International Women's Year, 1975

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International
Women’s Year
Année internationale
de la femme
Año Internacional
de la Mujer

1975

St. Joan’s International Alliance
U.S. Section
St. Joan's International Alliance
U.S. Section

B U L L E T I N

SPECIAL INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR ISSUE

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Credit-IWY Symbol: United Nations

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FOREWORD

By Ms. Bernice McNeela, President

We are pleased to present this special International Women's Year edition of St. Joan's BULLETIN. Included are reports of the Conference and the Tribune held in Mexico City in June, and also papers regarding various facets of the status of women. We think you will find them informative and interesting.

International Women's Year has offered all groups concerned with the status of women the opportunity to call attention to the unequal situation of women, to assess any progress which has been made, and to rally support for the continued efforts to correct the inequities. St. Joan's welcomed this opportunity.

Two of our members, Frances McGillicuddy and Frances Sawyer, attended the Conference in Mexico City as observers for St. Joan's International. Denyse Barbet attended the Tribune. Several of our members participated in a workshop sponsored by the Committee on International Women's Year of Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Status to the United Nations, which was held in New York City November 11-12. There were reports of the Conference in Mexico City, and discussions of what the United Nations, governments and non-governmental organizations can do for the advancement of women. Representatives from many foreign countries, presidents of international organizations, and other notables were in attendance. At the meeting, a BOOK OF LETTERS of support of International Women's Year from various organizations was presented to Ms. Helvi Sipila, Secretary-General of International Women's Year. St. Joan's letter is included in this BULLETIN.

Following the Workshop I had the pleasure of attending the Women United for the United Nations Annual Luncheon Meeting honoring women delegates to the United Nations General Assembly. St. Joan's member, Ms. Frances Sawyer, is president of Women United. The luncheon was held in the West Terrace of the UN Delegates Dining Room. I was seated at a special table for World and National Non-Governmental Organization Presidents.

Three of the resolutions we passed during the year pertained to International Women's Year. One, addressed to the Secretary of State of the United States, applauded the decision of the U.S. Commission for IWY to accord Number One priority to ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment, urged the life of the Commission for IWY be extended through 1976, and that the U.S. government ratify and implement all international instruments which pertain to equal rights and justice for women. Another resolution, addressed to the Holy See, urged the Holy See to ratify and implement international instruments which pertain to equal rights and justice for women. The third resolution, in recognition of IWY and Holy Year, and anticipating the Bicentennial in 1976, reaffirmed our basic objective of securing equality between women and men in the state, church, and society, and accepted as priority goals for the coming year elimination of all laws and practices within the Catholic Church which discriminate against women, and ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

The work of International Women's Year is not over. At the time of this writing, the United Nations is considering extending International Women's Year to INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DECADE. A year is much too short a time to accomplish what needs to be done - this will require continued dedication to the cause of equality for women.
Implementing the decision of the Executive Board, President Bernice McNeela, on June 10, 1975, sent a telegram to Secretary of State Henry Kissinger urging -

1) That the United States Delegation "play a role and exert an influence at the IWY Mexico City Conference consonant with our country's leadership position, and with the principles of liberty, equality, and justice on which our nation was founded 200 years ago.

2) That United States Government ratify and implement all international instruments which pertain to equal rights and justice for women.

3) The Alliance applauds the decisions of the United States Commission for IWY to accord Number One priority during International Women's Year to ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment and urges that the life of the Commission be extended through 1976.

* * * * * * * * * * * *

FEAR AND/OR APATHY

"...all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed."

(U.S. Declaration of Independence)

* * * * * * * * * * * *

"WITH LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL"

The United States Bishops have announced this quotation from the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag as the theme of their celebration of the Bicentennial.

Does "all" mean "women and men" or "males only"?

* * * * * * * * * * * *
On the occasion of the official launching of International Women's Year in Washington, January 11, 1975, St. Joan's member, The Reverend Dr. Jeannette Piccard of Minneapolis gave the invocation. Does anyone not know that The Reverend Dr. Piccard is one of the eleven famous Episcopalian women ordained to the priesthood in June 1974?

