

"New Energy Needed:

Women's Leadership -

Burning Issues" in
Today's World"

Amesterzão

Fundação Cuidar o Futuro

Novembro, 1986



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endent Commission on

Quality of Life

Fundação Cuidar o Futuro

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Nov 1986

NEW ENERGY NEEDED: WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP



BURNING ISSUES IN TODAY'S WORLD

THE WORLD AS A GLOBAL REALITY

ALL OF US FEEL THAT THE WORLD IN WHICH WE LIVE TODAY OBLIGES US TO TRAVEL THROUGH TIME. NOT ONLY BY GOING FROM COUNTRY TO COUNTRY AND THUS WIDENING OUR SENSE OF DURATION. BUT REALLY THROUGH TIME ITSELF, AS EVENTS OF UNKNOWN FEATURES EMERGE AMONG US. THE FUTURE SEEMS TO BE ALREADY IN OUR MIDST.

WE ARE ALL PART OF A JOURNEY TOWARDS A STILL-TO-BE-DISCOVERED LAND. NOBODY CAN TELL US WHAT WE WILL FIND THERE. NO FUTURE STUDIES, HOWEVER PROFOUND, CAN TELL US WHAT LIES AHEAD OF US. ALL THE INSTITUTES DOING PROSPECTIVE RESEARCH ARE RETICENT AND CAUTIOUS IN WHAT THEY SAY. ALL PREVISIONS ARE, FROM THE OUTSET, UNREAL. ALL FORECASTS ARE ALREADY OBSOLETE.

WE ARE MAKING THIS JOURNEY TOGETHER. TOGETHER NOT BECAUSE OF A GENEROUS SOLIDARITY, NOT BECAUSE OF ANY PRIVILEGED ALLIANCE. JUST BECAUSE THE WORLD HAS BECOME A WHOLE. ALL LOCAL OR NATIONAL PROBLEMS - OF ECONOMY, CULTURE, SOCIETY, PEACE - ARE PART OF A GLOBAL REALITY. IT IS THIS GLOBAL REALITY THAT I WANT TO EVOKE HERE.

COMPLEXITY AS A WAY OF THINKING

COMPLEXITY IS THE WORD COINED TO EXPRESS THE INTERCONNECTIONS OF THE MANY DIVERSIFIED FACTORS WHICH MAKE UP THAT GLOBAL REALITY. COMPLEXITY SPEAKS OF MYRIADS OF SUB-SYSTEMS MADE UP OF AUTONOMOUS AND YET INTERDEPENDENT ELEMENTS. THEY CHANGE CONTINUOUSLY THEIR CONFIGURATION AND PRESENT EVERY TIME ANEW THE FACE OF THE EARTH. THOSE SUB-SYSTEMS CAN BE FOUND IN FIELDS AS DIVERSE AS FOOD PRODUCTION, GENETIC KNOWLEDGE, HUMAN SETTLEMENTS, TECHNOLOGICAL ENDEAVOURS, CULTURAL INDUSTRIES. THEY BRING TO US A PATTERN OF AN EVER-CHANGING WORLD IN WHICH NO ELEMENT CAN BE SEEN IN ISOLATION FROM THE OTHERS.



BECAUSE OF THE INTERRELATEDNESS AND DIVERSITY OF ITS COMPONENTS; COMPLEXITY DOES AWAY WITH LINEAR THINKING, WITH SIMPLE CAUSE/EFFECT RELATIONSHIP, WITH SCAPEGOAT INTERPRETATIONS OF FAILURES OR DIFFICULTIES (~~AND I DO KNOW THAT TEMPTATION HAVING JUST COME OUT OF A NICE FAILURE!~~), WITH ECONOMIC OR CULTURAL LIBERALISM. COMPLEXITY ASKS FOR A NEW MODE OF RELATING TO THINGS, IDEAS AND EVENTS. COMPLEXITY BRINGS US TO ANOTHER LEVEL OF THINKING AND DOING.

ABSOLUTE PRIORITY: TO FACE THE DESTITUTION OF MILLIONS

OUR JOURNEY LEADS US TO FACE THE BURNING ISSUES OF OUR TIME.

THE VERY FIRST ONE WE CANNOT IGNORE ANYMORE IS THE UTTER DESTITUTION OF MILLIONS OF HUMAN BEINGS.

THEY LACK FOOD, HOUSING, MEDICAL CARE, EDUCATION. IT IS TRUE THAT THEY HAVE BECOME POLITICALLY INDEPENDENT FROM THE FORMER COLONIZERS. BUT THEY HAVE BECOME EVER MORE DEPENDENT ECONOMICALLY AND HAVE INTERIORISED THE CULTURAL MODELS OF WELL-BEING AND CONSUMPTION THE POWERFUL STATES PROPAGATE.

THERE LIES THE TRAGEDY OF THE SITUATION. SOME YEARS AGO WE COULD STILL LOOK AT THOSE PROBLEMS FROM A DISTANCE AND MAKE THE SUBTLE DISTINCTION OF: WE/THEY, RICH/POOR, DEVELOPED/UNDER-DEVELOPED. THAT PERIOD IS OVER. THERE IS NOT ANY MORE THE POSSIBILITY FOR THOSE DIVISIONS. WHEREVER THE SATISFACTION OF BASIC HUMAN NEEDS IS AT STAKE, IT CONCERNS US ALL.

IF WE ARE NOT ABLE TO MANAGE THE SATISFACTION OF THOSE BASIC HUMAN NEEDS 4,000 OR 6,000 MILES AWAY FROM US WE ARE NOT ABLE TO MANAGE THE BASIC NEEDS IN OUR TOWN, IN OUR COUNTRY - WE ARE NOT ABLE TO MANAGE HUMAN NEEDS AT ALL. THIS CONNECTION IS WHAT COMPLEXITY HELPS US TO SEE IN A VERY EXACT WAY: "TOUT SE TIENT".



JOINT RESPONSABILITY OF ALL

INDEED, EVERYTHING HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH EVERYTHING ELSE. AND HOW! THE SPECTACULAR MONETARY DISORDER OF THE WORLD HAS HAD, IN THIS REGARD, A POSITIVE EFFECT. WE KNOW OF THE HUGE FOREIGN DEBT OF MANY COUNTRIES (INCLUDING MY OWN). WE HEAR AGAIN AND AGAIN THE LEADERS OF THE DEBTOR COUNTRIES SPEAKING ABOUT THE CONSEQUENCES OF SUCH DEBTS FOR THEIR POLICIES AND PROTESTING AGAINST THE CONDITIONS IMPOSED BY THE IMF. THEY ARE OFTEN RIGHT IN THEIR OWN PLEA. BUT LET US NOT FOOL OURSELVES: IT IS NOT JUST THEIR PROBLEM. IN THE FINAL DECLARATION OF THE '84 SESSION OF THE INTER ACTION COUNCIL OF FORMER HEADS OF GOVERNMENT IT WAS STATED (BASED ON THE WORK DONE BY FORMER CHANCELLOR H. SCHMIDT WITH SIX BANKERS AMONG THOSE WITH THE GREATEST KNOWLEDGE OF MONETARY QUESTIONS):

"THE DEBT PROBLEM WAS JOINTLY CREATED BY THE ACTIONS OF ALL PARTIES. IT IS THEREFORE THE JOINT RESPONSIBILITY OF ALL TO SEEK SOLUTIONS. (...) THERE IS NOW AN URGENT NEED FOR A COMPREHENSIVE SOLUTION TO THE DEBTOR/CREDITOR PROBLEM." (1)

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THE SAME IS TRUE ABOUT TRADE. WHY IS IT THAT AFRICA CONTRIBUTED TO 6% OF THE WORLD TRADE WHEN IT WAS CONSTITUTED BY COLONIES AND TODAY IT CONTRIBUTES ONLY TO 1.2% OF THE WORLD TRADE? WHERE DOES THE DIFFERENCE GO? LET US BE HONEST IN OUR ASSESSMENT OF THE SITUATION: WE CANNOT GO ON SAYING THAT WE ARE PART OF A FREE TRADE SYSTEM WHEN MORE THAN HALF OF THE TRADE IN THE WORLD IS NOT FREE, RATHER IS UNDER PROTECTIONIST MEASURES! THIS SITUATION IS MUCH MORE THE OUTCOME OF THE POLICIES OF THE CREDITOR COUNTRIES THAN OF THE DEBTOR ONES.

