

About the “Accommodate this!” Report...

This report is the culmination of the « Accommodate this! » series of anti-racist events and discussions in Montreal, that aimed at challenging the xenophobic climate surrounding the so-called “debate” on Reasonable Accommodation in Quebec.

This series came in the wave of the anti-racist organizing that took place in the Fall 2007 in Montreal, to denounce the Bouchard-Taylor Commission as a state-sanctioned pseudo-forum based on racist and sexist premises, and reject its supposed role as a “forum” while it acted as a platform for racism and bigotry. We rejected the Bouchard-Taylor Commission and the surrounding so called “debate” on Reasonable Accommodation because:

- They fail to recognize that Quebec and Canada are built on stolen Indigenous land constituted through the dispossession and genocide of Indigenous peoples.
- They are based on a false and racist dichotomy between “us” and “them”, where ‘us’ is made up of white people of European descent, and ‘them’ is made up of migrant and racialized communities, perceived as “threats” to “national identity”.
- They use the so called “women’s rights” framework to advance racist and sexist arguments. We reject the Islamophobia and sexism that are used to justify war abroad -- as is the case in the on-going military occupation of Afghanistan -- and the attack on migrant communities – as is the case in the “debate” on reasonable accommodation.
- The Commission, sanctioned by the state, is a process of submission, whereby minority populations are forced to justify their very existence in Quebec. It ignores all the injustice faced by migrant communities in Quebec, while forcing them to defend themselves as “good Quebecois”

The “Accommodate this!” series aimed at creating true forums for members of racialized and migrant communities to address the real issues we face every day: racism, exploitation at work, sexism, precarious status, marginalization, deportation, detention, impoverishment, police brutality, racial profiling and harassment by the state.

In the vein of shifting the focus from the so called societal “debate” onto our lived realities, as migrant and racialized communities, and our on-going struggles, we wanted to record the voices of those at the receiving end of racism, sexism, exploitation and injustice, and those who are at the frontlines of the struggle against all forms of oppression, in a counter-report, based on our vision of justice and dignity. This is the “Accommodate this!” report.

This report attempts to collect some of the many realities of marginalization imposed on migrant communities in Quebec, through testimonies from the families of the men detained under Security Certificates, accounts from non status people fighting for their dignity, statements from migrants detained at the Immigration “Prevention” Center in

Laval, testimonies from victims of police brutality and racial profiling, and discussions about the double layer of racist and sexist oppression imposed on migrant women and on fighting gender violence targeted at racialized women.

It also draws from an anti-colonial and anti-racist analysis in offering a critique of the so-called “debate” on Reasonable Accommodation in Quebec as yet another manifestation of an on going history of land theft, genocide, white supremacy and exploitation of racialized communities, that continuously uses a co-opted pro-feminist discourse to justify an imperialist agenda.

Finally, this report highlights our on going organizing efforts against state oppression and violence targeted at the most marginalized, through Indigenous solidarity work, Status for All campaigns, mobilizing against so called “security measures” in Immigration, as well as organizing against the Bouchard-Taylor Commission itself.