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May 18, 1978

... FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE ... FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE ... FOR

MOTHER'S MONEY EVENT IN HARLEM

May 14 was Mother's Day. But with increased inflation, loss of paid jobs and cuts in social services, women are angrier than ever about our year-round poverty. Millions of mothers are now asking "When's payday?" and internationally we are forcing governments to put money into our hands for the first job all women do--housework.

Black Women for Wages for Housework (USA) is hostessing a MOTHER'S MONEY EVENT on Saturday, May 20, 1978, at 2 p.m. at the Harlem Commonwealth Council Auditorium, 361 W.125th St., New York, to affirm that all over the world EVERY MOTHER IS A WORKING MOTHER.

An international panel will discuss the family allowances, child benefits, pregnancy leaves and allowances, and pensions which women have won in many other parts of the world, which leave the US far behind on the road to financial recognition of the value of women's housework.

The panel of speakers will include Margo St. James, who gave birth to COYOTE on Mother's Day 1973; Norma Steele, founder of Black Women for Wages for Housework in Britain, who is flying to this country especially for the occasion; and Selma James, internationally known feminist author and speaker, and founder of the International Wages for Housework Campaign.

Legislators and IWY delegates have been invited to participate in the speakout which will follow, to discuss the implementation of the substitute welfare resolution overwhelmingly passed at the IWY National Women's Conference in Houston, demanding immediate increases in all federal payments to women and that "just as other workers, homemakers receiving payments should be afforded the dignity of having that payment called a wage, not welfare."

Three women will receive the first INTERNATIONAL MOTHER'S MONEY AWARD for their work in fighting for financial independence for women. They are Beulah Sanders, former president of the National Welfare Rights Organization and a leader during the 1960's of the great women's movement for welfare; Marguerite Davis, a leader of the Alliance for Displaced Homemakers; and Norma Steele, who recently led mothers in a successful school boycott against the National Front in Britain and is now fighting there against Child Benefit being withheld from Third World immigrant parents.

A film made for the BBC, "All Work and No Pay", with scenes of the October 24, 1975 women's general strike in Iceland will be shown, and Cheryl Scott, formerly of the Fred Benjamin Dance Troupe and now a member of the Chambers Dance Group, will perform.

Margaret Prescod-Roberts, New York State Delegate to the IWY National Women's Conference, and co-founder of Black Women for Wages for Housework (USA), will hostess the Mother's Money celebration.

All women are welcome; men by invitation only. Childcare will be provided by Payday, an international men's group organizing against all unpaid work and in support of the Wages for Housework Campaign.

For further information: Black Women for Wages for Housework (USA) - (212) 834-0992

filtered

MOTHER'S MONEY

SPECIAL BULLETIN

MOTHER'S DAY

SPRING 1978

INTERNATIONAL WAGES FOR HOUSEWORK CAMPAIGN



A MOTHER WORKING



A WORKING MOTHER

WHAT IS A HOUSEWIFE WORTH?

MOTHER. . . nurturer, guide, comforter, seamstress, caretaker, educator, lullaby-singer, problem-solver.

\$10,500 a year

COOK/DIETICIAN/NUTRITIONIST. . . shopping, planning, cooking, serving

\$125.00 a week

CLEANING WOMAN. . . laundry, sweeping, scrubbing, waxing, polishing, ironing

\$100.00 a week

SECRETARY/HOSTESS/BOOKKEEPER. . . Make appointments, act as chauffeur, send greeting cards, organize the lessons, parties, and budgets

\$30.00 a week (part time)

INTERIOR DECORATOR. . . makes a house a home with comforting color schemes, charming furnishings, plants, curtains, carpets and knick-knacks

\$100.00 a day as needed

WIFE. . . friend, companion, lover, back-rubber, ego-builder, warm shoulder, loyal supporter

CANNOT BE REPLACED

If qualified people were hired to do all the jobs that a housewife does without pay, it would cost over \$24,000 per year. And people hired to do the work would still expect vacations, sick leave, and days off.

(Statistics from New York Times employment listings, 1974.)



HOUSTON: EQUALITY BEGINS WITH MONEY

At the International Women's Year National Women's Conference (November 18-21, 1977) in Houston, Texas, the Wages for Housework Campaign announced itself as a national force.

Margaret Prescod-Roberts of Black Women for Wages for Housework (USA), a delegate from New York State, led the Wages for Housework contingent which came from many states as well as from Canada and Britain. We were determined that the conference should go on record against Carter's Welfare Reform "Program for Better Jobs and Income" now before Congress. We were determined that welfare, the wages some women have won, would not be lost at Houston.