INVOCATION

Almighty God, we thank you for the great women who have gone before us and given us models to emulate. We thank you for making us, both women and men, in your image. Keep us ever mindful that we are created in your image. Let us ever remember that anything we do to others, we do to you; that anything we do for others, we do for you. Keep us from ever treating another with contempt and when others treat us with contempt, keep us strong in the knowledge that we are always in you and you in us.

Bless, O God, this food to our use and us to your loving service, mindful of the needs and wants of others, through your Child, Jesus Christ. Amen
Women's Year Delegates Ask
Decade of Development

A Little Pique at IWY

Meanwhile, back at the Tribune, a group of nuns, presumably Americans, issued a release calling for the ordination of women "as deacons, priests and bishops." The statement cited as "giants of faith and action" Sor Juana de la Cruz, Mother Francesca Cabrini, Elizabeth Seton, and Mother Theresa. We're piqued not to find Joan of Arc listed among the "giants." But recall now that she was not a "Sister."

We cannot report how the deceased "giants" would react to the ordination move, but the response of Mother Theresa was, unfortunately, negative. She belongs to the "Mary-was-not-one-of-the-Twelve" school. It was, however, an honor, privilege and pleasure to talk with her. - Frances Lee McGillicuddy

BY FRANCES LEE MC GILLCUDDY
MEXICO CITY — Thousands of women (the men permitted us to outnumber them two to one) attended the World Conference of the International Women's Year held here from June 19 to July 2. Yet having the word "sexism," meaning discrimination based on sex, included in the list of obstacles impeding women was defeated.

Nevertheless there were accomplishments. IWY, whose goals are Equality, Development, Peace, will expand into a Decade for Women and Development (1975-1985) and a second world conference on women will be convened in 1980.

A Plan of Action, a Declaration of Mexico, and 34 resolutions were approved by the Conference. The Report of the Conference will be considered at the forthcoming session of the UN General Assembly later this year.

A draft Plan of Action prepared by the UN Secretariat was the major working paper before the delegates. Notwithstanding the intensive preliminary work on the document, 844 amendments were submitted during debate on the Plan in the Conference's First Committee.

Minimum Targets Cited

It is probable that the views of many sponsors of amendments were reflected in the Declaration of Mexico which was drafted by 74 developing countries, and in the 34 additional resolutions adopted by the Conference.

The Plan of Action, a rich document, sets forth long term and short-term targets. "Minimum targets" include:

- Increased employment opportunities for women;
- Enactment of legislation on equal political participation with men, equal employment opportunities and remuneration, and equality in legal capacity and the exercise thereof;
- Encouragement of increased participation of women in the formulation of policies at all levels;
- Provision for parity in the exercise of civil, social and political rights such as those pertaining to marriage, citizenship and commerce;
- Redirection of formal, non-formal and life-long education towards the revaluation of men and women, in order to ensure their full realization as individuals in the family and in society;
- The promotion of women's organizations as an interim measure within workers' organizations and educational, economic and professional institutions;
- Concerning the family the Plan states that the functions and roles traditionally allotted to each sex within the family should be continually reexamined and reassessed in the light of changing conditions if women are to enjoy equal rights, opportunities and responsibilities in society.

The Plan of Action was adopted without vote in plenary session of the Conference. Such was not the case with the Declaration of Mexico, which was drafted independently by delegates of 74 developing countries. Some other delegations resented the lack of consultation respecting the language of the Declaration and the inclusion of political and divisive elements into the declaration of a conference on women.

There was a roll-call vote, for example, on the inclusion of the word "zionism" in the listing of obstacles to the participation of women in development. Though a number of countries voted against, or abstained, in the roll-call vote they did vote in favor of the Declaration as a whole. Only Israel and the United States finally voted against the Declaration, as a whole, though there were 19 abstentions.

During the roll-call vote on the inclusion of the word "zionism," a spirited delegate from New Zealand protested the inclusion of "sexism" while the word "sexism" had been barred. This was an allusion to an exchange which took place in the Second Committee.

No 'Sexism' in UN

A member of the United States delegation, Ms. Rita Johnston, tried in vain to have the word "sexism" included in the list of obstacles impeding the participation of
MEXICO CITY CONFERENCE: INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR

By now every schoolgirl and boy knows, one hopes, that the World Conference of the International Women's Year took place in Mexico City from June 19 to July 2, 1975. The theme of the Conference was EQUALITY, DEVELOPMENT, PEACE.

