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WOMEN
IN
CRISIS
TOWN MEETING

NO BOUNDARIES
FOR WOMEN

May 31, 1979

S A T I S F I E D ?

N O

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Y E S

S O N G

WOMEN IN CRISIS TOWN MEETING

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

time: "Home, Home on the Range"

O, give me a home where the children will roam,

and the men will protect us from harm

Where seldom is heard an ambitious word,

Weren't these days for ~~women~~ women absurd.

Free, free to decide,

Whether home or at work or at play

What my future will be is now up to me

and men will think twice, wait and see.

O, give me a home, if I choose to be alone,

with a checkbook in my own hand.

I can do as I please, with my mind all at ease,

and I don't have to please no man.

What now can we do, to make all our dreams come true?

Should we stay home and sew, or get up and go?

The decision is now up to you!

STORY

WOMEN IN CRISIS TOWN MEETING

Our homes were not air-conditioned, and we had to wear starched dresses with lots of petticoats. We rode to Lakefront Amusement Park, and because of strict chaperone practices we would sneak out of school to meet our beaux. Fifty years ago we began to see a move toward better education for white women. We were unable to handle finances, and were raised with the goal of getting married and having a large family. Home implements were crude, for instance washboards and boilers, flatirons heated on the stove. Poor medical care was the rule, although milk and prescription drugs were delivered.

Presently we worry most over personal safety, job opportunities, inadequate child care, little training in financial matters or legal advice.

As a vision for our future we see Equal Rights as a reality, women taken seriously, and allowed to grow up in the community not just growing older. There will hopefully be women in elected positions, and higher positions of responsibility. A feeling of greater safety, moving around the city and in our own homes. Different expectations regarding roles and the right to control our own life. We'll feel better about ourselves as women, and as members of society.

CHALLENGES

WOMEN IN CRISIS TOWN MEETING

In the arena of personal safety, the fact that there is a lack of adequate law enforcement, constant fear is present, there is white, straight male bias in our legal system indicates that the underlying challenge is certain kinds of violence is tolerated and ignored. This is illustrated by: increase in rape; batterment; homicide; theft of welfare checks; purse-snatchings and inadequate legal protection for women.

In the arena of provision of human services and programs for women, the fact little or no free adequate child-care, not enough women in program development and lack of support for women in transition indicates that the underlying challenge is lack of priority for women's needs and human services. This is illustrated by: unequal access to economic power because of forced child-care; inaccessible health services; relatively no services for women in the midst of life changes exist for housing; economic/emotional support.

In the arena of political power, the fact that ~~women~~ women are underrepresented in policy making procedures indicates that the underlying challenge is a lack of confidence in their abilities on the part of men and women regarding women. This is illustrated by: political apathy; lack of financial support for women candidates; unequal educational opportunities; legal discrimination-i.e. no women in "New Orleans Trial Lawyers Association."

In the arena of employment, the fact that there is a lack of good job opportunities for women, inadequate and unequal pay, lack of good job training and education indicates that the underlying contradiction is: women need to earn good money and are denied the opportunity to do so. This is illustrated by: high female unemployment and underemployment; few women in high paying jobs; few women in non-traditional jobs; few women in municipal jobs.

In the arena of role definition, the fact that human potential is hindered by narrowly-defined sex roles indicates that the underlying challenge is to change perceptions and expectations of sexually defined roles. This is illustrated by: women work in houses for no pay-whether or not they have an outside job; women seen as extension of men in their lives; damaging sexual stereotyping is reinforced in the educational system; traditional beliefs and attitudes prevent change.

PROPOSALS

WOMEN IN CRISIS TOWN MEETING

We, the women of New Orleans, in order to have more involvement of women in society and decision-making propose town meetings involving men and women and policy makers and consumers of policy through these steps: planning, securing and soliciting the backing of groups of people; campaigns of publicity; the mayor declaring "Women's Week"; providing means of attendance (child care, and transportation); and action followthrough.