Many other individuals and organizations came to Houston to fight the welfare women's cause, among them three delegates who were leaders of the great women's movement for welfare in the 1960's — Frankie Mae Jeter, Beulah Sanders, and Johnnie Tillmann.

The question we all faced was how, on behalf of all the women who could not afford to be at Houston, to refuse Carter's Welfare "Reform" which the official resolution in the proposed National Plan of Action endorsed.

On an agenda in alphabetical order, welfare was as usual at the bottom. Money for women, either on welfare or in low-paying jobs, single or married, lesbian or straight — and always one man away from welfare — was scheduled to come last, the anti-climax after the "feminist" issues.

But welfare isn't just "another feminist issue." It's every woman's insurance policy against complete dependence and starvation.

Pro-Plan, the ruling coalition of the conference, discouraged any departure from the official resolutions, all of which they backed. They claimed that Pro-Life (the anti-abortion coalition) would use debate on any issue as the occasion to block the three resolutions which Pro-Plan considered crucial: ERA, abortion, and lesbian rights. But they were wrong.

Another coalition emerged.

The "Pro-Money Coalition" which included disabled women, Black, Hispanic, and Native American women, lesbian women, prostitute women and homemakers — placed, replaced and "displaced" — made welfare, the money we have already won, the focus for all other issues. The power to refuse rape, battering, and low-paying jobs — and to win childcare, education, custody and lesbian rights, as well as the choice to have or not to have children, depends on our access to money. Money is the power to live our own lives and make our own plans.

As we discussed in our own groups, caucused with each other and lobbied the delegates, the Wages for Housework Campaign demonstrated that together we have the power to change the agenda, refuse Carter's Reform, keep the money we have already won, and demand more. Pro-Money was able to win over both Pro-Plan and Pro-Life.

As the substitute resolution on welfare was being presented, a banner carried by Black and Hispanic women demanding "No Cuts — Just Bucks" moved through the coliseum. And from the bleachers Black and white women of all ages from every region chanted together: "Every mother is a working mother." Not even the Ku Klux Klan, which was openly present in the Mississippi delegation, could deny that!

The substitute welfare resolution which was overwhelmingly passed states:

The elimination of poverty must be a priority for all those working for equal rights for women.

We support increased federal funding for income transfer programs (e.g. Social Security, S.S.I., AFDC). Congress should approve a federal floor under payments to provide an adequate standard of living based on each state's cost of living. And just as with other workers, homemakers receiving payments should be afforded the dignity of having that payment called a wage, not welfare.

We oppose the Carter Administration proposal for welfare reform (HR 9030), which among other things eliminates food stamps, CETA training and CETA jobs paying more than minimum wage, adequate daycare, and introduces "workfare" where welfare mothers would be forced to "work off" their grants, which is work without a wage, without fringe benefits or bargaining rights, and without dignity.

We strongly support a welfare reform program developed from on-going consultation with persons who will be impacted.

"The women from the bottom of America fought for a place on the agenda and won," said Margaret Prescod-Roberts. "We were what was happening at Houston. The other women, some of them on their way to the top of U.S. government and industry, saw that. They dropped their own resolution and backed ours.

"The next battles are first for implementation and second to extend the victory of wages to women everywhere who work for free or for peanuts."

Campaign News

USA

July '77: The July 26th issue of *Family Circle* magazine published figures from the Prudential Life Insurance Company estimating the value of a woman's work in the home at \$283.49 a week.

The IWY International Interdependency Task Force has called on all governments throughout the world to include the value of housework in the Gross National Product of their countries. (If the value of housework was included in the Gross National Product of the U.S., it would amount to 24 percent of the entire GNP — or 350 billion dollars a year!)

BRITAIN

Valentine's Day '78: The Liberty Life Assurance Company estimated the value of a woman's work in the home at £ 115 a week. But the company admitted that it had not yet even "attempted to put a price on all the other valuable jobs a mother does for her family. At any time a wife can be called upon to act as unpaid nurse, seamstress, driver, plumber, electrician and decorator."

GREECE

May '77: The Greek Union of Housewives has stated that their immediate aims are pay for housework, state health care, and abolition of the dowry system. The Union has received a favorable response, especially from women who have reached the pensioning age of 58.

FINLAND

December '77: Finnish women are waiting for the outcome of their campaign to pay wages to full-time housewives.

The *Guardian* reports that when Finnish women win their wages for housework "there will inevitably be repercussions across the globe. . . It will be that much harder for other [governments] to resist" paying wages for housework.

ITALY

October '77: The strength of the Wages for Housework movement has called forth a Parliamentary recommendation that the 12 million full-time housewives in that country be paid a salary of \$60 per month. Included in the proposed bill is a provision that the salary would automatically increase whenever the cost of living does.