IMAGINATIVE JOINT SOLUTIONS

SPEAKING ABOUT "JOINT PROBLEMS" IS NOT ONLY AN OCCASION TO STATE COMMON RESPONSIBILITIES. THERE IS MORE ABOUT IT. THERE IS ALSO THE ROUTE TO "JOINT SOLUTIONS" - THE OPEN FIELD OF IMAGINATION, CREATIVITY, RISK. LET ME GIVE YOU AN EXAMPLE OF

HOW A PROCESS FOR NEW SOLUTIONS CAN EMERGE. AT THE HEIGHT OF THE FAMINE IN ETHIOPIA, QUEEN SOPHIA OF SPAIN, DURING A RECEPTION PUT INFORMALLY THIS QUESTION TO THE DIRECTOR OF THE UNDP (2):

"BUT WHY AREN'T THE STATES WHO HAVE A SURPLUS OF PRODUCTION AND HAVE TO PAY THEIR FARMERS IN ORDER FOR THEM NOT TO PRODUCE, WHY ARE THEY NOT CHANNELING, THROUGH SPECIAL TRANSPORT, THOSE SURPLUSES TO THOSE WHO ARE STARVING"? I HEARD THE QUESTION AND LOOKED AROUND: REGARDLESS OF THEIR RESPECT FOR THE QUEEN I COULD "LISTEN" THEIR UNSPOKEN COMMENT ABOUT WOMEN'S UTOPIAN DREAMS... BUT SINCE THEN THAT IDEA HAS GONE ITS OWN WAY. IN SEVERAL MEETINGS, INCLUDING THE ONE CALLED "THE OTHER SUMMIT", A NEW SOLUTION IS GAINING SHAPE ALONG THE LINES OF WHAT CAN BE CALLED, AFTER ALL, JUST COMMON SENSE!

THIS STORY ALSO POINTS OUT TO THE FACT THAT THE PROBLEMS OF THE HUNGRY, THE HOMELESS, THE ILLITERATE, THE POOR ARE OUR PROBLEMS AS WELL. WE ARE ALL RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT IS SIMPLY A STRUCTURALLY IRRATIONAL SITUATION. WE NEED SKILL, CONFIDENCE, INVENTIVENESS, SENSE OF RISK, TO MOVE INTO THE SO MUCH NEEDED COMPREHENSIVE SOLUTIONS.

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TO OVERCOME INTELLECTUAL PARALYSIS

AND YET WE DETECT IN EUROPE AN INTELLECTUAL PARALYSIS AS IF THOSE NEW DIMENSIONS OF OLD PROBLEMS HAD MET US UNEXPECTEDLY AND FOUND US DEPRIVED OF ANY TOOL TO FACE THEM.

THIS IS WHY OUR INTELLECTUAL PROCESSES HAVE KEPT US PRISONERS OF A TOO EASY TERMINOLOGY. WHEN, IN INTERNATIONAL GATHERINGS, WE WANT TO SPEAK ABOUT SOCIETY IN EUROPE WE WILL ALWAYS SAY THAT WE ARE THE META-INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY, THE POST-SECULAR SOCIETY, ETC.

WE SEEM TO KNOW THE LAND WE ARE ABOUT TO LEAVE BUT WE DON'T KNOW YET THE LAND WE ARE GOING TO. HENCE, A FUNDAMENTAL TASK OF PERCEPTION OF THE NEW REFERENCES AND OF THE LANDMARKS IN THE



GLOBAL REALITY OF THE NEW LAND ARE NECESSARY IF WE WANT TO SURVIVE SPIRITUALLY.

BUT IT IS NOT ONLY SPIRITUAL SURVIVAL WE HAVE TO CHOSE - WE ARE FACING THE MERE SURVIVAL OF MANKIND. WE HAVE REACHED A TURNING POINT IN HISTORY BEYOND WHICH OUR JOURNEY MAY END.

THE COMPLEXITY IN THIS CONTEXT IS MORE THAN THE INTER-RELATEDNESS OF GEOGRAPHIC ENTITIES AND THEIR WORKING TOGETHER FOR A REASONABLE PROCESS OF EXCHANGES AMONG THEM. THIS COMPLEXITY GOES TO A DEEPER LAYER OF THINGS.

THE NUCLEAR THREAT

IT IS AT THE ROOTS OF KNOWLEDGE AND OF MAN'S RELATION TO KNOWLEDGE THAT THE TURNING POINT IS FELT.

FOR A LONG TIME, THERE WAS A SHARP DISTINCTION BETWEEN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY. WE THOUGHT THAT SCIENCE WAS AN OPEN FIELD, WHICH CONTAINED AN INTRINSIC "GOODNESS", OUR DUTY BEING TO KNOW ALWAYS MORE AND MORE. TECHNOLOGY WAS GOOD OR BAD DEPENDING ON THE PURPOSES FOR WHICH IT WAS USED. I BELONG TO THE MANY WHO, IN THE CANDEUR OF OUR YOUTH WENT THROUGH THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE UN CONFERENCE ON THE "PEACEFUL USES OF NUCLEAR ENERGY". WE BELIEVED IN IT.

WE AWOKE PAINFULLY FROM THAT ILLUSION. WE REALIZED THAT BEFORE KNOWLEDGE, THERE IS THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE KNOWLEDGE PROCESS.

WE SAW THAT TECHNOLOGY IS NOT NEUTRAL, IS NOT INNOCENT. IN PHYSICS AND IN BIOLOGY, THERE ARE TECHNOLOGIES THAT, INSTEAD OF BEING AN EXPRESSION OF MANKIND'S CAPACITY TO MASTER THE EARTH - AS WE THOUGHT WAS OUR DUTY - ARE THERE READY TO BE THE INSTRUMENTS OF THE POWER OF MEN'S CREATIONS OVER MEN'S LIVES.

SCIENCE ITSELF IS NOT ANYMORE AN OCEAN OF PURE KNOWLEDGE,



"DU SAVOIR". IT IS FUNDAMENTAL TO REALIZE THAT ALL DISCOVERIES IN SCIENCE HAVE AN IMMEDIATE CORRELATION WITH TECHNOLOGY. THERE IS NOT A SINGLE DISCOVERY IN THE HISTORY OF SCIENCE WHICH DID NOT LEAD LATER TO A TECHNOLOGICAL APPLICATION.

OPENHEIMER, FERMI, EINSTEIN... UNDERSTOOD THIS AND WENT THROUGH THE MOST DEVASTATING PROCESS TO TRY TO STOP WHAT THEY HAD STARTED. BUT ALL THEIR SCIENTIFIC WEIGHT WAS NOT ENOUGH TO PREVENT HIROSHIMA. WOULD THEY BE ALIVE TODAY AND THEY WOULD DO NOTHING BUT TO EXPLAIN THE MORTAL THREAT OF THE NUCLEAR ARSENAL. THE WEAPONRY ALREADY DEPLOYED IS ENOUGH TO MAKE HUMAN LIFE TO VANISH FROM THE EARTH IN HALF A DAY.

AND YET MORE IS STILL TO COME. SOME LEADERS CAN BE FOOLED INTO BELIEVING THAT PRESIDENT REAGAN'S SDI IS A DEFENSIVE MECHANISM. WE ARE NOT FOOLED. FORMER CHANCELLOR HELMUT SCHMIDT COMMENTS IN THIS REGARD (3):

"STAR WARS INITIATIVE IS AN ATTEMPTED RESPONSE TO AN OBSESSION WITH THE CASE OF AN INTERCONTINENTAL NUCLEAR MISSILE ATTACK ON THE UNITED STATES. IT IS STILL NOT CLEAR WHETHER AND UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES REAGAN'S SDI WILL BE ABLE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE OVERALL SECURITY OF THE WORLD. WHAT IS CLEAR, HOWEVER, IS THAT IT CANNOT CONTRIBUTE TO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL WELFARE OF THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD..."

THE ECOLOGICAL "BOMB"

HUMAN SURVIVAL IS ALSO AT STAKE IN WHAT HAS BECOME NOW KNOWN AND FEARED AS THE ECOLOGICAL BOMB. FOR A LONG TIME WE SAW THE ECOLOGICAL MOVEMENT OR THE GREENS AS SOMETHING INTERESTING AND YET INNOCENT, BECAUSE THEY WERE FELT AS MARGINAL TO THE ISSUES IN OUR SOCIETIES. WE DID NOT REALIZE WELL ENOUGH THAT WHAT THEY WERE SAYING IS AT THE CORE OF OUR SOCIETIES.