We, the women of New Orleans, in order to get more money and power in the hands of women propose that we support and enable passage of the Equal Rights Amendment through city, state and national levels through these steps: solicit support of city councilmen; get the mayor to direct his legislative floor leaders and lobbyists to support it; get the mayor to put in part of his city package; request E.R.A. vote support and passage; getting documented information into voters hands before the election; and put this document in legislator's and governor's hands.

REGISTRATION

Name
Address
Phone #

Name
Address
Phone #

Name
Address
Phone #

Marybeth Buras
13771 Chef Hwy, #33
New Orleans, La 70129
254-0017

Melba Clemente
5672 Rosemary Place
New Orleans 70124
486-7535

Kathie O'Malley
1820 Calhoun
New Orleans

Thelma Nabonne
2602 Pangea Street
New Orleans, LA.
70116

Joe Lopez
3812 Cordell
N.O. LA 70115

Pete Beach
50 Gunter
New Orleans

Adele Lowe
818 Bourbon St.
N.O., La. 70116

Gay Kabiner, DIR
3433 Tulane
70119
498-2693

Carrie Walker
517 Indume St.
N.O. La 70116

Charlotte Bore
3443 Asplande
#457
N.O. 70119
827 1549

Carol Asher
211 Camp St. Rm 610
N.O., LA 70130
W. 525-7131

Michael L. Reed
2625 Prentiss Ave.
N.O., La. 70122
282-2458

Sr. Judith Gomila
4123 Woodlond
N.O. - 70114
394-7744

Linda Borton
211 Camp St. Rm 610
N.O. LA. 70130
525-7131

Donna Meyers
YWCA

Mrs. Linaella Cates
8539 Willow St.
861-7394

Paul W. N. 733/0090
N. M. 520 529/3232
2001 Canal St
New Orleans La 70112

Karen Smith
5504 Spin St.
N.O. La. 70122
20-460-200-7116

Pat Schmit
1205 Valerie
NOLA 70115
895-0239

Dimid and Aurora
Box 51012
N.O., La 70151
943-2081

Adriane McCannie
1928 So. CARROLLTON
N.O. 70118
NASW

Kathryn Zervigon
4154 CLEVELAND AV.
NOLA 70119
482-1191

Thomas H. Burrows
P.O. Box 50830
New Orleans 70150
894-9421

Betty Spencer
4116 Old Gentilly Rd
NOLA 70127
Pontchartrain MHC

TOWN MEETING PROGRAM

TOWN MEETING: NEW ORLEANS was created for communities by the Institute of Cultural Affairs, a not-for-profit research, training and demonstration group concerned with the human factor in world development. The ICA staff and volunteer consultants in 103 American and overseas locations work with local sponsoring groups to coordinate program development and provide methods, training and follow-up services upon request. During the period of April and May, 1979, (with an Assembly in June) the town meeting program with a focus on women is being sponsored by the Louisiana Committee for the Humanities, a state branch of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

THE TOWN MEETING: NEW ORLEANS ASSEMBLY WILL BE HELD ON JUNE 7, 1979, FROM 7:30 to 9:30 P.M. AT THE JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER, 5342 ST. CHARLES AVE. THIS IS A TIME TO SHARE PROPOSALS, LOOK AT IMPLEMENTATION, HEAR THE SONGS AND STORIES OF THE VARIOUS PARTS OF TOWN. COME AND REPRESENT YOUR COMMUNITY. REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED. THERE WILL BE A SLIDE SHOW OF COMMUNITIES DOING RAPID SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOLLOWING TOWN MEETINGS, IN VARIOUS COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD.

TOWN MEETING: WOMEN AFFECTING COMMUNITY
(GALLIER HALL)

Tune: "When the Saints Go Marching In"

Chorus:

At Gallier Hall, the Women met
On April 3rd, when it was wet!
We put our thoughts and hearts together
At a good old Town Meeting.