Participants at the Conference included delegations from 133 Governments (including the Holy See), 10 intergovernmental organizations, 23 United Nations organs and specialized agencies, 3 independence and political liberation movements, 3 Dependent Territories and 113 international organizations in consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council. Government representatives only were official delegates; others were observers.

In Government delegations women outnumbered men 5 to 1. It must be noted however that delegates expressed, not their own personal views but the policies and positions of their Governments. For the most part the male "policy men" remained unobtrusive until a politically sensitive question of vote arose, whereupon the "man-with-the-directions" surfaced.

Sixteen hundred journalists covered the proceedings—a vast number in view of the limited quantity and uneven quality of articles in the world press. On-the-spot correspondents worked diligently and filed an abundance of articles and editors at home, it seems, were the culprits.

The official opening of the Conference by Mexico's President Luis Echeverria, United Nations Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim, and the Secretary-General of the Conference, Ms. Helvi Sipila, took place in the Olympic Stadium, Juan de la Barrera; and other meetings were held in the Foreign Affairs Secretariat in Tlatelolco, Plaza de las Tres Cultures, historic backdrop of three cultures: Aztec, Spanish and Modern.

Concurrently with the Conference but at a distance of five miles the IWY Tribune attracted five thousand participants. Organized in some haste by a committee of international non-governmental organizations representatives in New York, the Tribune, which took place in the Centro Medico, was officially opened by Mexico's First Lady, Senora Maria Esther Duno de Echeverria. In the media coverage of Mexico City IWY events the distinction between the Conference and the Tribune was often blurred.

The Tribune was open to members of international and national organizations and to persons affiliated with no organized group. As stated above observers from accredited international organizations could attend the Conference proper but such organizations could name only two observers.

The Tribune seethed with varied activities, some pre-planned, others spontaneous and occasionally uninhibited, but none dull. The Tribune was the nearest thing to grassroots expression in Mexico, and it was called by some "the conscience of the Conference."

* Article by Frances McGillicuddy for a future issue of The Catholic Citizen
Many Tribune participants had come to Mexico City with the mistaken notion that they would have indirect, if not direct, input into the Conference. To their amazement, frustration and anger they learned that they could not even gain entrance to the Conference building. They were not mollified by the announcement that the president of the International Women's Year Conference was a man. Unfamiliar with United Nations precedents they were unaware of the custom to elect as president the leader of the host country’s delegation, in this case Mexico’s Attorney-General Pedro Ojeda Paullada. The President did not endear himself to Tribune participants, moreover, when he commented at a press conference that close communication between the Conference and Tribune was unnecessary because nothing new was being said in the Tribune and that, furthermore, participants had already had the chance in their own countries to make their views known.

Conference work was carried on in plenary sessions and in Committee I and II, all three sitting concurrently throughout the two-week period. In plenary meetings one could hear general policy statements by leaders of delegations, wives of Heads of State or of Government. The highest ranking woman-in-her-own-right was Sri Lanka’s (Ceylon) Prime Minister, Mrs. Sirimavo Bondaranaika.

Committee I dealt with the draft Plan of Action: Committee II considered jointly two items: Current Trends and Changes in the Status of Roles of Women and Men, and Major Obstacles to be Overcome in the Achievement of Equal Rights. It was in Committee II that this observer for St. Joan's International Alliance was permitted to read a statement jointly submitted by thirty-nine international non-governmental organizations. The statement, which has been issued in English, French and Spanish (E/CONF.66/NGO/3), termed traditional attitudes as the major obstacle to the attainment of equality of women and men. Committee II produced a series of valuable Resolutions which were all adopted by the full Conference. Some are cited below.

The First Committee had the enormous task of discussing and amending the Plan of Action, which had been originally drafted by the Secretariat and amended last March by the Consultative Committee for IWY during its two-week session in New York. The Committee in Mexico was staggered by an avalanche of 894 draft amendments. Working groups were set up in an attempt to consolidate the drafts. It was soon obvious that in the short time available it would be impossible to debate even a fraction of the drafts. The Committee decided to deal only with amendments to the Introduction and Chapter I (National Action). Chapters II (Specific Areas for National Action), III (Research, Data Collection and Analysis), IV (Mass Communications Media), V (International and Regional Action), and VI (Review and Appraisals) would be adopted without discussion, as originally drafted by the Secretariat.