THE IAC OF FORMER HEADS OF GOVERNMENT IN OUR LAST MEETING IN APRIL, BEFORE LISTING SEVERAL MEASURES TO BE TAKEN NOW, STATED



THE FOLLOWING WARNING:

"GLOBAL DESTRUCTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT IS LOOMING; VIGOROUS ACTION IS IMMEDIATELY REQUIRED." (4)

IN THE SOUTH, SPECIALLY IN AFRICA, LACK OF ALTERNATIVE SOURCES OF ENERGY, LACK OF TECHNOLOGICAL TRAINING OBLIGE WOMEN TO LOOK FURTHER AND FURTHER AWAY FOR FIREWOOD (SOMETIMES AS MUCH AS AT A DISTANCE OF 15 MILES) THUS DESTROYING GRADUALLY ALL THE FORESTS AND ERODING THE SOIL.

IN THE NORTH, UNCONTROLLED USE OF TECHNOLOGY LEADS TO ALL FORMS OF DESTRUCTION OF SEVERAL LIFE SPECIES. ACID RAINS ARE KILLING FORESTS AT A TERRIFYING SPEED. IF THE DESTRUCTION OF THE FORESTS GOES ON AT THE RYTHM IT HAS TAKEN IN THESE LAST YEARS, MAJOR CLIMATIC CHANGES WILL AFFECT THE EARTH. AT THE FIRST HALF OF THE NEXT CENTURY SEVERAL PARTS OF THE WORLD WILL BE SUBMERGED.

ALL THIS IS NOT SCIENCE-FICTION. IT IS THE HIDDEN TRUTH THE POLITICIANS AND MANY SCIENTISTS DON'T DARE TO TELL. ALREADY SEVERAL NUCLEAR PLANTS HAVE COME TO THE END OF THEIR CYCLE AND IN UK AND USA NONE OF THE THREE WAYS IN WHICH THEY CAN BE DECOMMISSIONED OR IN WHICH WE CAN DISPOSE OF RADIOACTIVE WASTES IS SURE.

AND YET ALL THIS CAN BE CONTROLLED. WHY ARE NOT THE INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS DEALING WITH THIS?

A SHIFT IN PARADIGM

CAN WE FACE SUCH QUESTION ONLY BY ACTIONS? WE NEED TO GO DEEPER.

WHAT IS AT STAKE IS A SHIFT IN PARADIGM. IN EUROPE, WE HAVE LIVED OUR RELATION TO NATURE AND SCIENCE - A RELATION WE EXPORTED



EVERYWHERE ELSE - SUPPORTED BY THE PRIMORDIAL MYTH OF CREATION AS DESCRIBED IN GENESIS. GOD SAID TO MAN:

"SUBDUE THE EARTH." (5)

AND MAN HAS BEEN BUSY DOING IT, ACTING OUT THE PARADIGM.

BUT WE HAVE FORGOTTEN THAT THE PRIMORDIAL MYTH OFFERED ANOTHER PARADIGM OF EQUAL IMPORTANCE:

"DO NOT EAT THE FRUIT FROM THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL." (6)

FOR CENTURIES MANY CHRISTIAN SAW THIS "FORBIDDEN FRUIT" AS BEING EQUATED WITH SEXUAL LICENCE. MAYBE THE SEQUENCE OF "THEY WERE ASHAMED BECAUSE THEY WERE NAKED" GAVE ROOM TO SUCH AN INTERPRETATION! INDEED WE ARE NAKED - DESTITUTED, HELPLESS - IN THE FACE OF THE THREATS WE HAVE COMING UPON US. THAT IS THE DEEP MEANING FOR THE SHAME OF BEING NAKED.

THE QUESTION IS PUT ANEW TO EVERYONE OF US: CAN WE EAT FROM ALL THE FRUITS OF THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE?

THERE IS A LIMIT - SACREDNESS OF LIFE IS THE ULTIMATE VALUE. WILL WOMEN, AS A MASSIVE FORCE, BE ABLE TO DEFEND AT ALL COSTS HUMAN SURVIVAL AGAINST ALL AMBITIONS OF SCIENCE, AND TECHNOLOGY AND THEIR OFFSPRINGS IN NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND ECOLOGICAL DISASTER? CAN WOMEN HELP A LIFE-CENTERED CIVILIZATION TO COME ABOUT? THIS IS THE KEY-QUESTION OF OUR REFLECTION HERE, TONIGHT.

WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING

ABSENCE FROM DECISIONS CONCERNING HUMAN SURVIVAL

WOMEN ARE MORE THAN HALF OF MANKIND. THEY DO REPRESENT ONE THIRD OF THE WORLD'S LABOUR FORCE. IN OUR ECONOMIC EUROPEAN





COMMUNITY THEY REPRESENTED IN 84, ALMOST 40% OF THE TOTAL LABOUR FORCE. THEY GROW HALF OF THE WORLD'S FOOD. THEY PROVIDE MORE HEALTH CARE THAN ALL THE HEALTH SERVICES PUT TOGETHER. THEY ARE THE INDISPENSABLE VALUE-GIVERS OF OUR SOCIETY. AND YET, THEY HAVE PRACTICALLY NO VOICE IN THE DECISIONS CONCERNING HUMAN SURVIVAL.

A WASTE OF HUMAN RESOURCES OF A TREMENDOUS DIMENSION SHOWS THE IRRATIONALITY OF THE DOMINATING ORDER OF TODAY'S WORLD.

THIS ORGANIZED DISORDER AND UNBALANCE IS SHARPLY FELT AT THE MOST OBVIOUS LEVELS OF DECISION-MAKING - NAMELY, THE POLITICAL BODIES AND INSTITUTIONS.

REGARDLESS OF REPEATED APPEALS BY THE UN AGENCIES TO MEMBER-STATES TO INTEGRATE WOMEN AT ALL LEVELS OF DECISION-MAKING IN THE WHOLE PROCESS OF DEVELOPMENT, THEIR PRESENCE IS MINIMAL.

AND YET IT WAS POSSIBLE TO READ IN ONE OF THE BASIC DOCUMENTS OF NAIROBI (7):

"THE NEED FOR WOMEN'S PERSPECTIVE IN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT IS DECISIVE. IN THE INTEREST OF WIDENING OF HUMAN PERCEPTION AND OF PROGRESS, IT IS NECESSARY TO INTRODUCE AND TO STRENGTHEN IN THE SOCIAL FABRICS THE CONCEPTS WOMEN HOLD ON EQUALITY, THEIR CHOICES ABOUT ALTERNATIVE STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPMENT AND THEIR APPROACHES TO PEACE, AS FLOWING FROM THEIR ASPIRATIONS, INTERESTS AND TALENTS."

LIP SERVICE? PROTECTIVE ATTITUDE? SIMPLE CONCESSION TO WHAT WOMEN HAD BEEN SAYING OVER THE LAST 15 YEARS?

WHATEVER THE REASONS, WOMEN ARE STILL IN FEW NUMBERS WHEREVER MAJOR DECISIONS ARE TAKEN.

THEY ARE PRACTICALLY ABSENT FROM ALL LEVELS AT WHICH THE TWO GREAT THREATS TO SURVIVAL OF MANKIND ARE BEING PUT INTO ACTION.

UNTIL TODAY, 11 WOMEN HAVE HAD THE FIRST RESPONSIBILITY OF RUNNING THE PUBLIC AFFAIRS OF THEIR COUNTRIES; TODAY THEY ARE 5 IN SUCH POSITION. ONLY A HANDFUL HAVE EVER HAD ANY POSSIBILITY TO ACT DECISIVELY ON SECURITY AND PEACE MATTERS. THOUGH MORE



HAVE HAD THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR ENVIRONMENT MATTERS IN THEIR COUNTRIES, IT HAS BEEN MOSTLY WHEN ENVIRONMENT SEEMED TO BE PART OF THE SOFTWARE OF THE OFFICIAL POLICY AND THEIR MANDATE EXCLUDED THEM FROM TECHNOLOGICAL CHOICES.

FROM ANGER TO THE RELEASE OF WOMEN'S COLLECTIVE ENERGY

NO DOUBT THAT A GREAT ANGER AROUSE AMONG WOMEN. THEY SEE THE ISSUES AT STAKE, THEY WANT TO CHANGE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES AND THEY REMAIN WHERE THEY ARE. THEY ARE DISCRIMINATED AGAINST. IN A SUBTLE, INVISIBLE WAY. THEY MAY BE WORKING IN ALL FIELDS OF ACTIVITY - THE POSITIONS OF DECISION-MAKING SEEM TO HAVE AN INVISIBLE NOTE PUT ON THEM: "ONLY FOR MEN - WOMEN NOT ALLOWED".

IT IS MORE THAN WASTE OF HUMAN RESOURCES - IT IS A DELIBERATE REDUCTION OF THE PROBABILITY TO SOLVE THE PROBLEMS OF TODAY'S WORLD.