There was a time in New Orleans
When women seldom made the scene.
We stayed at home and raised our babies
We thought those days would never end!
(Chorus)

Now is the time in New Orleans --
You bet your boots we're on the scene.
We took our rights outside the homestead
And we won't backtrack again.
(Chorus)

When ERA comes marching in
Then we will have our precious win.
Our sex will not be held against us.
We will be equal to men.
(Chorus)

FORO COMMUNITARIO DE IRISH CHANNEL
Con la musica de: "Cielito Lindo"

Esta comunidad del Irish Channel
Hermanos mios
Donde progresara nuestro futuro
Todos unidos.

Ay, Ay, Ay, Ay, Esperamos Alegros
Luchando unidos todos y
Logrando un mejor futuro

Logrur nejores vides
Cambiar violencia
Con mucha ayuda
Y vigilancia hacia la paz
Y emplea para los hispanos

Ay, Ay, Ay, Ay

LA CANCION DE FORO COMMUNITARIO DE MID-CITY
Con la musica: "Guantanamera"

El coro:

En Mid-City, hay muchos hispanos que viven.
En Mid-City, hay muchos hispanos que viven.

En nuestro barrio Mid-City,
Hay muchos problemas y robos.
En nuestra escuela Beauregard.
Hay problemas de drogas.

Nuestra esperanza en el
Futuro es que hablan unos a otros.
(Coro)

TOWN MEETING: TREME

Tune: "When the Saints Go Marching In"

Oh when the bell began to sound
We left the streets for homes around
Next day the chimney sweeper worked
While the policemen walked the beat.

Oh we are afraid to walk the streets
For all the crime is so unsweet
Now we go to Harmony House
Where all the friendly people meet.

Better housing, better schools
And better streets and neighborhoods
We shall all get along together
And we will overcome some day.

TOWN MEETING: SHEPHERD'S CENTER

Tune: "I Could Have Danced All Night"

I could have stayed all day down
Shepherd Center way
With friends for play and fun.
We want to spread our wings
And do a thousand things
We've never done before.
Day Care need is what we plead and pray for
To make come true our great desire
To share and care for all.
We want to hear your call.
Let's do our best to reach our goal.

TOWN MEETING: CALLIOPE

Tune: "Reach Out and Touch"

Chorus:

Reach out and touch, somebody's hand,
And make the Calliope a better place to
live, if you can. REPEAT.

Would I be asking too much, if I asked
you to share, a problem that I have.
We can change the community,
If we start giving.
So why ton't you:
(Chorus)

TOWN MEETING: TREME

TIME OF TREME

Tune: "When the Saints Go Marching In"

Oh yes we must
Oh yes we must
Question authority today
If we want to have a future
Then we must question today.

We all are here
Our time is dear
The time of Treme now is here.
So let's all come together
And greet the future not in fear.

We'll kock it out
Without a doubt
The time of Treme now is here
So if you want to be in that number
Make all your Treme neighbors near.

TOWN MEETING: LAKEVIEW

OUR LAKEVIEW

Tune: "Way Down Yonder in New Orleans"

In the past in old Lakeview
Opportunities were very few
Milk cows and mosquitoes
Kept you company too.
As the pelple came moving through
Condominiums grew and grew.

Stop Let's get together now
And form a plan.
Stop Let's all work together
Hand in hand.
We decided to look around at the problems
We knew.
For the future of our Lakeview.

TOWN MEETING: CENTRAL CITY

Tune: "Jesus Loves Me"

Central City is a place, where God's love
Is the moving force.
Central City is a true black community
We know.

Chorus:

Yea Central City
Yea Central City
Yea Central City
A place where life is loved.

We have hope in all our minds.
That our streets will gleam and shine.
In the future we will build unity and
Better skills.
(Chorus)

TOWN MEETING: MID CITY

ONWARD, MID-CITY

Tune: "I'm Looking Over a Four-leaf Clover"

In old Mid-City, a place so pretty
The people were good and kind.
We had our party on every block
And all our doors were left unlocked.

Some problems in Mid-City and more's the pity
Cause that is the place to live.
Get rid of the litter the noise and crime
And all the glitter and neon signs.

