

Liz Shaver

Abzug, Bella

PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION

**WOMEN'S ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION
WEDO**

845 Third Avenue, 15th floor, New York, NY 10022
Tel: (212) 759-7982 Fax: (212) 759-8647

FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION SHEET

TO: Hillary Clinton

PLACE: _____

FAX #: (202) 456-6244

FROM: Bella Abzug

DATE: February 1, 1996 **TIME:** _____

You should receive pages including this cover sheet. If you do not, please call us back at (212) 759-7982.

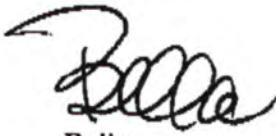
Dear Hillary,

Your presence everywhere has been very effective. We are with you all the way.

In the meantime I am enclosing a Contract with American Women Campaign for your information. I believe it will have a significant impact for 1996.

If you have any questions or suggestions please let me hear from you.

To the best of all outcomes.


Bella

Abzug, Bella



Women's Environment & Development Organization

845 Third Avenue • 15th Floor • New York, NY 10022 • U.S.A.

Fax: (212) 759-8647 • E-mail: wedo@igc.apc.org • Telephone: (212) 759-7982

January 30, 1996

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Susan Davis
Executive Director

Dear Friend,

We invite you to be an initiating sponsor of the **Contract with American Women Campaign**, to implement the Platform for Action and commitments made by U.S. policy makers at the UN 4th World Conference on Women.

The Platform was adopted by consensus by 190 countries and 30,000 women. *Though not legally binding, it is a politically binding contract with the world's women.*

WEDO is working with women in many countries to formulate national Contracts based on the Platform and monitor governments' progress on empowering women.

The **Contract with American Women** adapts key elements of the Beijing Platform to priority issues that are relevant to U.S. women. It is a flexible and unifying vehicle for supporting and expanding women's activism from the grassroots up to the local, state and national levels. It will provide a potent mechanism for monitoring and advocacy with policy-makers and candidates. Women can use it to participate fully in the political process this election year. In particular, the Contract with American Women compliments the work of women's voter education and registration projects.

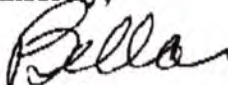
We are currently working with the Center for Women Policy Studies and progressive women state legislators to develop State contracts with Women. The State Contracts will highlight relevant issues from the U.S. Contract and adapt them to the needs and priorities of local constituents with input from public hearings and women's groups.

The **Contract with American Women** will be introduced along with the first five to 10 State Contracts at a Press Conference in Washington D.C. on March 8, International Women's Day. Present will be Congresswomen, state legislators and prominent women activists. Related events are also being planned by state legislators around the U.S.

Though the Contract Campaign is in its first stages, we are gratified by the enthusiastic early responses from policy makers, women's organizations and grass-roots activists. We will present the results of the first year of organizing around the Contract at a meeting in September, 1996. The initiative will be part of an international report by women from around the world on progress in "turning words into action."

Please join this effort as an initiating sponsor. Share any ideas and strategies you have to fully implement the promises made in Beijing. We'll keep you informed as the Contract with American Women Campaign progresses.

Sincerely,


Bella Abzug

printed on recycled paper

WEDO is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit educational organization



Contract With American Women

As public officials, advocates for women's rights, policy makers, organizations and individuals, we sign this Contract with American Women to implement the Platform for Action adopted September, 1995 at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women by 190 governments, including the United States of America.

We pledge our mutual commitment to the goal of equality and empowerment for American women, the continuing majority population of our Nation and States.

We pledge to work together to overcome discrimination based on sex, race, class, age, immigration status, sexual orientation, religion and disability. We seek to end social, economic and political inequities, violence and the human rights abuses that still confront millions of American women and girls.

Looking to the 21st century, we enter into this Contract with American Women for ourselves and for future generations to achieve our vision of a healthy planet and healthy nations, states and communities, with peace, equality and justice for all.

1. EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

We pledge to work for empowerment of women in all their diversity through their equal participation in decision-making and equal access to shared power in government, in all spheres and at every level of society.

