

Is it easy?

No!

What is my basic program!

- 1) There is no political democracy
if there is not a social
economic
cultural democracy

Food/shelter/work/education/medical care
are basic human rights
as much as freedom of expression
and of association
are basic human rights

- 2) No country is truly independent
if it becomes a satellite of any other power,
so, every country has to diversify
the platforms of cooperation

this means also erosion of East/West, North/South

- 3) To govern, to run for office
is to accept the challenge of leadership
and to set the rules guiding the exercise of leadership
and the forms of its accountability.

This is what is all about when we speak of women in decision-making positions:



the concern with real people and their needs
the never-ceasing link with diversified reality,
leading to different solutions and answers.

So, when we say "equality" we are not meaning access to what men do, and to do it in the same way.

It is only worthwhile to fight for it, in so far as women in decision-making positions of high responsibility question, by their attitudes, the paradigm of power.

"The basic premise of the political discourse seems to be the primitive concept of power as brutal force with the goal of domination and control."

To question this paradigm is to appear as a threat to the establishment.

Because this has to do with:

Fundação Cuidar o Futuro

- social forces and their freedom to express themselves
- priorities in technological choices
(do they want to dominate nature?)
- respect for human rights.



Therefore, while speaking of and naming the concrete things, women are labelled (as I have been) as an utopian person, as idealist, as populist ...

I. Imagine the Parliament. I have submitted the programme of Government. (I intend to govern not to play political game). I am attacked by the most conservative forces with a mixture of genuine criticism and endless lies ... I had wanted to answer to contents, not to personal attacks. Nevertheless I have to rebuke such perverse behaviour. When I say "I didn't expect lies ... from men whom until then I considered honest", the house almost falls down. They bang on their tables, they shout.

And I asked: Is ~~it~~ the programme? the ideas? the measures?

One of them shouts: Yourself

A dead silence falls in the house. The exorcism has been done. The words have been said.

It was clear that the mere fact of my being a woman was an unbearable fact for them.

The context in which I assumed power made it clear. I was there to change the very nature of political power.

II. How to avoid marginalization?

First of all, making it true that women are a social movement

- common interests,
- common goals,
- concerted strategies.

. A need for many women to experience the political life and want it entails.



A need for solidarity among women as a basis for women in exercise of political power.

We are still very far from this solidarity.

Enquiry of EEC: only 9% of women chose to be represented by another woman (3% of men)

- . Opportunities of "crisis situations": when all stereotypes are put into question, when culture is in the making, there is the urgency of the task, new values new attitudes can be introduced.

III. This solidarity is also connected with the way in which politics is seen.

Politics is an everyday concern and affects all our choices and behaviours.

Once the "traditional" feminine fields of action start moving, the political action in government or other bodies can be changed too.

There is an intricate connection between all fields in society - everything is connected with everything else. If we are playing dirty tricks on the defense front, we are also probably overlooking basic needs in our own societies.

Media and politicians tend to isolate issues.

But if women discover in new terms their understanding of the process of life,

then they can show that all spheres of life are interdependent.



They form a system. You cannot deal with issues at the top-level if at all levels the issues are not coped with in a new and original way.

IV. This is possible if women make the best of one distinctive feature in their lives: the multifunctionality.

Every women performs a thousand activities, unpaid, unaccounted for. She has to change from one to the other.

There was a lot of oppression in that. But at the same time it is an opening to:

conviviality
tolerance
life of multiple expressions
pluralism.

Then, political power may be equated with political leadership,

Fundação Cuidar o Futuro
a sense of direction,
a capacity to encompass complexity,
a lucidity to establish priority
to be rigorous and flexible,
an imagination to create strategies.

V. Women with common goals:

SURVIVAL OF HUMANKIND

life-centered civilization.

- Before us, the problems are clear:



- a) to face the destitution of millions
food/housing/medical care/education
- b) nuclear threat:
technology not neutral,
possibility to destroy 60 times the earth
- c) ecological bomb:
Chernobyl, half the species dying,
half forest in RFA disappearing
desertification
too much technology in the North
too little in the South
- d) economic paralysis:
unemployment without solution
monetary system
- e) new zones of ignorance, of illiteracy
how to decodify a complex world
("the circuits are overloaded")
- f) fundamentalism
as running away from complexity.

Fundação Cuidar o Futuro



VI. If women ran the world

- to overcome intellectual paralysis, to get where the issues are,
- to create thought in frontier-situations
- to give leadership at all levels of the social organization.

(pp. 19-20)

From Tokyo to Moscow: Gary Hart (Captain coming and greeting him)

"I was told that a former PM of Portugal was on board,
but I have not seen him,
you are not supposed to be "it"!

. This shows how far it is from people's mind that women
can be in positions of political power!

Unconscious level

Expectations

Fundação Cuidar o Futuro



Maria de Lourdes Pintasilgo

San Francisco, March 1986

Fundação Cuidar o Futuro