SUCH A DISCRIMINATION REFLECTS THE VALUES OF A WHOLE SOCIETY AND NOT ONLY OF ITS MASCULINE HALF, TWO FACTS BEING WELL KNOWN. ON ONE HAND, WOMEN WHO HAVE REACHED PLACES OF DECISION-MAKING ARE OFTEN THE INSTRUMENT OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST OTHER WOMEN; ON THE OTHER HAND, THE GREAT MASS OF WOMEN SEEM TO ACCEPT BADLY THOSE WOMEN WHO HAVE ACCESS TO POWER BY WITHHOLDING THEIR OTHERWISE NATURAL BASE OF SOCIAL SUPPORT TO SUCH WOMEN. WHY IS THIS SO? IT IS NOT EASY TO UNDERSTAND. SOME EXPLANATIONS GIVEN SO FAR ARE TOO SIMPLISTIC. NO DOUBT MORE STUDY ON SUCH PHENOMENA IS STILL NEEDED.

TO PUT AN END TO SUCH A DISCRIMINATION IS NOT ONLY TO ASSURE THE UNIVERSALITY OF HUMAN RIGHTS BUT ALSO (AND THIS IS WHAT INTERESTS ME MOST OF ALL) TO FREE THE CULTURAL AND SOCIAL ENERGY OF A GROUP WHOSE VERY CULTURE HAS BEEN REDUCED TO SILENCE AND MADE UNABLE TO EXPRESS ITSELF IN POLITICAL TERMS.

BEYOND EQUAL RIGHTS, THE CRITICAL MASS AND THE ATTITUDINAL CHANGE

THE BASIS OUT OF WHICH THE ATTEMPT OF WOMEN TO EXERCISE

LEADERSHIP HAS BEEN LED IS THE AFFIRMATION OF EQUAL RIGHTS. OF COURSE THIS IS IN ITSELF EXTREMELY IMPORTANT AS IT SPRINGS FORTH FROM THE AWARENESS OF THE DIGNITY OF THE HUMAN PERSON, MAN OR WOMAN. IN THIS PROCESS SOME POSITIVE STEPS HAVE BEEN TAKEN. VERY SLOWLY WE CAN SEE THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE XX CENTURY WOMEN EMERGING IN NEW ROLES OF LEADERSHIP.

HOWEVER, THE SOLE AFFIRMATION OF EQUAL RIGHTS CAN ALSO BE A TRAP. EQUAL RIGHTS FALL SHORT OF THEIR PURPOSE IF THEY DON'T GO TOGETHER WITH THE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF DIFFERENTIATION.

MOREOVER, FOR A POLICY OF EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES TO GIVE ROOM TO FULL DIFFERENTIATION AND TO THE EXERCISE OF DECISION-MAKING FUNCTIONS IN WHICH WOMEN DO MAKE A DIFFERENCE, A CRITICAL MASS IS NECESSARY - AND IT HAS NOT YET BEEN REACHED.

THIS IS WHY I CONSIDER THAT THE MERE EGALITARIAN THEORY ON THE BASE OF THE SAME RIGHTS OFTEN LEADS TO A DEADLOCK.

IN THE RARE SITUATIONS IN WHICH WOMEN HAVE HAD ACCESS TO THE SAME POSITION OF RESPONSIBILITY AS MEN, SEVERAL PITFALLS ARE VISIBLE.

WE SEE SOME OF THOSE WOMEN ONLY AS A "TOKEN" AS IT IS SO OFTEN DESCRIBED BY THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT. SUCH WOMEN BEGIN BY YIELDING TO ALL ESTABLISHED NORMS, TO THE STATU QUO, KNOWING THEY COULD BE EASILY REPLACED AGAIN BY A MAN - AND NOBODY WOULD NOTICE.

OTHERS GIVE IN STRONGLY TO THE "OTHER SIDE", OFTEN REINFORCING TO THE EXTREME THE NORMS ESTABLISHED BY MEN AND THUS BLOCKING THE WAY TO OTHER WOMEN.

SOMETIMES THEIR ONLY CHANCE OF SURVIVAL IN AN ENVIRONMENT THEY DIDN'T HELP TO SHAPE IS TO ENFORCE ASSIMILATION. AND AS WOMEN ARE OFTEN DEDICATED PERSONS AND RATHER DEMANDING UPON THEMSELVES IN THE EXERCISE OF THEIR FUNCTIONS, THEIR PRESENCE





THOUGH EVENTUALLY SATISFACTORY ON A STRICTLY PROFESSIONAL LEVEL, DOES NOT MEAN A CHANGE IN THE CONDITION OF WOMEN'S ACCESS AND PRESENCE.

I AM NOT SAYING THAT THE PRESENCE OF WOMEN AT WHAT WE USED TO CALL HIGH POSTS OF RESPONSIBILITY IS NOT NECESSARY. ON THE CONTRARY - REGARDLESS OF WHAT THEY DO, THEIR PRESENCE PERMITS A GENERAL LIFTING OF BAN, NOT ONLY IN LAW BUT IN THE COLLECTIVE IMAGINARY WORLD OF EVERYONE AND MOST OF ALL OF CHILDREN.

THIS IS MOST IMPORTANT AS REAL EQUALITY MEANS EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITIES - AND THEY START AT THE LEVEL OF THE MOST FUNDAMENTAL DESIRES THAT SPRING UP IN THE MINDS OF BOYS AND GIRLS. IN A STUDY DONE IN MY OWN COUNTRY ABOUT THE OPTIONS OPEN TO MAN AND WOMEN, YOUNG GIRLS COME UP WITH 13 DIFFERENT FIELDS, WHILE BOYS SEE THEM WITH MORE THAN 15; ON THE OTHER HAND BOYS SEE BEFORE THEMSELVES MORE THAN 29 FIELDS (MORE THAN DOUBLE!) IN WHICH THE SAME GIRLS ALSO SEE THE BOYS!

BUT THESE ASTOUNDING FACTS ARE NOT ONLY FOUND AMONG THE CHILDREN IN MY COUNTRY. THE SAME DISTORTION OF THE EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITIES CAN BE SEEN IN THE ENQUIRY DONE IN 1984 IN THE 10 EEC COUNTRIES. TO MY ASTONISHMENT, WHEN ASKED IF THEY HAVE ADVANTAGES OR DISADVANTAGES BECAUSE OF BEING WOMEN, THE WOMEN WHO CONSIDER THEMSELVES IN DISADVANTAGE ARE ONLY 15% WHILE 57% OF MEN CONSIDER THEMSELVES IN ADVANTAGE BECAUSE OF BEING MEN! (THESE RESULTS ARE PRACTICALLY THE SAME IN ALL GENERATIONS AND AT ALL LEVELS OF EDUCATION.)

THESE FIGURES SHOULD GO TOGETHER WITH ANOTHER ASTOUNDING RESULT. ASKED IF IN A TIME OF UNEMPLOYMENT MEN HAD MORE RIGHT THAN WOMEN TO WORK, 70% OF WOMEN WITHOUT PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY THINK THAT MEN HAVE MORE RIGHT TO WORK THAN WOMEN! BUT EVEN AMONG THOSE WHO HAVE A PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY, 54% THINK THE SAME.

NEED FOR MECHANISMS OF VISIBILITY

THE PICTURE IS RATHER DARK. IT IS AT THE ARCHAIC ZONES OF EACH PERSON THAT OLD IMAGES AND STEREOTYPES ARE FORMED. EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITIES AS MERE ACCESS TO FUNCTIONS AND TO POSITIONS OF LEADERSHIP WILL BE AN ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TASK FOR WOMEN IF WOMEN HAVE IN THEIR MINDS SUCH SELF-IMAGE OF THEM NOT BEING NEEDED IN SOCIETY AT LARGE. IT IS CLEAR THAT A TREMENDOUS PROCESS OF MASS EDUCATION HAS TO GO ON (OR TO BE LAUNCHED) EVEN IN THE HIGHLY INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES OF THE EEC.

FOR WOMEN TO HAVE THE RIGHT TO THE SAME FUNCTIONS OF DECISION-MAKING WHICH ARE THE STRONGHOLD OF MEN, IT IS VITAL THAT THERE WILL BE A RE-AWAKENING OF THE COLLECTIVE CONSCIENCE OF WOMEN TO THE NEW POSSIBILITIES OPEN TO THEM.