To the World Plan of Action would be appended the Plans of Action already adopted, or to be adopted, by Regional Commissions. Two such already exist, those of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and the Economic Commission for Africa.

Adoption of the World Plan of Action by the Mexican Conference was by consensus. Only two delegations were unable to join the consensus: China and the Holy See. The latter opposed inclusion of the word "individuals" in paragraph 19 of the Introduction which reads:

"Individuals and couples have the right freely and responsibly to determine the number and spacing of their children and to have information and means to do so. The exercise of this right is basic to the attainment of any real equality between the sexes and without its achievement women are disadvantaged in their attempt to benefit from other reforms." (Emphasis added.)
Mildred,

I thought you might be a collector of this type of "literature." You may recall that the joint statement (p. 129) was drafted by the
U.N. Rep. of St. Jan's Int'l Alliance to read by her in CM.
commission II of the 14th conference. (Mathes) in the name of the 39
co-sponsoring u.l. NC-01's.

[Signature]
The Holy See submitted one draft resolution during the Conference. After some criticism by a number of delegations and subsequent revision the Resolution was adopted. The draft had been presented by Mother Theresa; it dealt with poverty and charity. The Holy See, as ever, maintained an "equal-but" stance. Its press conference was less specific than homiletic.

The World Plan of Action is a rich and comprehensive document containing short and long-term goals, and guidelines for their attainment. There is no substitute for a serious study of the Plan, nor is it possible adequately to summarize it. We shall simply list a few of the "minimum targets" to be reached by 1980:

A marked increase in literacy and civic education of women;
Equal access to education at every level;
Co-educational technical and vocational training in industrial and agricultural sectors;
Increased employment opportunities...increased efforts to eliminate discrimination;
Greater participation of women in policy-making at all levels;
Recognition of the economic value of women's work in the home, in domestic food production and marketing and voluntary activities not traditionally renumerated;
Establishment of infrastructural (support) services.

In addition to the Plan of Action the Conference adopted 34 Resolutions of great interest. In many of these, as well as in the Plan, the assistance and cooperation of non-governmental organizations is invited and urged. Space permits mention of only a few of the 34 Resolutions; which deal with:

(No. 7) Prevention of the exploitation of women and girls.
(No. 8) The situation of women in the employ of the United Nations and specialized agencies;
(No. 12) Social resources for the integration of women in development;
(No. 17) Treatment of the family as an object of special protection and the recognition of its rights with respect to its formation and defense, the establishment of the legal equality of the spouses and the guarantee of individual and couples freely to decide the number and spacing of their children.;
(No. 19) Importance of the media in determining attitudes and values;
(No. 22) Women and development, with special concern for the poor and disadvantaged; (This is the Holy See Resolution previously mentioned);

One of the most important Resolutions which deserves special mention (No. 25)
"Considers it necessary to speed up the elaboration and finalization by the United Nations of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women." The resolution "welcomes the progress already made by the Commission on the Status of Women in drafting such a convention."

At its final meeting the Conference adopted a thirty-paragraph statement of principles called the DECLARATION OF MEXICO ON THE EQUALITY OF WOMEN AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE, 1975. There is considerable overlapping between this statement of principles and the text of the Plan of Action and the Resolutions previously approved.
The Declaration, sponsored by 7 developing countries, is well drafted and contains affirmations of principles which will be specially welcomed by St. Joan's members. Unfortunately, at least one item, of a sensitive political nature, caused dissension and somewhat marred the closing meeting of the Conference. Three of the most heartening paragraphs of the Declaration follow:

(No. 11), "It should be one of the principal aims of social education to teach respect for physical integrity and its rightful place in human life. The human body, whether of woman or man, is inviolable and respect for it is a fundamental element of human dignity and freedom."

(No. 28) "Women all over the world should unite to eliminate violations of human rights committed against women and girls such as rape, prostitution, physical assault, mental cruelty, child marriage, forced marriage and marriage as a commercial transaction."

(No. 16) "The ultimate end of development is to achieve a better quality of life for all, which means not only the development of economic and other material resources but also the physical, moral, intellectual and cultural growth of the human person."