2. SHARING OF FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES

We pledge to work for equal sharing of family responsibilities by partners and individual members, to respect the diversity of families and promote practices and policies that enhance the multiple roles, security and well-being of women and girls, men and boys.

3. ENDING THE BURDEN OF POVERTY

We pledge to work to end the increasing burden of poverty on women and their children, a majority of the poor. Recognizing the value of women's unpaid and underpaid labor to our families, communities and economy, we support a significant increase in minimum wage rates and adequate funding for welfare and other social safety nets, child care, education and job training, and access to collateral-free credit for women-owned microenterprises.

4. HIGH QUALITY, AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE

We pledge to work to reaffirm the rights of women and girls, regardless of income or where they live, to high quality, accessible, affordable and respectful health physical and mental health care based on sound women-focused research.

5. SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS

We pledge to work to reaffirm and uphold the sexual and reproductive rights of all women, including their individual right to control their own reproductive lives free of coercion, violence and harassment.

6. WORKPLACE RIGHTS

We pledge to work for guarantees of equal pay for work of comparable value and an end to discriminatory hiring and sexual harassment. We support family-friendly work practices, job training and opportunities programs, strengthening of affirmative action, employees' rights to organize unions, and safe, healthy working environments.

7. EDUCATIONAL EQUITY

We pledge to work for educational equity for women and girls, including creation and strengthening of gender-fair curricula and teaching techniques, equal opportunities and access for girls and women throughout their lives to education, career development, training and scholarships, educational administration and policy-making.

8. ENDING VIOLENCE

We pledge to work for policies and programs to end violence against women and children in every form and to ensure that violence against women and children is understood as a violation of their human rights and civil rights.

9. PROTECTING A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

We pledge to work to end environmental degradation and eliminate toxic chemicals, nuclear wastes and other pollutants that threaten our health, our communities, country and planet. We uphold active roles by government at all levels and public and private sectors to continue and expand environmental protection programs.

10. WOMEN AS PEACE MAKERS

We salute women's leading roles in peace movements and conflict resolution and pledge to work for their inclusion in policy making at all levels aimed at preventing wars, halting the international arms trade and eliminating nuclear testing and weapons. We also seek reductions in military spending and conversion of military facilities.

11. HONOR COMMITMENTS AND RATIFY CEDAW

We pledge to support the commitments made by the U.S. government to implement the UN Platform for Action, which constitutes a contract with the world's women. We call on the U.S. Senate to ratify the Convention to Eliminate Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which the United States has signed.

12. A LONG-TERM PLAN TO ACHIEVE EQUALITY

We who are state and federal policy-makers pledge to work in partnership with women's organizations to develop and enforce a long-term plan to achieve our goals of equality and empowerment for women. We support the re-establishment of a national Advisory Panel on Women and similar panels in each state to ensure that government at every level take the necessary steps to implement this Contract.

Contract with American Women Campaign

In 1995, 7000 U.S. women joined their sisters from around the world in China for the United Nations 4th World Conference on Women and NGO Forum. The Conference produced a Platform for Action, a global plan for women's empowerment, which has been adopted by consensus by 190 countries, including the United States, and 30,000 women.

"The Platform, while not legally binding, represents a politically binding Contract with the World's Women." —Bella Abzug

The **Contract with American Women** adapts key elements of the Platform for Action to priority issues that are relevant to U.S. women. The purpose of the Contract Campaign is to assure that the promises made in Beijing, as well as the funding, support and structures outlined in the Platform, are turned into reality for all women. The campaign objectives include:

- Promote women's political participation in cooperation with voter education and registration projects.
- Develop state and local Contracts with Women (in cooperation with the Center for Women Policy Studies, progressive legislators and other legislative coalitions).
- Monitor local, state and national policies using Contract scorecards and public hearings.
- Organize community strategies to implement the goals of the Contract with Women in cooperation with women's organizations, advocates and allies.
- Publicize the Contract with American Women and U.S.-wide implementation efforts.
- Network with women's groups worldwide to share ideas, report and build coalitions for action.