IT IS TRUE THAT IN ORDER TO OBTAIN THE SAME OPPORTUNITIES THERE ARE MANY STRATEGIES THAT DIFFERENT COUNTRIES AND DIFFERENT GROUPS HAVE FOLLOWED. FOR SEVERAL YEARS, A FEW POLITICAL PARTIES HAVE USED THE QUOTA SYSTEM. BUT, APART FROM THE SCANDINAVIAN COUNTRIES WHERE WOMEN ARE 20 TO 25% OF THE MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT, THE RESULTS ARE NOT BRIGHT IN THE OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES WHERE WOMEN RANGE FROM 5 TO 11% IN THE PARLIAMENT.

MOREOVER THOSE RESULTS ARE AMBIGUOUS BECAUSE IF IN SOME COUNTRIES THE QUOTA SYSTEM LED TO A GREATER NUMBER OF WOMEN IN POSITIONS OF DECISION-MAKING, IT IS NOT YET CLEAR HOW FAR THOSE WOMEN DID BEHAVE IN A DIFFERENT WAY, INTRODUCED A NEW PATTERN. THE DANGER IN THIS PROCESS IS THAT WOMEN MAY BE INDUCED TO DO EXACTLY THE SAME THINGS AND IN THE SAME WAY AS MEN.

BUT THERE IS A CLEAR ADVANTAGE IN THE QUOTA SYSTEM AND EQUIVALENT MECHANISMS: IT DOES OBLIGE MEN AND WOMEN TO LOOK FOR WOMEN. HENCE, IT IS A VERY SIMPLE DEVICE TO GET WOMEN OUT OF INVISIBILITY.





RECENTLY A CERTAIN HEAD OF STATE WAS CONFRONTED WITH THE QUOTA SYSTEM BY A GROUP OF WOMEN WHO TOLD HIM THAT THEY WERE GOING TO PROMOTE THE INTRODUCTION IN THE ELECTIONS FOR PARLIAMENT OF THE QUOTA SYSTEM FOR ALL POLITICAL PARTIES. THIS HEAD OF STATE (WHO COMES FROM A POLITICAL PARTY) BECAME VERY CONCERNED AND ASKED THE TRADITIONAL QUESTION: "WHAT IF THERE ARE NO COMPETENT WOMEN TO FULFIL THE QUOTA?" THE ANSWER HE GOT WAS QUICK: "WHAT IF THERE ARE NO COMPETENT MEN TO FILL YOUR LISTS?" IT DOES STRIP DOWN MEN'S AUTHORITY FROM ITS AURA OF COMPETENCE!

THE QUOTA SYSTEM CAN BE COMPLEMENTED IN OTHER WAYS. RECENTLY IN CANADA, I HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO BE PRESENT AT THE LAUNCHING OF A NEW PROJECT FROM THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF MONTREAL. IN ORDER TO BE SURE WOMEN ARE VISIBLE AND THAT THOSE WHO ARE VISIBLE ARE THE MOST COMPETENT IN THE FIELDS OF MANAGEMENT AND BUSINESS, THE CHAMBER CALLS UPON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A ROSTER OF WOMEN'S NAMES CONSTITUTED ON THE BASIS OF CONSENSUAL INFORMATION GIVEN BY OTHER WOMEN. THE COMBINATION OF QUOTA AND ROSTER CAN LEAD TO THE PRESENCE OF WOMEN WHO ARE NOT "SOLD" TO THE EXISTING POWERS.

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DIFFERENTIATION FOR A DIFFERENT LEADERSHIP

SO FAR, I HAVE ASSUMED THAT IT IS IMPORTANT TO INVENT MECHANISMS WHICH WILL ENABLE WOMEN TO HAVE ACCESS TO POSITIONS OF DECISION-MAKING.

BUT I ADD A FUNDAMENTAL CONDITION: IT IS IMPORTANT FOR WOMEN TO BE IN DECISION-MAKING POSITIONS IN SO FAR AS THEY EXPRESS THEMSELVES DIFFERENTLY AND INTRODUCE NEW MODES OF BEING AND NEW ANSWERS TO THE FIELDS IN WHICH THEY ARE WORKING.

I TAKE AS A SCIENTIFIC STARTING POINT THAT MEN AND WOMEN ARE DIFFERENT. ALL THE ATTEMPTS TO DENY THAT DIFFERENCE BY-PASS THE NOW COMMON KNOWLEDGE THAT COMES FROM PSYCHOANALYSIS AS A SCIENCE. IN THE WAKE OF THAT SCIENCE ONE FRENCH PHYLOSOPHER



WROTE RECENTLY THAT EACH INDIVIDUAL MUST BE BORNE A SECOND TIME - A BIRTH WHICH IS MYTHICAL AND SUPPLEMENTARY - FOR THE SAKE OF HISTORY, FOR THE SAKE OF AN INSTITUTION THAT IS NOT ANYMORE THE MOTHER. (HOW MUCH OF THIS NEED WAS ALREADY IN CHRIST'S WORDS: "IF YOU AREN'T BORN AGAIN TO THE HOLY SPIRIT...")

WE ARE AT THE CENTER OF THE MYSTERY OF THE HUMAN BEING. IN THIS BIRTH, IT DOES MATTER IF YOU ARE A MAN OR A WOMAN.

EVERYONE IS BORNE TO HISTORY DIFFERENTLY - THAT BIRTH BEING LINKED TO THE ARCHAIC REGIONS OF EACH OF US WHERE THE FIRST BIRTH TOOK PLACE. THIS SECOND BIRTH DOES NOT HAPPEN BY ITSELF. THE SAME PHYLOSOPHER STATES THAT IT MUST OCCUR AT THE PRECISE MOMENT OF THE JUNCTURE BETWEEN THE HISTORY OF AN INDIVIDUAL AND THE COLLECTIVE HISTORY OF A REGION, OF A NATION, PERHAPS OF A WHOLE CONTINENT.

EVERY WOMAN HAS TO GO THROUGH THIS "EXACT JUNCTURE" WHERE KNOWLEDGE OF ONESELF AS A WOMAN AND KNOWLEDGE OF THE INSTITUTIONS BLEND TOGETHER. PRIVATE AND PUBLIC LIFE JOIN AND MERGE AT THE VERY CRUX OF ONE'S OWN IDENTITY AND AT THE AWARENESS OF TODAY'S GLOBAL ISSUES.

WOMEN'S WITHDRAWAL FROM DECISION-MAKING FUNCTIONS

OFTEN WE HEAR (I JUST HEARD FROM ONE YOUNG RECTOR OF ONE UNIVERSITY HERE IN THE NL) THAT WOMEN ARE NOT PRESENT IN DECISION-MAKING FUNCTIONS BECAUSE THEY DON'T SEEM INTERESTED. (IN THE UN SYSTEM THIS IS THE RECURRING ARGUMENT TO EXPLAIN "WHY" THERE ARE PRACTICALLY NO WOMEN AT THE HEAVY TOP-LEVEL OF THE ORGANIZATION AND ITS SUBSIDIARY ORGANS.) (8)

BUT THERE IS SOME TRUTH IN IT. SOME WOMEN HAVE EXPERIENCED THE HIGH LEVELS OF DECISION-MAKING AND HAVE COME BACK AGAIN TO THE RANK AND FILE. WHY? A FEW COMMON EXPERIENCES COME TO



MIND WHICH MAY EXPLAIN SUCH ATTITUDE FROM THE WOMEN THEMSELVES.

WOMEN FEEL AS STRANGERS IN POSITIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN SHAPED BY MEN, SOMETIMES FOR CENTURIES. NOT ONLY DO THEY HAVE TO SUFFER THE CONTINUOUS ATTACK OF THE SYSTEM AS IT IS BUT THEY ALSO HAVE TO GO THROUGH A PROCESS OF SCRUTINY ABOUT THEIR OWN MOTIVATIONS AND ATTITUDES. (YOU JUST LISTENED TO GERALDINE FERRARO AND YOU WILL SEE WHAT A WOMAN HAS TO ENDURE WHENEVER SHE AIMS AT A POSITION OF LEADERSHIP.)

WOMEN EXPERIENCE OFTEN THE ACTIVITIES THAT GO ON AT THE LEVEL OF THE "EXECUTIVES" AS ENTHROPIC SITUATIONS, WHERE THERE IS A LOT OF WASTE OF RESOURCES AND ENERGY.

