

Lay Down the New Women's Agenda for Full Women's Liberation! - MabuhayRadio

Written by Jollene Levid

Tuesday, 03 March 2009 07:07 - Last Updated Tuesday, 03 March 2009 07:11

As we commemorate the enduring legacy of the global women's movement this 2009 International Women's Day, GABNet of the Mariposa Alliance calls for the laying down of a New Women's Agenda attuned to the tactical needs of our time and the strategic requirements for full liberation for womankind.

In this era of impending profound social transformation, when class society faces crisis upon crisis, and imperialism itself is reeling from the very catastrophe it has wrought upon the world, GABNet, in consonance with the cooperating organizations of the MARIPOSA ALLIANCE, calls for the coming together of all the disparate elements and forces of the women's movement.

The changing demographics of our societies make this imperative. We are witnessing the rise of transnational women and their communities, with their own special cluster of issues. Women and men of two passports, of two cultures, of two or more languages and who are bi-racial are slowly becoming the majority population in the US. Indeed, within less than a decade, the US will become bi-lingual.

And because we are women of action, GABNet is spearheading the start of this discourse, with the founding congress of the Mariposa Alliance this Fall, in the Bay Area, California, with a gathering of individual women and representatives of women's organizations to launch a higher level of cooperation among women of diverse origins and backgrounds.

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We have reasons to celebrate the past year: the passage of the Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, which recognizes gender discrimination as a continuum; the defeat of Proposition K for the legalization of prostitution; the extension of the International Marriage Brokers Regulatory Act (IMBRA); the impending passage of the Domestic Workers Bill of Rights in New York; the full surge of women's participation in the last elections that wrote finish to the Bush/GOP administration; the rise of women's voices the world over activism over a great range of issues, from reproductive rights to right to historical signification.

* GABNet of the Mariposa Alliance can boast of two decades of consistent work for the emancipation of women of Philippine ancestry. Among its accomplishments for the past year alone are:

Holding four national meetings of GABNet membership and leadership;

Organizing ten school-based committees working on the Purple-Rose Campaign against the Traffic of Filipinas;

Engaging, on a national basis, on daily activities to commemorate 16 Days of Activism on Violence against Women;

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Launching a mini-campaign on a Divorce Bill for the Philippines;

Holding a Los Angeles to San Diego Caravan against the Trafficking of Women;

Holding a concert against the Trafficking and Violence against Women;

Organizing a rally of women in Los Angeles on International Women's Day, which earned the support of the West Hollywood City Council;

Organizing women's delegations to all anti-war marches;

Organizing new GABNet high school units;

Holding a Feminist Valentine Dinner in commemoration of the Purple Rose Anniversary;

Initiating and deepening the organizing committee for the Mariposa Alliance.

In addition to this, all GABNet members participated in theory-building sessions and educational activities to enhance their understanding of women's oppression and social activism.

This rich and long-standing experience in work for the liberation of women of Philippine ancestry is the solid foundational basis of the Mariposa Alliance, a coalition of individual women and women's organizations in formation.

We have reasons as well to be upset: the same-sex marriage ban in California which deprived thousands of a basic human right, the emphasis on male-dominated industries in the stimulus package passed by Congress, the huge gender-gap in political and economic leadership which continues the pervasive masculinity rule in class society that women should be "responsible but with no power; accountable but with no authority;" the continuing redaction of women's social and political roles to being place-holders of power for others, their political work deemed of no historic value, the continued violence against women which rests on the denial of their right to historical significance, and the patriarchal surge that enables their transformation into commodity under imperialist globalization.

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It is time. Machismo is so obsolete; authoritarianism is passé and women considering their collective interests as secondary went out with whalebone girdle. The need for a new women's agenda grows greater each passing day, the imperative for coming together more urgent. Let us begin lest we be left again holding the bucket – and an empty one at that – as women have been in the past. The Future begins today.

To the Bay, this Fall, to lay down the New Women's Agenda!

Liberate women, liberate all!

Free ourselves, free our sisters!

End war and all violence against women!

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Dismantle gender-based oppression and exploitation!

Equality in Unity, Justice in Strength! # # #

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