Is International Women's Year merely a global "To-the-Ladies-God-Bless-Them" gesture? One recalls that not a great deal was said and done at Mexico City which had not already been said and done in the UN Status of Women Commission and associated seminars around the world. What has been lacking in the past has been the will of Governments to translate into action the resolutions, declarations and international instruments they themselves have voted within the United Nations bodies. Governments, if they are serious and sincere in their affirmations and reaffirmations of the equality of women and men, will have to reorder their priorities. At present, it seems that the problems of women everywhere--without distinction as to geography, ideology or stage of economic development--remain at the bottom of the priority heap.

If the United Nations General Assembly adopts the recommendations of Mexico, IWY will be extended into IWD, International Women's Decade, 1975-1985. This will be a great opportunity for and challenge to women, above all to women's non-governmental organizations. As Ms. Helvi Sipila expressed it: "Now, tired though we are, the real work has just begun."

Closing the historic Conference at 11:00 P.M. on July 2, its president, Pedro Ojeda Paullada, called it "the first step in the establishment of a society in which women, all the women of the world, can increasingly become the rulers of their own destinies."

# # #

END

MALE COLONIALISM,
IMPERIALISM,
AND SEX-BASED
APARTHEID
The Secretary-General has received the following statement to be distributed to the World Conference of the International Women's Year in conformity with rule 54 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Conference.

OBSTACLES TO THE ATTAINMENT OF EQUALITY OF WOMEN AND MEN

1. Fourteen international non-governmental organizations in 1973 jointly submitted to the twenty-fifth session of the Commission on the Status of Women a statement on International Women's Year entitled Obstacles to the Attainment of Equality of Men and Women. (E/CN.6/NGO/249 and Add.1). This document is a tabulation of obstacles identified by government-appointed participants to a number of United Nations seminars; these were held in various regions of the world, under the advisory services in the field of human rights.
2. The most serious obstacle cited within this document is the persistence of certain traditional attitudes. This underlying obstacle impedes progress in eliminating all others, primarily illiteracy, lack of general education, inadequate vocational training, and non-participation in decision-making within the family and in the community. Concerted, action-oriented programmes to combat negative attitudes should be developed at every level.

3. That attitudes are more difficult to change than laws is generally acknowledged especially by persons engaged in combating discrimination on the basis of race, creed, language, or religion. According to social psychologists the more extreme and well-established the attitude the harder it is to change, and the more central a belief, the more it will resist change. Limiting attitudes toward women are both central and well-established. It is said further that discriminatory treatment begins in the home, and is reinforced in school, religious institutions, and society in general. The tragic result of this is that women themselves "internalize" and perpetuate an image of inferiority.

4. The mass media can be a powerful aid in changing attitudes. This fact has been recognized by the Commission on the Status of Women in its valuable ongoing study of the Influence of Mass Media on the Formulation of a New Attitude Towards the Role of Women in Present Day Society (E/Conf.6/581). The announcement that the Government of Australia will host a seminar in November 1975 on Women, the Media and the Arts, is warmly welcomed.

5. Religious institutions too are potential allies in the effort to change traditional attitudes. One interdenominational organization, for example, recently held a world-wide consultation called "Sexism in the 1970's".

6. Programmes adapted to the needs of different countries should concentrate on specific problems in areas such as health, education (women are the chief victims of illiteracy), nutrition, child care, civic and political training, and vocational counselling and training.

7. In the area of work both inside and outside the family, traditional stereotypes of "women's work" and "men's work" should be discarded. Women in a world of rapid technological change should be taught new skills, otherwise they will continue to be relegated to the arduous menial, poorly paid jobs that men do not want. As a participant at one United Nations seminar observed: the gap in the future will be between the trained and the untrained of either sex.

8. It cannot be too often repeated that the motivation for development and the integration of women in development, must rest primarily on the principles of human rights and social justice rather than on an attempt to raise a country's gross national product, otherwise women will remain the victims of continued exploitation.