MOREOVER, THERE IS A WORLD OF MAKE-BELIEVE WHICH WOMEN HAVE DIFFICULTY TO ACCEPT AS THEY ARE NEARER THE MANIFOLD ASPECTS OF DAILY AND REAL LIFE. WORDS REPLACE ACTION. ROUTINE SUBSTITUTES INNOVATION. GENERAL OUTDATED PRINCIPLES STIFFLE IMAGINATION. THERE IS IN THIS GATHERING TONIGHT A FORMER DUTCH MINISTER WHOM I HAVE QUOTED ENDLESSLY SINCE WE MET FOR THE FIRST TIME 11 YEARS AGO. IN 1975 THE BELGIUM MINISTER OF CULTURE INVITED ALL THE WOMEN MINISTERS OF EASTERN AND WESTERN EUROPE. IN THE FIRST INFORMAL MOMENTS A DIALOGUE TOOK PLACE. THE MINISTER FOR JUSTICE AND CULTURE FROM DENMARK ASKED THE DUTCH MINISTER: "HOW ARE THINGS GOING? WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN DOING?" AND THEN THE QUICK, WITTY ANSWER OF THE DUTCH MINISTER: "A LOT OF NONSENSE AND A FEW NICE THINGS."

THIS IS INDEED WHAT MANY WOMEN FEEL WHEN THEY ENTER MEN'S DOMAIN. IF WOMEN ARE TRUE TO THEMSELVES, THIS IS VERY OFTEN WHAT THOSE HIGH FUNCTIONS AMOUNT TO!

THOSE SITUATIONS MAY EXPLAIN THAT SOME WOMEN WHO WANT TO BE TRUE TO THEMSELVES AND TO OTHERS QUIT. I HAVE GREAT RESPECT FOR ALL THOSE REASONS. BUT FOR EVERY WOMAN WHO QUILTS, THERE WILL BE A LONG TIME BEFORE ANY OTHER WOMAN WILL GET THERE!

SELF-ASSERTION AS A BASIC CONDITION

IN SUCH SOCIAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT THE QUESTION OF ACCESS TO DECISION-MAKING FUNCTIONS BRINGS US TO THE BASIC ATTITUDES AND MOTIVATIONS OF WOMEN. WE HAVE TO EXERCISE SELF-ASSERTION AS THE TYPE OF BEHAVIOUR WHICH IS ASKED OF WOMEN IN OUR TIME, A BEHAVIOUR WHICH HAS BEEN DESCRIBED AS "EMOTIONALLY HONEST, DIRECT, SELF-ENHANCING, EXPRESSING YOUR FEELINGS, NEEDS AND IDEAS AND STANDING UP FOR YOUR LEGITIMATE RIGHTS IN WAYS THAT DON'T VIOLATE THE RIGHT OF OTHERS." (9)

MUCH CAN BE SAID ABOUT THE SELF-ASSERTIVE BEHAVIOUR (NEITHER PASSIVE NOR AGRESSIVE!), AS SO MANY LAYERS OF MYTHS AND CONVENTIONAL NORMS HAVE PILED UP IN THE UNCONSCIOUS OF EVERY WOMAN.

QUITE BY CHANCE I CAME UP TO WHAT A GREAT WOMAN, THE PAINTER VIEIRA DA SILVA, SAID IN AN INTERVIEW LAST WEEK. IT SAYS IN A NUTSHELL WHAT I MEAN BY SELF-ASSERTION. THE JOURNALIST ASKS HER: "FINALLY WHAT IS YOUR NATIONALITY? YOU WERE BORN IN PORTUGAL, YOU MARRIED A HUNGARIAN PAINTER, YOU LIVED IN FRANCE AND IN BRASIL, YOU TRAVELLED AROUND...?" AND THEN THAT GREAT ARTIST, WHOSE PAINTINGS ARE IN THE GREAT MUSEUMS OF THE WORLD, ANSWERED IN HER CONCISE, BUT DIRECT WAY: "I HAVE THE NATIONALITY OF MY NAME."

SHE IS A MODEST, ALMOST SHY PERSON. AND YET A WHOLE WEALTH OF EXPERIENCE, SELF-CONFIDENCE, KNOWLEDGE OF ONESELF, SHINES THROUGH THAT SENTENCE. HOW MANY AMONG WOMEN COULD SAY THAT, WITH SUCH FREEDOM, SUCH SIMPLICITY? IT IS THAT ATTITUDE WHICH I CALL SELF-ASSERTION.

WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP AS A POTENTIAL FORCE FOR A LIFE-CENTERED
CIVILIZATION



LACK OF LEADERSHIP IN THE WORLD

THAT CAPACITY FOR SELF-ASSERTION (ALWAYS SUBJECT TO THE TEST OF OTHER'S ACCEPTANCE AND OF ONE'S OWN GROWTH IN SELF-KNOWLEDGE) IS A BASIC CONDITION TO BE CLEARLY AND PEACEFULLY IN A POSITION OF LEADERSHIP.

I STRESS AT THIS MOMENT THIS ATTITUDE AS LEADERSHIP IS SO OBVIOUSLY LACKING IN THE WORLD TODAY. IN THE LAST MEETING OF THE INTER ACTION COUNCIL OF FORMER HEADS OF GOVERNMENT A SENTENCE WHICH CAME OUT OF THE EXPERIENCE OF LEADERS LIKE PIERRE TRUDEAU, ADOLFO SUAREZ, HELMUT SCHMIDT AND OTHERS, BECAME THE FIRST LINE OF OUR FINAL DECLARATION:

"THE FIRST DUTY OF LEADERS IS TO LEAD."!!

INDEED, THE APPARENT PLATITUDE EXPRESSED BY THIS SENTENCE POINTS OUT TO A NEW PHENOMENON: THE COMPLEXITY OF TODAY'S WORLD REACHED SUCH A DEGREE THAT LEADERSHIP SHRINKS AWAY FROM ITS RESPONSIBILITIES. ISSUES AND DECISIONS ARE LEFT TO THE ROUTINE OF SIMPLE MANAGEMENT.

LEADERSHIP IS NOT MISSING ONLY AT THE POLITICAL LEVEL. IT IS MISSING AT ALL LEVELS OF THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION.

AT A TIME OF TRANSITION, OLD MODELS PREVAIL AS A KIND OF SECURITY PROTECTION. AND YET THEY ARE NOT ABLE TO COPE ANYMORE WITH THE NEW ISSUES.

THE ABSENCE OF LEADERSHIP LEADS TO UNFORESEEN PROBLEMS.

CONNECTIONS BREAK LOOSE: WORK LOSES ITS IMPACT ON THE SOCIAL FABRICS; RELATIONSHIPS BECOME SCATTERED AND UNABLE TO FORM THE

COHESION OUT OF WHICH NEW VALUES CAN EMERGE.

GOALS ARE NOT DEFINED: IMMEDIATE ANSWERS, CALLED AS PRAGMATIC, BUT BEING IN REALITY SHORT-SIGHTED, BLOCK THE HORIZON AND PREVENT REAL AND LONG-TERM SOLUTIONS TO EMERGE.

DECISIONS ARE AJOURNED - OR ARE REPLACED BY THE ERZATS OF A REPORT OR AGAIN ANOTHER MEETING.

PYRAMIDAL STRUCTURES ARE TOO RIGID AND DON'T ALLOW FOR THE ANSWER TO THE REAL PROBLEMS. THEY OBLIGE TO DELEGATE POWER TO PAPERS AND CHANNELS, NOT TO REAL PEOPLE - AT THE END THEY KILL LIFE AND PREVENT THE FREE CIRCULATION OF IDEAS AND PEOPLE.

LACK OF LEADERSHIP IS ALSO VERY PATENT IN THE LAISSEZ-FAIRE ATTITUDE AND POLICY. PERMISSIVENESS AT ALL LEVELS, IDENTICAL TREATMENT OF EACH INDIVIDUAL WITHOUT GIVING ROOM FOR THE UNIQUENESS AND ORIGINALITY OF EACH ONE LEAD TO A MASS-SOCIETY DEPRIVED OF ANY SENSE OF PURPOSE AND OF VISION.

Fundação Cuidar o Futuro

SOCIETY IS DOOMED TO STAGNATION WITHOUT LEADERSHIP. EXISTING FORMS OF LEADERSHIP ARE NOT ADEQUATE ANYMORE TO THE NEW ISSUES AND CHALLENGES THE WORLD IS FACING.

WOMEN AS POTENTIAL LEADERSHIP FOR HUMAN SURVIVAL

IT IS AT THIS PRECISE POINT OF HISTORY THAT WE HAVE TO LOOK AROUND AND ASK OURSELVES: AS IN THE HIGH MOMENT OF INDUSTRIALIZATION, IN THE XIX CENTURY, VOICE WAS GIVEN TO THE WORKERS TO SHAPE THE NEW INDUSTRIALIZED SOCIETY, AS IN THE LAST 30 YEARS THE MOVEMENT FOR AUTONOMY AND INDEPENDENCE OF THE PEOPLES BROUGHT ABOUT MORE THAN 100 COUNTRIES AND CREATED A NEW DISTRIBUTION OF POWER IN THE WORLD, ISN'T IT TIME FOR THE HIDDEN FORCE OF WOMEN TO GAIN MOMENTUM AND TO HELP TO LEAD THE NEW SOCIETY?