1996 Agenda for Action

March 8, International Women's Day: The Contract with American Women will be introduced at a Press Conference in Washington D.C. with Congresswomen, state legislators and prominent women activists.

September, 1996: Representatives from many nations, including the U.S., will report on progress made in their countries to implement the Platform for Action and national Contracts with Women.

Ongoing . . .

National, regional, state and local meetings to implement and report on Contracts with Women.

Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO), initiated in 1990, is a global activist, advocacy, networking and information organization. Led by co-founder Bella Abzug and an International Board, WEDO has earned worldwide recognition as a champion of women's empowerment. At and before the Beijing conference, WEDO coordinated many initiatives to facilitate women's participation in formulating the Platform for Action. Today, WEDO is continuing our collaborative organizing and advocacy efforts to support women worldwide in developing national Contracts with Women to ensure that the promises made in Beijing are fully implemented.

WEDO • 845 Third Avenue • 15th Floor • New York, NY • 10022 • USA
Fax: (212) 759-8647 • e-mail: [wed@igc.apc.org](mailto:wedo@igc.apc.org) • Telephone: (212) 759-7982

WEDO gopher: gopher.igc.apc.org choose (7) "Womensnet" • Select (3) "Women's Organizations in Womensnet" • Then select (13) to find WEDO

Yes, I support the Contract with American Women!

Name _____ Affiliation _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Fax _____ e-mail _____

Please put me on the WEDO mailing list for the Contract with American Women Campaign _____

I would like to organize the following actions in my community:

Press Conferences _____ Public Speak Outs _____ Contract Hearings _____ Special Events _____

Organization _____

Issues _____

I would like to help draft and monitor a Contract with Women with my state legislators _____

Names of legislative contacts _____

I would like to serve on a regional or national Planning Committee _____

Please send me a WEDO Contract Community Organizing Packet (ready by 3/1/96) (\$10) _____

Please send me a WEDO report on the Beijing Conference (\$10) _____

Please send me information on WEDO's other campaigns:

Action for Cancer Prevention _____ Global Economy _____ U.N. Monitoring _____

Enclosed is a tax-deductible donation to WEDO's Contract with Women Campaign \$ _____

Return to Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO)
845 Third Avenue - 15th Floor - New York, NY 10022 - USA
Phone: (212) 759-7982 - e-mail: wedo@lgc.apc.org - Fax: (212) 759-8647



CONTRACT WITH WOMEN OF THE USA

As public officials, advocates for women's rights, policy-makers, organizations and individuals, we sign this Contract with Women of the USA to implement the Platform for Action adopted September 1995 at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women by consensus of 189 governments, including the United States of America.

We pledge our mutual commitment to the goal of equality and empowerment for American women, who are the continuing majority population of our nation and states.

We pledge to work together to overcome discrimination based on sex, race, class, age, immigration status, sexual orientation, religion and disability. We seek to end social, economic and political inequities, violence and the human rights abuses that still confront millions of women and girls in our country.

Looking to the 21st century, we enter into this Contract with Women of the USA for ourselves and for future generations to achieve our vision of a healthy planet and healthy nations, states and communities, with peace, equality and justice for all.

1. EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

We pledge to work for empowerment of women in all their diversity through their equal participation in decision-making and equal access to shared power in government, in all spheres and at every level of society.

2. SHARING FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES

We pledge to work for equal sharing of family responsibilities, recognition and respect for the diversity of families, and for practices and policies that enhance the multiple roles, security and well-being of women and girls, men and boys.

3. ENDING THE BURDEN OF POVERTY

We pledge to work for economic justice and to end the increasing burden of poverty on women and their children, who are a majority of the poor. Recognizing the value of women's unpaid and underpaid labor to our families, communities and economy, we support a living wage for all workers and adequate funding for welfare and other social safety nets, child care, education and job training, and access to collateral-free credit for women-owned small businesses.

4. HIGH QUALITY, AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE

We pledge to work to reaffirm the rights of women and girls, regardless of income or where they live, to high quality, accessible, affordable and respectful physical and mental health care, based on sound women-focused research.