9. International Women's Year should mark the beginning of a positive process wherein woman takes the initiative to achieve the equality promised her in numerous pronouncements including the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

* * * *

Note of BULLETIN Editor: This statement was read in the IWY Conference Committee II by Frances McGillicuddy on behalf of the 39 co-sponsoring organizations.
EXCERPTS FROM AN INTERVENTION BY MS. PATRICIA HUTAR,
Leader of U.S. Delegation to IWY Conference in Mexico City

"Discrimination based on sex is the most widely known kind of discrimina­tion... No rhetoric, however attractive it may be, should postpone the achieve­ment of equal rights and responsibilities for women...."

"Equality without development means shared misery and frustration. Development without equality may mean a worsened situation for many women, both those who are homemakers and those who are in the labor force. Similarly, achieving one of the goals helps achieve the other... Women cannot wait, with arms folded, for men to achieve a new order before women can achieve equality...."

"Someone must build support systems within existing structures—whether business, government, political, academic, or agriculture... Women must develop support systems to change the degrading sex-role stereotyping and images of women in the mass media which perpetuates false depictions of women...."

"From the moment they are born, women's role in society has been dictated by culture and tradition. This affects the way their role is perceived by man, by the society, and by themselves...."

"We must examine and reassess old myths that society holds about the capacities, potential, and life-style of girls and women. Self-images for women are beginning to change, but the inaccuracies and destructive sex images projected must be rooted out...."

"We must make changes in the portrayal of women in program content and commercials in mass media—radio, television, newspapers. Educational materials in the schools—textbooks, visual aids, curricular—all need to be reexamined and changed to reflect the changing role of women and men in the society and to eliminate sex-role stereotyping...."

EXCERPT FROM INTERVENTION BY MS. ELIZABETH REID (AUSTRALIA)

"Improvements in the lives of women cannot and must not await the outcome of deliberations on the new economic order... women throughout the world want action now and... this can be achieved within present resource limitations and boundaries by a resetting of priorities, and realization of the importance of women in themselves as well as to development."

* * * *
Women's Year Delegates Ask
Decade of Development (continued from Page 4)

women. An Iraqi delegate (male) had previously proposed that “zionism” be inserted. A delegate from Bangladesh protested that he was not sure what “sexism” meant, that the word did not appear in United Nations documents. Ms. Johnston patiently explained it meant discrimination based on sex, “possibly the reason why we are at this Conference.” Ms. Mary Sinclair of New Zealand commented that the word “racism” was not found in UN documents some years ago. She suggested that if delegates were not aware of the meaning of sexism they should perhaps not be at the Conference. A delegate from the Ukraine said that the concept was “alien to USSR’s woman cosmonaut Valentine Nikolaeva-Tereshkova, who said she did not want the word “sexism” in her vocabulary.

By a vote of the Committee, “sexism” lost. The delegate from Iraq withdrew his proposal about “zionism” which, as stated above resurfaced and was adopted within the Declaration of Mexico at the closing plenary meeting.

While the Conference participants consisted of delegates from 133 countries, 10 intergovernmental bodies, 25 UN organs and specialized agencies, 8 liberation (independence) movements and 113 accredited international non-governmental organization observers, the Tribune took place at about ten subway stations distance, reported an attendance of 5,000. There was never a dull moment at the Medical Center where the Tribune met. Lively discussion programs, panels and caucuses took place and much learning no doubt resulted.

Many if not most of the persons attending the Tribune came with the impression that they would have great input into the Conference. They were “frustrated” as they said in a statement which they presented, together with a serious commentary on the Plan of Action, to Ms. Helvi Sipila, Secretary-General of the Conference by the lack of communication between the IWY Tribune and the official UN Conference. They were concerned lest the Plan not contain adequate and effective implementation and monitoring machinery.

Swimming in Amendments

The 34-page document of serious commentary on the Plan of Action was impressive; it is doubtful, however, that many delegates, already swimming in the 89 draft amendments, had time to give the Tribune commentary the attention it deserved. It was appreciated certainly by the U.S. delegation as well as by Ms. Helvi Sipila, Secretary-General, all of whom realize that it is precisely those determined, action-oriented women who can be depended upon to see that the Plan of Action is put into effect.

Of the three women heads of governments expected to attend the opening of the Conference only Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike Prime Minister of Sri Lanka (Ceylon) was able to come. However several “first ladies”, and many highly distinguished women were members of their countries’ delegations. We mentioned the Russian cosmonaut. The Brazilian delegation included Dr. Bertha Lutz, one of the four women who signed the Charter of the United Nations at San Francisco. The delegation of the Holy See, led by the “amicus curiae” Vice President of the Vatican’s Commission on Justice and Peace, Bishop Ramon Torrella Cascante, included Mother Theresa of Calcutta.