WOMEN REPRESENT A POTENTIAL OF LEADERSHIP CAPABLE TO
 NEW ENERGY BY FOCUSSING, IN A NEW WAY, THE ISSUES OF THE WORLD
 AND BY FINDING PATHS OF REALISTIC ACTION LEADING TO THE
 PRESERVATION OF HUMAN LIFE.

SEVERAL CONDITIONS ARE NEEDED. FIRST, WOMEN HAVE TO REALIZE
 THEIR UNIQUENESS AS WOMEN. YES, WOMEN DON'T KNOW YET HOW TO
 ORGANIZE THEIR PARTICIPATION IN LEADERSHIP. YES, WOMEN HAVE TO
 OVERCOME THEIR REPULSE TO THE "TRACKING" SYSTEM AND TO ESTABLISH
 THEIR OWN NETWORKS. YES, WOMEN HAVE TO OVERCOME THE FACT THAT,
 IN EVERY SITUATION, (AND AGAIN ON THE BASIS OF THE 84 EEC
 ENQUIRY) ONLY 6% OF THE EUROPEANS FEEL THEMSELVES ADEQUATELY
 REPRESENTED BY A WOMAN. YES, WOMEN ARE ABLE TO CAPITALIZE IN
 THEIR MILLENARY EXPERIENCE AND THEREFORE CAN BECOME THE SPECIFIC
 ACTORS WHO AT THE END OF THE CENTURY ARE CALLED TO DEAL WITH
 SURVIVAL ISSUES.

A NEW TYPE OF ENERGY IN SOCIETY

THE SOCIOLOGICAL INVISIBILITY OF WOMEN IS A PRESENT HANDICAP
 FROM WHICH AN ASSET FOR A FUTURE TYPE OF INTERVENTION IN SOCIETY
 CAN BE DRAWN, AS THEIR CONSCIOUS APPEARANCE ON THE SCENE OF
 LEADERSHIP WON'T PASS UN-NOTICED.

HOWEVER IT IS NOT POWER SEEN IN A MECHANICAL WAY THAT WOMEN
 SHOULD SEEK (THE POWER WE SEE AT PLAY WHEN WE WATCH A TV
 FACE-TO-FACE DEBATE OF TWO CANDIDATES). IT IS NOT THAT KIND OF
 POWER. IN THAT CONCEPT, POWER IS THE FORCE EXERCISED BY A OVER
 B (A PERSON, AN INSTITUTION, A STATE) MINUS B' RESISTANCE TO IT.

RATHER IT IS POWER IN A THERMODYNAMIC WAY. THEN IT IS ENERGY
 WHICH IS PRESENT: ENERGY WHICH IS AT ONCE HEAT AND ANIMATED
 MATTER; ENERGY WHICH PARTLY DISSIPATES ITSELF AND PARTLY ANIMATES
 FROM WITHIN ALL THE MATTER INVOLVED IN ANY PHYSICAL TRANSFORMATION.

WOMEN NEED ENERGY WITHIN THEMSELVES - TO STAND ON THEIR OWN

FEET, TO FACE THE ABSENCE OF MODELS FOR THEIR TASKS, TO RISK EVERYTHING IN WHAT THEY UNDERTAKE. WOMEN NEED TO GET TOGETHER IN ORDER TO RELEASE THEIR COLLECTIVE ENERGY.

EVERYWHERE IN THE WORLD, IN ALL PROFESSIONS AND SOCIAL CLASSES, I HAVE SEEN WOMEN WORKING VERY HARD BUT UNABLE TO PUT THEIR ENERGY WHERE NEW VITALITY IS NEEDED. A DISSIPATION OF ENERGY OCCURS WHICH ACCOUNTS FOR SUDDEN EXPLOSIONS IN THE LIVES OF SOME OF THOSE WOMEN AND WHICH PREVENTS SOCIETY FROM GETTING MORE DYNAMISM AND GREATER SCOPE.

IF THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO SPEAK ABOUT LIBERATION OF WOMEN, IT WILL BE, I TRUST IT, THE LIBERATION OF THEIR ENERGY.

WHEN TACKLING THE MOST PRESSING ISSUES OF OUR TIMES, WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IS CHALLENGED TO INTRODUCE INTO SOCIETY A NEW ENERGY, SO FAR HIDDEN BY THE SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC FORCES WHICH KEPT WOMEN OUTSIDE THE LEADERSHIP ROLES.

UNVEILING EXISTING PATTERNS OF WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP

THE FIRST TASK FOR THE LIBERATION OF WOMEN'S ENERGY IS TO UNVEIL THE ALREADY EXISTING PATTERNS OF WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN OUR MIDST.

THE WOMAN WE HONOUR TONIGHT WAS PART OF THAT PATTERN. SHE DIDN'T SET UP TO START A CAREER. SHE FACED LIFE AND HER TASKS AS THEY CAME TO HER. SHE WAS NOT ALL THE TIME IN THE LIMELIGHT. SHE WAS IN AND OUT OF A PUBLIC ACTIVITY. HER RESPONSIBILITIES DIDN'T SPRING UP FROM A WELL-CALCULATED GOAL. RATHER, I DARE SAY SHE MADE THE MOST OF WHAT SO MANY WOMEN ARE GIVEN TO DO: A LIFE IN ZIGZAGUE, WITH DIFFERENT PHASES IN IT, EACH ONE MEANINGFUL IN ITSELF, GETTING THUS AN ACCUMULATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND THE INVALUABLE EXPERIENCE OF A MULTI-FUNCTIONAL ROLE.

AT THE SAME TIME, IN ALL THE DIFFERENT PHASES OF HER LIFE, SHE HAS BEEN CONCERNED WITH THE ULTIMATE GOAL OF WHAT SHE WAS DOING. SHE DIDN'T STOP BEING EXCLUSIVELY DEDICATED TO ONE ACTIVITY, TO ONE TYPE OF





CONCERN. THROUGH THE VARIETY OF TASKS, SHE HAS WOVEN THE FABRICS OF HER OWN LIFE. SHE WAS AUTONOMOUS AND FREE. SHE WAS SURE OF THE VALUE IN HER - NOT BECAUSE OF THE MANY TALENTS SHE HAD, NOT BECAUSE OF HER STATUS, BUT BECAUSE OF THE VALUE SHE HERSELF GAVE TO WHAT SHE WAS DOING.

FROM WHAT I KNOW ABOUT HER LIFE, SHE DID VENTURE IN NEW INITIATIVES, ABLE TO STAND ON THE MARGINS FROM WHERE CREATIVITY STARTS AND YET ENOUGH IN THE CENTER TO BE RECOGNIZED AND ACCEPTED. SHE GOT OTHER WOMEN INTERESTED IN THE SAME VISION AND GOAL AND WAS NOT AFRAID OF SHOWING AND SHARING HER ENTHOUSIASM.

LIKE HER, THERE ARE IN THE WORLD MANY WOMEN WHOSE LIFE PATTERN HAS ALREADY IN IT THE INGREDIENTS OF A SITUATION OF LEADERSHIP. AND YET WOMEN FAIL TO RECOGNIZE WHERE THEY ARE.

IN SO MANY DIFFERENT INSTANCES, WE KNOW DEEP DOWN THAT THERE IS A REBELLION IN US CONCERNING THE INJUSTICE OR EVEN THE IRRELEVANCY IN WHAT WE ARE DOING. INSTEAD OF COMPLAINING ENDLESSLY ABOUT WAY THINGS ARE WE CAN JUST SHOW HOW THEY SHOULD BE. NO CREATIVE ACT COMES FROM CONFORMISM. IT IS IN A PEACEFUL REBELLION THAT CREATIVITY GETS MOMENTUM.

WOMEN OFTEN IN THEIR LIVES HAVE MOVED IN AND OUT OF THE PUBLIC LIFE, EITHER BECAUSE OF FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES OR BECAUSE OF MICRO-INITIATIVES AND ALTERNATIVE WAYS OF LIVING AND DOING. IN A TIME WHEN THE YOUNG STUDENTS KNOW ALREADY THAT THEY WILL HAVE TO MOVE, DURING A NORMAL LIFE OF WORK, 5 OR 6 TIMES FROM ONE ACTIVITY TO THE OTHER, AREN'T WOMEN READY TO USE THE VERSATILITY OF THEIR OCCUPATIONS? LET US LEAVE THE CONCEPTS OF LINEAR EVOLUTION TO THOSE WHO CANNOT LIVE WITHOUT IT; AS TO OURSELVES LET US TRY TO INTERPRET THE ZIGUEZAGUE OF OUR OWN HISTORY. ONE OF THOSE INTERPRETATIONS IS IN THE IMPORTANCE OF THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS OF THE TEACHER, THE DOCTOR, THE NURSE, THE WOMEN CONSUMER AND BUYER OF ALL GOODS.