CANADA

November '77: Margo St. James of COYOTE and Judith Ramirez of the Toronto Wages for Housework Committee participated in the opening event of BEAVER (Better End All Vicious Erotic Repression), an organization working towards decriminalization of prostitution.

WHAT'S A WOMAN WORTH?*

Job	Hours Per Week	Value Per Hour	Total
Nursemaid	44.5	\$2.41 =	\$107.25
Cook	13.1	4.21 =	55.15
Housekeeper	17.5	2.41 =	42.13
Dishwasher	6.2	3.01 =	18.66
Laundress	5.9	3.01 =	17.76
Food Buyer	3.3	3.01 =	9.93
Dietician	1.2	7.22 =	8.66
Chauffeur	2.0	3.01 =	6.02
Gardener	2.3	2.41 =	5.54
Handywoman	1.7	3.01 =	5.12
Seamstress	1.3	3.61 =	4.69
Practical Nurse	.6	4.21 =	2.53
Total Hours	99.6		Wk. \$283.49

*Information courtesy of Prudential Life Insurance Co., based on a family with a full-time homemaker, husband and two children. Reprinted from *Family Circle* magazine, July 26, 1977.

MOTHER'S DAY IN BRITAIN MOTHER'S DAY IN BRITAIN MOTHER'S DAY IN BRITAIN MOTHER'S DAY IN BRITAIN MOTHER'S DAY IN BRITAIN MOTHER'S DAY IN BRITAIN

UNION
OF
TURKISH WOMEN

BLACK WOMEN
FOR
WAGES FOR HOUSEWORK

BANGLADESH
WOMEN'S
ASSOCIATION

"CHILD BENEFIT FOR ALL"



FOR BEING DEPRIVED OF OUR CHILDREN — IMMIGRANTS MUST PAY £ 70 MILLIONS. From April 5th, the child tax allowance will be phased out; and most mothers will get a rise in Child Benefit. But immigrants from Africa, Asia, Cyprus, Greece, Latin America, Portugal, Turkey and the West Indies whose children are not in this country will not be eligible for any Child Benefit. **WE WILL BE CHARGED £ 70 MILLION FOR BEING DEPRIVED OF OUR CHILDREN.**

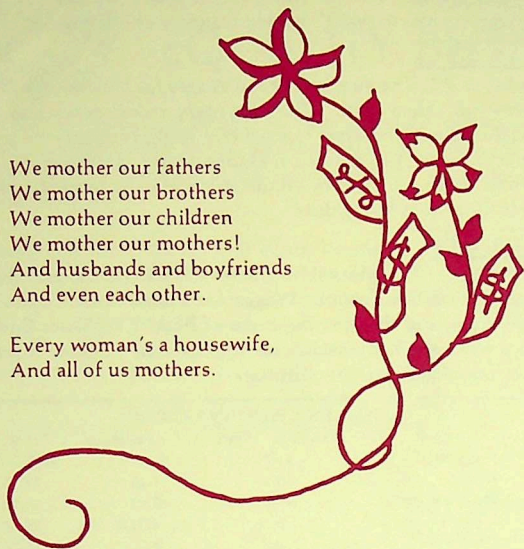
WHEREVER WE LIVE — WE ALL WORK FOR BRITAIN. Housework has recently been valued at £ 115 a week, and all of us women are doing this work. We women are working for Britain and not only in Britain. We have ALWAYS worked for Britain in the Third World where we produced, first, wealth and workers for the British Empire, and now wealth and workers for Britain. We are tired of seeing that once again it is parents and children from the Third World who are expected to pay the most.

WHO PAYS THE PRICE. This government proposal is aimed at keeping us poor, divided and dependent. Women, immigrant and native, of all races, will speak at the meeting about our lives and how this new discrimination will affect ALL IMMIGRANTS AND ALL WOMEN.

PUBLIC MEETING, Monday, March 6, 1978 at 7 o'clock at THE HOUSE OF COMMONS, PARLIAMENT, London, England.

We mother our fathers
We mother our brothers
We mother our children
We mother our mothers!
And husbands and boyfriends
And even each other.

Every woman's a housewife,
And all of us mothers.



Main Campaign Addresses

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International literature, speakers, films, videotapes, buttons, potholders, dishtowels available from any Wages for Housework Campaign address.

Books and Pamphlets:
The Power of Women and the Subversion of the Community
Sex, Race and Class
Women, the Unions and Work
Motherhood, Lesbianism and Child Custody
All Work and No Pay

Journals:
Safire - newsletter of Black Women for Wages for Housework (USA)
Power of Women - magazine of the International Wages for Housework Campaign
Canadian Wages for Housework Bulletin

Wages for Housework groups in other cities:

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