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8. ENDING VIOLENCE

We pledge to work for policies and programs to end violence against women and children in every form and to ensure that violence against women and children is understood as a violation of their human rights and civil rights.

9. PROTECTING A HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT

We pledge to work to end environmental degradation and eliminate toxic chemicals, nuclear wastes and other pollutants that threaten our health, our communities, country and planet. We uphold active roles by government at all levels and public and private sectors to continue and expand environmental protection programs.

10. WOMEN AS PEACE MAKERS

We salute women's leading roles in peace movements and conflict resolution and pledge to work for their inclusion in policy-making at all levels aimed at preventing wars, halting the international arms trade and eliminating all nuclear testing. We seek reductions in military spending and conversion of military facilities to socially productive purposes.

11. HONOR COMMITMENTS AND RATIFY CEDAW

We pledge to support the commitments made by the United States government to implement the UN Platform for Action, which constitutes a contract with the world's women. We call on the United States Senate to ratify the Convention to Eliminate Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which the United States has signed.

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We who are state and federal policy makers pledge to work in partnership with women's organizations to develop and enforce a long-term plan to achieve our goals of equality and empowerment for women. We support the re-establishment of a national Advisory Panel on Women and the creation or strengthening of similar panels or commissions in each state, to ensure that governments at every level take the necessary steps to implement this Contract.



**WOMEN'S ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION
WEDO**

845 Third Avenue, 15th floor, New York, NY 10022
Tel: (212) 759-7982 Fax: (212) 759-8647

FACSIMILE TRANSMISSION SHEET

TO: Wendee Verover
PLACE: First Lady's office
FAX #: 202-456-6544
FROM: Bella Abzug
DATE: January 18, 1996 TIME: _____

You should receive _____ pages including this cover sheet. If you do not, please call us back at (212) 759-7982.

These are just some ideas for the President's State of the Union Address. If you have any input you might find this useful.

Thanks.

Bella

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Jas
Lissa - w*



1/15/ 06

Memo from Bella Abzug on President's State of the Union address (including suggested language for inclusion in 1/23/96 State of Union address and text of letter to the President 1/12/96)

Some basic background data based on article, "Who Killed the Middle Class?" by John Cassidy, The New Yorker (late 1995 issue) that may be useful in addressing Middle Americans concerns, including the increasing work responsibilities of women:

In 1993, according to Census Bureau, there were 53.2 million families headed by married couples and 12.4 million headed by females, with no males present. Between 1979 and 1995, according to U.S. Labor dept., median male worker saw his annual earnings tumble 11.5% from \$31,317 to \$27,716. Hourly wages of highschool graduates and highschool dropouts fell by 14.7% and 22.5%, respectively.

With men's wages plummeting during past two decades, married women came under increasing pressure to enter labor force. In 1979 proportion of families with children under 18 in which both families worked year-round was less than one in five. By 1993 it had grown to almost one in three. Twenty years ago, only 31% of all women with children under two years of age were in the labor force. By 1995, that figure had grown to more than 55%.

Twenty years ago, working women's wage gap was 59 cents on the dollar. It has narrowed to about 21%, partly because male earnings are decreasing. Labor Dept. data (Consumer Expenditure Survey) show that the typical American family is now spending almost half its income-- 46.1% on housing, utilities and health care, compared with about a third of its income a generation ago.

From Wall Street Journal article (1/11/96) on Peter Hart poll showing women favoring Clinton over Dole by an 18% margin (54% to 36%) compared with a male split (Clinton 45%, Dole 44%). Poll also showed women (54%) more concerned with upholding social programs related to education and poverty as compared with 37% of men and less concerned about deficit reduction (19% of women, compared with 35% of men).

Suggested language

One of the major accomplishments of our Administration was the leading role our multipartisan U.S. delegation played at the UN's 4th World Conference on Women last September. At that history-making gathering, 189 countries, including the United States, reached consensus on a Declaration and Platform for Action dedicated to the empowerment of women, including equality, social and economic justice and protection of their human rights.

