

The original documents are located in Box 3, folder “Women’s Economic Conference, Executive Office Building, November 20, 1974” of the Frances K. Pullen Papers at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library.

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WOMENS ECONOMIC CONFERENCE

NOVEMBER 20, 1974

GOOD MORNING. I'M DELIGHTED TO BE HERE TODAY TO WELCOME YOU AND TO BRING YOU A FEW WORDS FROM MY HUSBAND -- LONG DISTANCE-- OF COURSE....AS YOU KNOW HE IS IN JAPAN THIS WEEK. I TALKED TO HIM EARLIER, AND HE SOUNDED JUST GREAT -- VERY MUCH LIKE THE JOB IS STILL AGREEING WITH HIM! AND I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT IN SPITE OF THE HECTIC PACE OF JAPAN, HE HAS FOUND TIME TO SEND ME TWO POST CARDS!

HE DID ASK ME TO LET YOU KNOW THIS MORNING HOW VERY SIGNIFICANT HE CONSIDERS THIS MEETING AND HOW VERY NECESSARY HE FEELS IT IS TO GET YOUR ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED IN THE FIGHT AGAINST INFLATION. WE ARE ALL AFFECTED BY IT, AND IT'S IMPORTANT THAT ALL OF US JOIN IN THE FIGHT AGAINST IT. THAT'S WHERE EACH ONE OF YOU CAN BE INSTRUMENTAL, IN CONVEYING THE MESSAGE IN A PERSONAL WAY TO YOUR INDIVIDUAL GROUPS.

LAST WEEK, JERRY AND I SIGNED A CONSUMERS' PLEDGE, AND BECAUSE I FEEL STRONGLY THAT THE PLEDGE WAS MUCH MORE THAN A PIECE OF PAPER, I'D LIKE TO READ IT TO YOU.

"I PLEDGE TO MY FELLOW CITIZENS THAT I WILL BUY, WHEN POSSIBLE, ONLY THOSE PRODUCTS AND SERVICES PRICED AT OR BELOW PRESENT LEVELS. I ALSO PROMISE TO CONSERVE ENERGY, AND I URGE OTHERS TO SIGN THIS PLEDGE." THE PLEDGE IS SIMPLE -- TWO SHORT SENTENCES -- AND I THINK IT'S APPROPRIATE, BECAUSE MOST OF THE THINGS WE CAN DO TO HELP ARE VERY SIMPLE.

WHEN JERRY AND I SIGNED THE CONSUMER PLEDGE, HE TALKED ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF PEOPLE CLEANING THEIR PLATES AT MEALTIME. YESTERDAY, SOMEBODY ASKED ME IF HE DOES THAT HIMSELF, AND I HONESTLY HAD TO TELL THEM HE WOULD EAT THE PLATE IF THEY DIDN'T TAKE IT AWAY! WELL, THAT'S A LITTLE EXAGGERATED; BUT WE HAVE ALWAYS STRESSED TAKING ONLY WHAT YOU CAN EAT, AND WE'RE EVEN MORE CONSCIOUS OF THAT NOW. JERRY IS A FIRM BELIEVER THAT IT'S UP TO US TO SET THE EXAMPLE, AND WE'VE FOUND THAT IT'S EVEN KIND OF FUN.

ONE THING THAT HAS BEEN TREMENDOUSLY ENCOURAGING IS THE INTEREST SHOWN IN FIGHTING INFLATION AND CONSERVING ENERGY FROM EVERY PART OF THE COUNTRY. DO YOU REALIZE THAT IN THE LAST MONTH, WE HAVE RECEIVED MORE THAN 200,000 LETTERS EITHER ENLISTING IN THE WIN PROGRAM OR SHARING THOUGHTS AND SUGGESTIONS ON HOW TO CONSERVE? I THINK THIS SHOWS THAT PEOPLE THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY ARE SERIOUSLY INTERESTED IN COMING UP WITH POSITIVE WAYS OF FIGHTING THIS PROBLEM. AND THAT'S A VERY IMPORTANT BEGINNING.

IT'S IMPORTANT THAT WE, AS WOMEN, TAKE A LEAD IN THIS FIGHT BECAUSE WE ARE THE CONSUMERS. WE ARE THE PEOPLE WHO DECIDE HOW OUR FAMILIES SPEND THEIR MONEY. WE FEEL THE PINCH PERHAPS MORE ACUTELY THAN ANY OTHER MEMBER OF OUR FAMILY, AND WE NEED TO BE AS KNOWLEDGEABLE ON EVERY ASPECT OF THE ECONOMY AS POSSIBLE. I URGE EACH ONE OF YOU TO GET YOUR ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED AND THINKING.

BUT JUST TO SHOW YOU THAT WINNING CAN BE FUN, I THOUGHT, IN CONCLUSION, THAT YOU MIGHT ENJOY SOME OF THE SUGGESTIONS I'VE BEEN GETTING FROM WRITERS:

ONE: WHEN YOU LET YOUR DOG OUT, OPEN YOUR DOOR FOR JUST 10 SECONDS. AND IF HE DOESN'T MOVE, GIVE HIM A QUICK, GENTLE SHOVE!

TWO: DON'T HAVE SO MANY DAYS OF SCHOOL--THAT'S FROM A STUDENT, NATURALLY.

AND THREE: IF YOU DON'T HAVE A HOT WATER BOTTLE...TRY SLEEPING WITH YOUR CAT!

IT HAS BEEN A PLEASURE MEETING WITH YOU THIS MORNING --
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.

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