Now we're not perfect but we're improving
To be better than before.
We must start caring and effort sharing
To build up the neighborhood!!!

TOWN MEETING: CARROLLTON

Tune: "What a Friend We Have in Jesus"

We were known as "Streetcar County"
Oh, our dairies still remain,
Women took in wash and ironing
Jazz musicians eased the pain.

We have moved in new directions
Marching toward a better end,
We have put our plans together
Carrollton workers will not bend.

TOWN MEETING: MT. ZION SENIOR CITIZENS

Tune: "You Are My Sunshine"

We all worked hard, dear
Sun up till sun down
We cooked and scrubbed
And washed and ironed,
We helped each other,
We loved our neighbors,
We got along as one mankind.

Upon our streets now is so much crime
We fear to walk outside our door.
Hardness of life now is due to prices
Of food and rent and medical care.

So in the future
There'll be more love
A unity of talk and work
For better houses and lots more jobs
And lower rent for everyone.

TOWN MEETING: MID-CITY SENIOR CITIZENS

Tune: "Yankee Doodle Dandy"

Washing on the washboard
Too much work around the house
More hayrides and more good times to
 help us forget our tax.
Kinder words for one another,
Just a little less crime and more help
 from medicine and a bus to take us to
 town.
A cooler place to play cards in and keep
 our blood pressure down.
Give us the protection that we need to
 keep us safe and sound.

TOWN MEETING: YWCA SENIOR CITIZENS

PEOPLE WORKING SIDE-BY-SIDE

Tune: "He's Got the Whole World in His
 Hands"

We were talking the other day
 About Mid-City and our past.
Talked about the flats and the baseball
 Field, street cars and ice wagons.

Changes came along our way --
 Buses and NOPSI are here to stay
Houses all gone, businesses moved in
 And people looked the other way.

What we'd like now to see
 Is return of safety and community,
A skating rink and better parks
 And people working side by side.

TOWN MEETING: MOVING ON WITH GRETNA

MOVING ON WITH GRETNA

Tune: "Don't Fence Me In"

We have power, lots of power, in our grasp
 This very hour
 TO MOVE AHEAD
We will work together in the worst of any
 Weather
 TO MOVE AHEAD
We have pride in our past and a future that's
 Bright
Our history was great and so is our fight
Send us off for Gretna with the power of
 The light
 WE'LL MOVE AHEAD.

TOWN MEETING: ALGIERS-FISCHER COMMUNITY

Tune: "You Are My Sunshine"

Back in the old days when times were grey
Way back in Freetown in old Algiers
We had no school then, we had to work hard
To earn a buck at Todd's Shipyard.

Right now in these days things are no better
For we still work hard for little pay
Our kids are playing with sticks, guns & dice
Buy needles every day.

We must be hopeful for all our children
And we must teach them to live and pray
Let's come together, love one another
For Algiers-Fischer is on its way.

TOWN MEETING: KENNER

KENNER'S ON THE MOVE

Tune: "We Shall Overcome"

In our past we farmed, Celery was our fame.
People worked so hard and the pay was small.
But folks worked together and built our town
Kenner is our favorite town.

Kenner's on the move, Trying to improve
Joining hands and doing the best we can.
O deep in our hearts, we do our part.
Kenner's on the move to improve.

Our goals we will achieve, Cleaner and crime
 free
Full employment and better housing
Education for our youth and a park for our
 young
We're gonna do it ourselves.

TOWN MEETING: YWCA WOMEN IN CRISIS

Tune: "Home on the Range"

O, give me a home where the children will roam,
And the men will protect us from harm.
Where seldom is heard
An ambitious word,
Weren't those days for women absurd.

Free, free to decide,
Whether home or at work or at play
What my future will be is now up to me
And men will think twice, wait and see.

O, give me a home, if I choose to be alone,
With a checkbook in my own hand.
I can do as I please,
With my mind all at ease.
And I don't have to please no man.

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