It addresses the status and needs of women and girls in all their diversity and at every stage of their lives. In almost every country of the world, including our own, women and girls are still denied equality of opportunity in schools, in the work place, in the professions, science and the arts, in public life and government. With increasing numbers of women carrying combined heavy responsibilities in the home and at work, they seek a sharing of responsibilities and true partnerships with men in the family, in their private, public and working lives. And, with great urgency, they seek an end to the ugly epidemic of violence and sexual abuse directed against women, from childhood on, that deprives them of safety in their homes as well as in the streets and other public arenas.

That UN document is now being called a Contract with the World's Women, and here in our own country we have the responsibility to translate its promises into positive action. We need our own Contract with American women, more than 7,000 of whom traveled from almost every state in the Union to China, under conditions of great physical discomfort, to show their concern. As the U.S. delegation said in its official report on the World Conference on Women:

"The community of nations came together and addressed every area of women's lives--as individuals with human rights; as mothers, wives, sisters and daughters with family roles and responsibilities; as workers, employers, entrepreneurs and activists; and as leaders at the community, national and global levels.

"It called for the empowerment of women, through investing in their

health and education, eliminating violence and discrimination against them, and ensuring their access to all levels of political and economic life. The world concluded that women's empowerment is not simply a matter of justice, it is a pragmatic necessity for the well-being and advancement of families, communities, nations and the world."

To demonstrate our commitment to implementing this Contract with the World's Women, I have set up an Inter-Agency Council on Women, headed by ~~the~~ Secretary Donna Shalala, in which representatives from every federal department and agency are analyzing how their policies and programs can be related to the pledges made at the women's conference. We are especially focusing on these issues: women's roles in the workplace, including recognizing the real value of their paid, underpaid and unpaid work. The sharing of family responsibilities. A national effort by the Justice Department to fight domestic and other forms of violence against women by combining tough new federal laws with assistance to states and localities in law enforcement, victim assistance, prosecutions and crime prevention. I have also signed an Executive Memorandum directing all federal agencies to train their employees- (those who aren't prevented from coming to work)--about domestic violence and resources that are available.

The Treasury Department has introduced a Federal Microenterprise Initiative, designed to spotlight and assist the major role of women in starting and conducting small businesses that are rapidly growing in numbers.

The Department of Health and Human Services is acting on a range of problems of concern to women throughout the life cycle, recognizing the additional problems faced by women of low income and from ethnic and racial minorities. We have a new initiative to reduce teen pregnancy by 50%, we have established a Governing council on Children and Youth. And we are undertaking initiatives to address the growing incidence of breast and cervical cancer, the impact of poverty-related diseases on women, and a public policy agenda on HIV/AIDS specific to women, adolescents and children.

In all these areas of concern, we look to the Congress to work with the Executive branch to provide us with the laws, mechanisms, funds and

B (4)

implementation needed to assure the female majority of our population (53%) and our children, boys and girls, that we recognize our responsibility as a rich and powerful nation to assure all our people that their basic economic, education and health needs will be met. Social safety nets must remain in place. We must reject the war against women and children living in poverty, the efforts to kill the affirmative action programs on which women and minorities depend to get a fair break in education and the workplace must be rejected.

And we must also act to affirm our credibility among the nations of the world as the world's leading democracy. The UN Convention to End Discrimination Against Women, a basic Bill of Rights, was signed by President Carter more than fifteen years ago. It has been ratified by the great majority of the governments of the world. Today, the United States remains the only major nation that has not ratified this Convention. That failure rests with the U.S. Senate, and I call on the Senate to end that insult to American women and our failure to accept our responsibilities as a world leader.

####

of women's organizations, networks,
women's movement goals.

President Clinton should repeat his October pledge "I ask every male to join me in pledging to never lift a hand to a woman or girl, etc." I would make that part his commitment to implement Beijing and use it before the training of federal workers on domestic violence. He might add a pledge to end sexual harassment from this body Congress and all work places.

I would link his welfare veto to support for ending poverty which hits women and kids especially hard.