There was nothing in the contribution of the Holy See to suggest that Rome has changed its traditional attitude toward women. On the other hand this writer, through papers, exhortations and buttons, persevered at odd moments in her somewhat quixotic apostolate of evangelization of prelates.

We’ve Only Just Begun

The American Delegation headed by Ms. Patricia Hutar and Mr. Daniel Parker, was varied but uniformly able, diligent, beautiful, gracious, accessible and ... American. Closing the historic Conference at 11 p.m. on July 2, its president Attorney General Pedro Ojeda Paullada called the Conference “the first step in the establishment of a society in which women, all the women of the world, can increasingly become the rulers of their own destinies.”

Helvi Sipila’s last pep talk was “Now, tired though we are, the real work has just begun.”

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![Equal Rites for Women](image1.png)

![No Mini-Ministries](image2.png)

![Ordain Women or Stop Baptizing Them](image3.png)
ST. JOAN'S MEMBERS AT THE IWY TRIBUNE

(Note: Denyse Barbet of New York City and Ann Cheetham, a British journalist, participated actively in the Mexico City IWY Tribune).

A Workshop on "Quality of Life for Older Women" was organized by Denyse Barbet. The fact that older women and their problems were not included in the agenda of the UN Conference or the Tribune reminded me of the Eskimo grandmother who was abandoned and left to die on the icefloe. Indeed the failure to include older women in the agenda was striking evidence of the neglect and indifference accorded this important segment of society. I therefore obtained space at the Tribune for a workshop: 'Quality of Life for Older Women."

Rather than the usual panel format, I preferred to conduct a "women-learn-from-women" type of workshop. Some fifty women from industrialized countries—Australia, Canada, Mexico, The Netherlands, New Zealand, United Kingdom, United States and West Germany—participated. Unrepresented were the developing countries where older women are more rare. Many women die in childbirth or from its consequences as they are expected to bear as many children as possible to make up for the high infant mortality. Others, moreover, die young because of the harshness of their lives. Those who do survive to old age, however, are respected and cared for by their extended families.

The workshop mood was intense with spirited sharing about "identity" (the need to be one's own person at last, rather than so-and-so's wife or mother), about the image of the older women in the media and industrialized society generally ("little old ladies in tennis shoes"), about widowhood, separation and divorce, and the likelihood of being single during one's last years ("Prepare for survival," one participant advised), about one's sex-life at this stage, about coping with aloneness and loneliness with reduced income or outright poverty and with the double discrimination of sexism and agism.

Various coping strategies were considered: jobs and careers to meet financial needs and as a means to self-actualization, vocational planning and retraining, adult education, higher education, health care and delivery of health services, insurance, social security, and finances in general.

Participants included several young women members of the Gray Panthers who were concerned about inter-generation communication, especially between older women and their daughters and nieces, and the role model older women present for the younger generation.

Sharing continued beyond the time-slot allocated to the Workshop. Sparks were really flying—getting together kindled something. Seven members of the group continued the exchange at dinner and were still talking at 2:00 A.M. These formed the nucleus of an informal international network of older women who have since been corresponding and meeting together to help one another to take action.

* * *
I also participated in a meeting called by Ann Cheetham, a British journalist and member of St. Joan's. We discussed the impending meeting of Anglican Bishops which was to decide whether to ordain women to the priesthood.

Two questions were to be posed:

1) Did the body approve in principle the ordination of women;

2) Would Church law be changed to allow such ordination.

The British Government had, a short time before, passed a law prohibiting all sex discrimination, except by religious bodies.

After discussing various aspects of the ordination of women to the full priesthood, the group decided to circulate for signatures two petitions; one to the Archbishop of Canterbury urging approval of women's ordination, the second to the Prime Minister urging that no exception be allowed in the law prohibiting discrimination.

Having obtained many signatures from Tribune and Conference participants, Ann Cheetham flew back to London and immediately delivered the two petitions.

