Women's Committee Report
January 2017

Good day Sisters and Brothers! This report is a is all about the International Women's March that happened last weekend with millions of women and their allies gathering across the world in Solidarity to say that Women's Rights are Human Rights and should be protected as so. Most of our members get the reasoning for this feminist movement but for those who don't…here is a post written by an American woman that reminds us of why we need to keep fighting for equality.

Say Thank You

- Say thank you. Say thank you to the women who gave you a voice. Say thank you to the women who were arrested and imprisoned and beaten and gassed for you to have a voice. Say thank you to the women who refused to back down, to the women who fought tirelessly to give you a voice. Say thank you to the women who put their lives on hold, who –lucky for you—did not have "better things to do" than to march and protest and rally for your voice. So you don't feel like a "second class citizen." So you get to feel "equal."
- Thank Susan B. Anthony and Alice Paul for your right to vote.
- Thank Elizabeth Stanton for your right to work.
- Thank Maud Wood Park for your prenatal care and your identity outside of your husband.
- Thank Rose Schneiderman for your humane working conditions.
- Thank Eleanor Roosevelt and Molly Dewson for your ability to work in politics and affect policy.
- Thank Margaret Sanger for your legal birth control.
- Thank Carol Downer for your reproductive healthcare rights.
- Thank Margaret Fuller and Sarah Jane Early for your equal education.
- Thank Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Shannon Turner, Gloria Steinem, Zelda Kingoff Nordlinger, Rosa Parks, Angela Davis, Malika Saada Saar, Wagatwe Wanjuki, Ida B. Wells, Malala Yousafzai. Thank your mother, your grandmother, your great-grandmother who did not have half of the rights you have now.

You can make your own choices, speak and be heard, vote, work, control your body, defend yourself, defend your family, because of the women who marched. You did nothing to earn those rights. You were born into those rights. You did nothing, but you reap the benefits of women, strong women, women who fought misogyny and pushed through patriarchy and fought for you. And you sit on your pedestal, a pedestal you are fortunate enough to have, and type. A keyboard warrior. A fighter for complacency. An acceptor of what you were given. A denier of facts. Wrapped up in your delusion of equality.

You are not equal. Even if you feel like you are. You still make less than a man for doing the same work. You make less as a CEO, as an athlete, as an actress, as a doctor. You make less in government, in the tech industry, in healthcare.

You still don't have full rights over your own body. Men are still debating over your uterus. Over your prenatal care. Over your choices.

You still have to pay taxes for your basic sanitary needs.

You still have to carry mace when walking alone at night. You still have to prove to the court why you were drunk on the night you were raped. You still have to justify your behavior when a man forces himself on you.

You still don't have paid (or even unpaid) maternity leave. You still have to go back to work while your body is broken. While you silently suffer from postpartum depression.

You still have to fight to breastfeed in public. You still have to prove to other women it's your right to do so. You still offend others with your breasts.

You are still objectified. You are still catcalled. You are still sexualized. You are still told you're too skinny or you're too fat. You're still told you're too old or too young. You're applauded when you "age gracefully." You're still told men age "better." You're still told to dress like a lady. You are still judged on your outfit instead of what's in your head. What brand bag you have still matters more than your college degree.

You are still being abused by your husband, by your boyfriend. You're still being murdered by your partners. Being beaten by your soulmate.

You are still worse off if you are a woman of color, a gay woman, a transgender woman. You are still harassed, belittled, dehumanized.

Your daughters are still told they are beautiful before they are told they are smart. Your daughters are still told to behave even though "boys will be boys." Your daughters are still told boys pull hair or pinch them because they like them.

You are not equal. Your daughters are not equal. You are still systemically oppressed.

Estonia allows parents to take up to three years of leave, fully paid for the first 435 days. United States has no policy requiring maternity leave.

Singapore's women feel safe walking alone at night. American women do not.

New Zealand's women have the smallest gender gap in wages, at 5.6%. United States' pay gap is 20%.

Iceland has the highest number of women CEOs, at 44%. United States is at 4.0%.

The United States ranks at 45 for women's equality. Behind Rwanda, Cuba, Philippines, Jamaica.

But I get it. You don't want to admit it. You don't want to be a victim. You think feminism is a dirty word. You think it's not classy to fight for equality. You hate the word pussy. Unless of course you use it to call a man who isn't up to your standard of manhood. You know the type of man that "allows" "his" woman to do whatever she damn well pleases. I get it. You believe feminists are emotional, irrational, unreasonable. Why aren't women just satisfied with their lives, right? You get what you get and you don't get upset, right?

I get it. You want to feel empowered. You don't want to believe you're oppressed. Because that would mean you are indeed a "second-class citizen." You don't want to feel like one. I get it. But don't worry. I will walk for you. I will walk for your daughter. And your daughter's daughter. And maybe you will still believe the world did not change. You will believe you've always had the rights you have today. And that's okay. Because women who actually care and support other women don't care what you think about them. They care about their future and the future of the women who come after them.

Open your eyes. Open them wide. Because I'm here to tell you, along with millions of other women that you are not equal. Our equality is an illusion. A feel-good sleight of hand. A trick of the mind. I'm sorry to tell you, but you are not equal. And neither are your daughters.

But don't worry. We will walk for you. We will fight for you. We will stand up for you. And one day you will actually be equal, instead of just feeling like you are.

~ Dina Leygerman, 2017…*Diana (Dina) Leygerman is a blogger, a mother, a wife, a daughter, a sister, and a friend.*

It wasn't that long ago that Donald Trump declared his run for presidency and people didn't believe he would win. But through cool calculations he is now the President of the United States of America. And guess what? Kevin O'Leary just declared his run for the leadership of the Conservative party! With the NDP struggling in Alberta and the Liberals losing support across Canada… can you image what kind of damage this guy would do to Canada if he was elected Prime Minister using the same tactics as Trump? That is why women and their allies need to keep on their toes and be ready when the time comes to defend our rights again. So as we look forward to 2017 and the objectives that are put in front of us, remember the words that appear above. Let these words inspire us to move forward with confidence as we continue to struggle with the inequality that is present in our society.

In Sisterhood,
Valerie Saliba
Women's Committee Chair

PS…Don't forget to checkout the 4050 Women's Committee Page to stay current with what is going on!