

TEXT OF THE SPEECH GIVEN BY THE COALITION OF ASIAN WOMEN'S GROUPS
MARCH 8, 1975, INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

Today on International Working Women's Day, we of the Coalition of Asian Women's Groups join in solidarity with all working women the world over. As immigrants and as the children of immigrants who worked on the railroads, plowed the fields and slaved in the factories that make up the wealth of this country -- as women who are part of the immense work force that built this nation: We respond to the call, initiated on March 8, for all working women in the world to unite and organize for women's equality as working people.

We Asian women who are struggling not only against the oppression of women, but in addition against the burden of racism with all our sisters of color, thus recognize a basic form of oppression -- that of the masses of working people whose lives and livelihood are manipulated by a handful of powerful men, the capitalists, who control the wealth of this country. We therefore call for a massive and fundamental change in this relationship so that the needs of the majority take precedence over that of the minority.

We contend that a women's liberation movement which would retain or simply reform that very system which exploits and cripples us, or a women's movement which simply exchanges the sex of the exploiting class would be a monstrous sham. True liberation for us women can be achieved only by a complete transformation of this inhumane, exploitative system, which breeds on racism and sexism.

We must be constantly aware that those who are conspiring against the interests of working people always devise splits and divisions among us. They pit women against men, whites against minorities, minorities against minorities, organized workers against unorganized workers, workers against welfare people, civil service workers against provisionals, and American-born against foreign-born workers. -- The drive to blame aliens for the ills of a crisis-ridden capitalist system is particularly intense today. But these are all tactics and traps to prevent our organizing and mobilizing against them. We who work for a living share a common interest and a common struggle against a common enemy. And only through unity as a broad mass of working people can we defeat those who oppress, exploit and seek to crush us.

It is always in the larger context of change, not reform, that we must carry on our fight for democratic rights. With the deepening economic crisis, it is the oppressed minorities in this country and especially minority women who are the hardest hit and the last to win their basic human rights.--The right to unionize and to decent wages, working conditions, education for our children, health care, and daycare. And as women, as workers, as oppressed minorities, we must continually fight to secure these rights.

Our struggle for women's equality in the work force is part and parcel of all working people's struggle against unfair use of labor for profit and for wars of aggression which are purposely incited for the sake of super-profits -- what we call imperialism.

We seek world peace, but this can only be achieved when these wars of aggression against undeveloped and third world countries are put to an end. Our recognition of the necessity for armed struggles of third world people is therefore not a contradiction. If the imperialists of the United States and the Soviet Union hope to attain world peace through detente, at the expense of third world nations, this is a false peace. It is the courageous third world

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people -- the women and men fighting together against the domination of their labor, their lands and their natural resources by foreign and domestic exploiters -- who are actively fighting for the end to imperialist aggression and therefore, for real world peace. They are a vital link to our struggle, and we support them.

We in the Asian Women's Coalition urge men who also seek and struggle to change this society to join forces with us. For only in unity with all working people can we weaken and finally dismantle this system of super-profit exploitation which is called capitalism, and our fight for women's rights must be therefore closely allied with the fight for the rights of all working and oppressed people.

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It is always in the larger context of change, not reform, that we must carry on our fight for democratic rights. With the deepening economic crisis, it is the oppressed minorities in this country and especially minority women who are the hardest hit and the least to win their basic human rights. -- The right to unions and to decent wages, working conditions, education for our children, health care, and daycare. And as women, as workers, as oppressed minorities, we must continually fight to secure these rights.

Our struggle for women's equality in the work force is part and parcel of all working people's struggle against unfair use of labor for profit and for wars of aggression which are purposely incited for the sake of super-profits -- what we call imperialism.

We seek world peace, but this can only be achieved when there is no aggression against undeveloped and third world countries and put to an end. Our recognition of the necessity for armed struggle of third world people is therefore not a contradiction. If the imperialists of the United States and the Soviet Union hope to attain world peace through détente, at the expense of third world nations, this is a false peace. It is the courageous third world