

The New York Times

NEW YORK, MONDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 1984

Institute on Women Created

By GEORGIA DULLEA

After five days of strategy meetings in a feminist think tank in Stony Brook, L.I., a group of 25 women from third world, Western, Socialist and Communist countries announced the creation of an international institute to improve the lives of women around the world. In a statement to be presented at a press conference today, the women express solidarity despite their political and cultural differences saying, "In a world of many tragic divisions, we believe that women can find a common language."

The women are among 70 contributors to "Sisterhood Is Global," an international anthology of the women's movement that was published last week. Their new organization, which is not connected to any government, is called the Sisterhood Is Powerful Institute. A committee has been formed to plan and raise funds for its first conference next year, they said, to be held probably in Greece.

Among the institute's founders are: Robin Morgan, the American feminist, author of "Sisterhood Is Powerful" and editor of "Sisterhood Is Global"; Margaret Papandreou, wife of the Greek Prime Minister; Maria de Lourdes Pintasilgo, former Prime Minister of Portugal; Fawzia Fawzia, a Palestinian social scientist, and Marilyn Waring, former Member of Parliament in New Zealand, who in June brought down the Government, and her own party, by denying them her one-vote margin to permit nuclear submarines to refuel there.

An Israel Parliament member,

Shulamit Aloni, was said to be unable to attend the strategy meeting on Long Island because she was accepting a peace award in Europe. Four women at the meeting, all contributors to the book, asked not to be identified, saying they feared reprisals from their governments.

"They come from places where feminism is not just a ridiculed word, it's a dead word," Robin Morgan said Saturday, at a reception given by Hunter College to honor the women.

'On Ideological Grounds'

In a wide-ranging statement of purpose, the women pledged to fight an effort to "sidetrack on ideological or other grounds" the Nairobi World Conference in 1985, which will mark the end of the United Nations Decade for Women. The aim, according to the statement, was to avoid the polarization at earlier conferences in Mexico and Denmark "where women, per se, were used as pawns or altogether ignored by delegations from patriarchal governments."

Politics, chiefly Middle Eastern politics, were said to dominate those conferences. Western delegates charged that women's issues were being ignored. Arab and Eastern bloc nations along with third world delegates countered that politics were indeed a women's issue. While the statement did not refer to any specific political controversy, it was proposed by a woman from an Arab country who was not identified.

In addition, the institute will call upon women to join it in a number of actions, including the following:

¶ Refuse to participate in any census, household survey or registration system unless the women's unpaid work is counted.

¶ Organize international campaigns to support women who are censored, jailed, tortured or persecuted for feminist activities.

¶ Establish independent fact-finding commissions to investigate the problems of "women in crisis" such as Palestinian women, migrant women, women living under apartheid in South Africa, minority women in the United States.

¶ Support countries with expressed and concrete disarmament plans or expressed nuclear-free policies, by buying their products.

¶ Investigate airlines, tourist agencies and hotels that promote so-called "sex tours," and then call for boycotts against businesses exploiting women.

¶ Speak out against religious fundamentalism — "from Christian fundamentalism in the United States to Islamic fundamentalism in the Middle East — as "particularly adverse to women."

The cost of the meetings, about \$200,000, was financed by grants from the Ford Foundation, the United Methodist Church and others. Though the women emerged with a common plan, there had been some "creative friction" behind the scenes, as Gwendoline Konie of Zambia put it. "If we had not had some hot clashes I would have worried," she said. "I would have packed up and left." ■