* * * *

Let's face it, Fellas, what are we afraid of?
Ms. Helvi Sipila, Secretary-General
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR
United Nations Headquarters
New York, N.Y. 10017

Dear Ms. Sipila:

In the crowd outside the London prison in 1911 (See TV series Shoulder to Shoulder) awaiting the release of women jailed for the militant demonstrations during the women's suffrage struggle were two Catholic young women who decided then and there to form an organization, under the patronage of Joan of Arc, to participate in the crusade for women's right to vote on equal terms with men. The new organization was named the Catholic Women's Suffrage Society; the name was later changed to St. Joan's International Alliance.

Since 1911 the organization has vigorously and uninterruptedly worked for the legal and de facto equality of women and men in political, economic and social areas. Inspired by Pope John XXIII's encyclical Pacem in Terris, the egalitarian efforts of the Alliance were broadened to include the Church itself.

St. Joan's International Alliance will do all in its power to promote and attain the goals of International Women's Year and the Mexico City Conference Plan of Action. Among the Resolutions of the Conference which St. Joan's International Alliance particularly welcomes are the following:

- Life-long education and training;
- Completion of the Draft Convention by the Commission on the Status of Women, on the elimination of discrimination against women;
- Ratification of all UN international instruments dealing with women;
- Participation of women in international conferences;
- Women and communications (Image & attitudes);
- Revision and expansion of International Standard Classification of Occupations;
- Research and training institutes (Caution: Who will direct them?)


Sincerely yours,

Lydia M. Halsey, President
A WORKSHOP - INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR - WORDS INTO ACTION, organized by the Committee on International Women's Year; Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council, was held on November 11-12, 1975 in the Church Center of the United Nations in New York.

Ms. Esther Hymer, UN representative of the International Business and Professional Women and Chairperson of the Non-Governmental Organizations IWY Committee, presided at the Workshop. Ms. Frances McGillicuddy was one of the speakers.

Five World Presidents and one Vice-President of Women's International Non-Governmental Organizations (WINGOS) attended the Workshop. Ms. Bernice McNeela, President of St. Joan's U.S. Section, represented Mrs. Lydia M. Halsey, President of St. Joan's International Alliance. Other St. Joan's members at the Workshop were Ms. Frances Sawyer, President of Women United for the United Nations (WUUN) and alternate UN representative of St. Joan's International Alliance and Ms. Eleanore Schnurr, in charge of office and arrangements for the Workshop.

Following the Summary of the Workshop Panel and small-group discussions, a presentation of the BOOK OF LETTERS from some sixty Non-Governmental Organizations (including St. Joan's International Alliance) expressing support and appreciation of International Women's Year was made to Ms. Helvi Sipila, Secretary-General of International Women's Year.

The final event of the two-day Workshop was the Annual Luncheon Meeting at the United Nations, organized by Women United for the United Nations honoring the Women Delegates to the 30th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Ms. Frances Sawyer, President of WUUN, welcomed the Delegates and distinguished guests; members of the UN Secretariat, international and national non-governmental organizations and friends. The launching of the 1975-76 WUUN Programme working toward an International Women's Decade (IWD) in cooperation with women around the world, was announced by Ms. Sawyer.

Ms. Helvi Sipila (Finland), Secretary-General of IWY and UN Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, gave the opening address; other speakers included H.E. Ambassador Mrs. Leticia Ramos Shahani (Philippines), Chairman of the Commission on the Status of Women and Vice Chairman of the UN General Assembly's Third Committee; Mrs. Fama J. Joka-Bangura (Sierra Leone), Chairman of the UN General Assembly's Fourth Committee; and Mrs. Margaret K. Bruce, Deputy Secretary-General of IWY and Chief of the Section of the Commission on the Status of Women.

Ms. Minerva Bernardino-Cappa (Dominican Republic), of the four women signers of the UN Charter in San Francisco (1945) was honored in absentia.

In closing the meeting, Ms. Sawyer stressed the importance of working toward an International Women's Decade, and urged the strengthening of the UN Commission on the Status of Women.

St. Joan's members attending the luncheon, in addition to Ms. Frances Sawyer, were Ms. Bernice McNeela, Ms. Frances McGillicuddy, Ms. Denyse Barbet and Ms. Eleanore Schnurr.

By Frances Sawyer who participated in the IWY Conference as one of the Observers for St. Joan's International Alliance.