TO BLOW UP FALSE CERTAINTIES IN LEADERSHIP

WHEN WE CONTRIBUTE TO HELP OTHER WOMEN TO BECOME VISIBLE IN THEIR LEADERSHIP FUNCTION, WE ARE ALREADY GIVING A NEW CONNOTATION TO LEADERSHIP: WE ARE DENOUNCING AND REPLACING THE PSEUDO-LEADERSHIP CONVEYED BY THE STAR-SYSTEM AND THE POLITICS-SHOW. THIS WON'T BE A MINOR ACHIEVEMENT.

SUCH ENERGY WILL BLOW UP THE FALSE CERTAINTIES. ALL THE PARAPHERNALIA WHICH SURROUNDS ANY LEADERSHIP FUNCTION - THE "HE IS SO BUSY" APPROACH, THE SCREENING BY THE ADVISORS AND SECRETARIES, THE LONG TIME TAKEN FOR EVERY SIMPLE DECISION, THE PROFESSIONAL SECRET AS A SHIELD AGAINST EXPOSURE, THE OVERCONCERN WITH THE IMAGE MORE THAN WITH THE REALITY - ALL THIS NEEDS TO BE SHAKEN. SO THAT MEN AND WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP FUNCTIONS MAY BE ABLE TO LOOK STRAIGHT INTO THE EYES OF PEOPLE WHOM THEY HAVE TO RESPECT SO THAT THEY WILL SERVE THEM WITH THEIR IDEAS, THEIR CAPACITIES AND THEIR TALENTS.

TO RESTORE LIFE

Fundação Cuidar o Futuro

WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP HAS TO FACE THE FORCES OF DEATH AND DESTRUCTION WHICH, AT ALL LEVELS OF SOCIETY, ARE THE RESULT OF ABSENCE OF TRUE LEADERSHIP.

FOR THAT TO HAPPEN, THERE IS A CRUCIAL TASK: TO MAKE OF ALL DECISION-MAKING PLACES A "LOCUS VITAE" - TO RESTORE LIFE, TO ACCEPT THE CHALLENGE OF THE CIVILIZATION IN WHICH WE LIVE.

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HISTORY, WE ARE AWARE OF THE ALIVE PRINCIPLE PRESENT IN ALL FORMS OF MATTER. THOUGH IMERSED IN TRAGIC CIRCUMSTANCES, THIS CIVILIZATION OPENS THE WAY FOR A RENEWED CELEBRATION OF AND REVERENCE FOR LIFE.

INDEED, AS SOME SCIENTISTS ARE CALLING IT, IT IS A "LIFE-CENTERED CIVILIZATION". CAN WE GIVE TO IT A PROPER



SOCIOLOGICAL SHAPE? CAN WE OVERCOME THE FORCES OF DESTRUCTION?

WOMEN HAVE IN THEM THE CAPACITY TO CREATE /PRODUCE LIFE -
"LA PRODUCTION DU VIVANT".

A LIFE-CENTERED CIVILIZATION ASKS FOR NEW FUNCTIONS AND NEW TASKS. THEY HAVE ALL A COMMON TRAIT AND A COMMON BASIS. THEY ARE GEARED TOWARDS THE FRUITFULNESS OF LIFE. THEY DEMAND THAT ISSUES BE TACKLED IN A INTER-SECTORIAL WAY. THEY FORM THE FRAME FOR A CARING SOCIETY IN WHICH NEW FORMS OF SOLIDARITY AND CREATIVITY HAVE TO EMERGE.

A BASIC TASK OF LEADERSHIP IS THE ONE EXPRESSED IN THE AREA OF IDEAS: WOMEN HAVE TO ACCEPT TODAY THE CHALLENGE OF COVERING NEW GROUND, OF FINDING NEW PARADIGMS, OF ELABORATING NEW THOUGHT AND DEFINING IMAGINATIVE SOLUTIONS. IN THE LAND WE ARE DISCOVERING, WOMEN HAVE TO BE IN THE FRONTIER-SITUATIONS.

THE ISSUES OF THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT: HUMAN SURVIVAL

Fundação Cuidar o Futuro

THE COLLECTIVE ENERGY OF WOMEN IS FOSTERED AND DEVELOPED IN WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS, GROUPS, NETWORKS - IN WHAT IS CALLED "THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT".

THERE ARE DIFFICULTIES, OLD AND NEW. BUT NEVER HAS THE CHALLENGE BEEN SO STRONG.

WE KNOW NOW THAT IT IS NOT JUST BY TALKING ABOUT THE SO-CALLED WOMEN'S ISSUES THAT A NEW ERA CAN COME. BUT WE KNOW TOO THAT WOMEN'S ISSUES PORTRAY WHAT A WHOLE SOCIETY IS LIVING FROM.

ONE GREAT DIFFICULTY EXISTS IN EUROPE. IN THE 84 EEC ENQUIRY, IT WAS ASKED THE DEGREE OF AGREEMENT TO SEVERAL GOALS OF THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT. THE RESULTS ARE ASTOUNDING! WHILE IN THOSE 10 COUNTRIES THE GOALS OF "EQUALITY IN PROFESSIONAL LIFE" AND "EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR MEN AND WOMEN IN POLITICAL PARTIES"



DESERVE 46% OF STRONG AGREEMENT AND ONLY 4% OF DISAGREEMENT, THE PICTURE IS COMPLETELY REVERSED ABOUT THE GOAL "TO ORGANIZE WOMEN IN AUTONOMOUS MOVEMENT AS A MEANS TO CHANGE SOCIETY RADICALLY" - THEN 44% EXPRESS STRONG DISAGREEMENT AND ONLY 7% ARE IN AGREEMENT!

LET US BE CLEAR AND OUTSPOKEN: THAT IS WHAT WE HAVE BEEN TALKING ABOUT TONIGHT! TO CREATE CONDITIONS FOR THE INTERNATIONAL ECONOMY TO ALLOW POSSIBILITIES OF DECENT LIFE FOR ALL HUMAN BEINGS; TO AVOID TOTAL DESTRUCTION BY A HUMAN MISTAKE IN TRIGGERING ANY OF THE MANY NUCLEAR WEAPONS SCATTERED IN ALL REGIONS OF THE WORLD; TO CREATE RESPONSIBLE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MANKIND NEEDS AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS.

TO AIM AT ALL THIS IS INDEED TO AIM AT A RADICAL CHANGE OF SOCIETY. SO, WHAT CAN WE DO WITH ONLY 7% IN SUPPORT OF THIS GOAL?

WE ARE FACING THE MOST EXCITING TASK GIVEN TO WOMEN TODAY. A MARVELLOUS ADVENTURE IS BEFORE US. LET US NOT BE WRAPPED UP IN OUR SMALL WORLDS AND CONCERNS. LET US TRY TO MAKE OUR JOURNEY TO THE NEW LAND, A HAPPY ONE. LET US BE PROUD WITH WHAT WE ARE DOING. HOPEFUL WITH WHAT WE CAN DO.

AND I AM SURE WE CAN DO IT.

NOTES

- (1) BRIONI FINAL DECLARATION OF INTERACTION COUNCIL OF FORMER HEADS OF GOVERNMENT, 1984, PARAG. 16.
- (2) THIS IS A NOT RECORDED CONVERSATION IN WHICH I PARTICIPATED IN MADRID, AT THE END OF THE SESSION OF THE INTERACTION COUNCIL POLICY BOARD, 1985.
- (3) SCHMIDT, HELMUT, IN "A GRAND STRATEGY FOR THE WEST", YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1985.
- (4) HAKONE FINAL DECLARATION OF IAC, 1986, PARAG. 5.
- (5) GEN. 1, 28.
- (6) GEN. 2, 17.
- (7) UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON WOMEN'S DECADE, A/CONF 116/12, PARAG. 16.
- (8) SINCE THIS LECTURE WAS DELIVERED, NEW APPOINTMENTS AT HIGHER LEVELS OF THE UN SYSTEM HAVE INCLUDED A FEW WOMEN, THOUGH THE OVERALL SYSTEM IN ITS LOGIC DIDN'T CHANGE.
- (9) BLOOM, LYNN Z. AND ALLII, IN "THE NEW ASSERTIVE WOMAN", DELL, 1975, PP. 18/19.

