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SISTERHOOD ISN'T SO POWERFUL, AFTER ALL

The Sisterhood is Global Institute is the latest excuse for the talk shows and the lifestyle sections to give a new round of publicity to the feminists. Its chairperson, longtime radical feminist Robin Morgan, tells us that the oppressive condition of women in America is "surprisingly similar" to that suffered by women in other countries.

I haven't heard of any brides in America being burned to death because their dowries were insufficient, as is the custom in India. Nor have I heard of any women in America who are forced to have abortions because they exceeded their government-determined quota of one child, as is the custom in Red China.

Undisturbed by such real oppression of women, the Sisterhood is Global gals instead will devote themselves to opposing U.S. welfare cutbacks and to promoting "affirmative consumer support" of nations with concrete disarmament plans. It's clear that the goal isn't sisterhood but the global pursuit of the same radical agenda that lost on Nov. 6.

In the postmortems after the November election, a leading feminist columnist asked the question, "what happened to the sense of sisterhood?" She complained that women were split by the way Ronald Reagan pitched for women's votes when he said, "We offer promise, not promises."

The truth of the matter is that the "sisterhood is powerful" line never appealed to any but the radical fringe. Sisterhood with a monolithic bloc of other women is not the goal of most women, and the attempt to build a political party, a national ticket, or a campaign for office on that premise is doomed to defeat.

Women are simply not collectively motivated or activated. Women don't vote for a female candidate because she is a woman. Women vote their politics not their gender.

The majority of women want a family, husband and children. Most women are family-oriented; they are not motivated toward building one gender bloc to confront the other. An ideology or political campaign which rejects such fundamentals of human nature has lost touch with reality.

It would be unnecessary to belabor the obvious except for the way that the national news media, during 1983 and '84, was so obsessively caught up in the swirl of what was called "gender gap politics." Reporters and interviewers consistently subordinated such major political issues as taxes, jobs, national defense, and foreign policy to repetitious, advocacy questions designed to perpetuate the media myth called the "gender gap."

Margaret Thatcher and Jeane Kirkpatrick prove that success is attainable for those who invest hard work, determination and skill in building a political career. That they happen to be women is irrelevant. That they happen to be non-feminist is basic.

There is another subliminal message in the "package" of a woman who is successful in the political process. She must, first of all, get her act together in relation to husband and children. Just as a man's wife and family are factors in a male politician's success, a woman's husband and family are factors in a woman's political success.

That's why most women who are successful in politics raise their families first and take up public service later in life. The lengthening of the human life span allows women to fill the role of motherhood first, and then have an auxiliary career.

Feminists have wide and easy access to the media today, but they have not figured out how to win the voters. The number of women in Congress is no greater in the 1980s than in the 1960s, which indicates that the feminist movement has probably been a detriment to the increase of women in public office. Pennsylvania, the state with the most avant garde pro-feminist policies and activists, ranks 48th out of the 50 states in the percentage of women holding elective office.

1984 was supposed to be <u>the</u> year for women in politics. During most of the year, one could scarcely look at the daily news without hearing threats that President Reagan and Republicans would be punished at the polls because of their alleged insensitivity to "women's issues."

On the night of November 6, that bubble of predilections and predictions burst. The majority of women voted for Ronald Reagan and all the feminist challengers who ran for the Senate and House were defeated.

Does this mean a setback for women in politics? Of course not! It is a setback only for feminist women and their radical agenda. No wonder they are seeking to go global!