members declare that the Council is needed now more than ever.

With the federal government poised to grant Monsanto the right to market bovine growth hormone in Canada, the Council builds a strong national coalition, organizes a campaign, and in 1998 wins a moratorium against the introduction of BGH in Canada.

### 1995

The Council gives Prime Minister Jean Chrétien a failing grade on “social policy” in a mid-term “Report Card” on his government. Chrétien receives his “F” for the Canada Health and



Social Transfer cuts of \$7 billion that put medicare, post-secondary education and vital social services at risk.

### 1996

The Council holds a demonstration outside of the finance ministers’ meeting in Ottawa to protest planned cuts to the Canada Pension Plan (CPP). Council members present Finance Minister Paul Martin and his provincial counterparts with 100,000 petitions against the cuts. The government of British Columbia agrees and blocks Martin’s plans to cut the CPP.

### 1997

The Council loses the first round of its fight to stop Conrad Black’s take-over of the Southam newspaper chain. The Court states that the Council isn’t entitled to appeal the government’s approval of the deal because the Council isn’t “commercially affected.”