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## Senate

### SENATOR PAUL TSONGAS SPEAKS ON DOLLARS AND DIGNITY FOR WORKING WOMEN

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, "9 to 5" is the organization of women office-workers in the Boston area that has won impressive improvements in office working conditions for women. Started just 8 years ago, the group now has over 1,000 members and is affiliated with the national organization, "Working Women." "9 to 5" has fought effectively for equitable and professional treatment of women officeworkers. Its members have mobilized for improved working conditions, including higher salaries and better opportunities for promotion.

I was honored to deliver the keynote address at the organization's First Convention for Working Women in November 1978. My Massachusetts colleague, PAUL TSONGAS, was keynote speaker at the Second Convention for Working Women, which was held in Boston on April 11. His address emphasized the political, legal, and economic tools that must be utilized for working women to win continued progress in the 1980's. I would like to share his thoughtful remarks with our colleagues. Mr. President, I ask that the text of Senator TSONGAS' keynote address to the Second Convention for Working Women be printed in the RECORD.

The address follows:

(Keynote Address by Senator PAUL E. TSONGAS to the Second Convention for Working Women, Boston, Mass., April 11, 1981)

#### DOLLARS AND DIGNITY FOR WORKING WOMEN

I am honored to address this convention of working women. I have looked forward to today because I share your convictions and your goals. Quite simply, we believe that discrimination has no place in America. It has no place in the voting booth, no place in the classroom, no place in the workplace.

But I don't have to tell you that many working women suffer discrimination every day. It isn't right, and it isn't legal. Even in strictly economic terms, it isn't rational. But discrimination against women is an unjust, illegal, irrational reality.

It is self-evident that discrimination is wrong. So leaders in business and government now use the right rhetoric—even if they don't support real change. That itself is testimony to the work of 9 to 5 and the other affiliates of Working Women. But you and I know that the victories of the last 8 years are just a start. Battles are being won, but the war for women's rights remains unwon.

Sex discrimination in the office involves 2 things: dollars and dignity. Obviously, they reinforce each other. Money alone can't compensate you for being treated unprofessionally. Without a decent salary, good office conditions don't add up.

As a group, women office workers are not paid what they deserve. Many working women are mistreated in a manner that no one deserves.

Office work itself is essential, hard work. Without one quarter million women office workers, business in Boston would come to a halt. But you get lower pay and less respect than your contribution deserves. Why? Because you are women.

Women make up 44 percent of Boston's workforce, but receive just 25 percent of the total pay.

Discrimination is wrong; it is unacceptable. But if reason alone could cure it, we wouldn't be here today. In the 1980's, we must be even better organized to attack it

effectively. We must use all the tools of politics, law, and economics to win decent salaries and professional treatment for working women.

You have won major victories in the past 8 years, despite enormous institutional barriers. Now the challenge is to defend past gains and keep moving forward. To succeed, your strategy must face new realities. These include the new Administration, which is "promising" only in the literal sense. Another reality is America's declining economy, which will hurt your interests unless you act boldly.

#### WORKING WOMEN AND WASHINGTON

First, let's look at what the new mood in Washington means for working women. We have a new Administration, and strong agreement on the need to restrain federal spending. I want careful economies in every federal department, and I supported many of the Administration's cuts in the Senate. But I would apportion them differently.

I am very concerned about programs designed to improve women's opportunities in employment and education:

Improved day care is a priority. More than 6 million children of pre-school age have mothers who work, yet only 2 percent of the kids are in day care centers. While we need more facilities, the new budget provides less. It folds Title XX social services—which include day care—into a block grant. Its total funding for the next fiscal year is 25 percent below this year's level.

I believe that federal incentives for day care are cost-effective because they increase employment and tax revenues. In fact, day care means the difference between self-support and welfare for some women. I am working on legislation to increase the day-care tax credit based on financial need, and to raise incentives for industry to provide day care.

Equal education is a priority. Yet the Administration plans to eliminate funding for 2 programs that help schools and colleges end sex discrimination. These are the Women's Educational Equity Act, and Title IV of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Their total budget: \$23 million.

The Administration wants to cut both of these programs by 25 percent this year. Under the proposed budget for 1982, they would disappear into block grants. The fact is that few states have used unrestricted federal funds for projects aimed at sex discrimination. I believe that both of these programs are worth the small federal cost that they require.

Our commitment to end discrimination must not be bargained away in a barrage of false economies. We must keep sensible programs from drowning in the conservative tide.

We also need to support new measures for fair treatment of women. I am cosponsoring the Women's Economic Equity Act of 1981 along with Senator Kassebaum and others.

This tax reform bill would improve your rights in pensions, insurance, inheritances, and other problem areas. For example, it would give tax credits to employers who hire women entering the work force after divorce or the husband's death. The legislation was introduced on Tuesday.

#### WORKING WOMEN AND THE LAW

The tide against spending and regulation threatens your progress—past and future. Much of that progress was won by enforcing laws such as the Equal Pay Act of 1963 and the Civil Rights Act of 1964. These laws are enforced by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). The Administration budget cuts the Commission's staff by about 10 percent.

This cut cannot be justified. It would mean the following for the EEOC:

1. Efforts to investigate systemic discrimination would virtually stop.

2. Congress' mandate to end discrimination by federal agencies could not be carried out.

3. Litigation—which occurs in less than 1 percent of the EEOC's cases—would decline further.

4. The backlog of charges would mushroom. The Commission is confronted with a veritable "growth industry" in sex discrimination.

Example: In 1978, the EEOC received authority to enforce the Equal Pay and Age Discrimination in Employment Acts from the Labor Department. An increasing number of workers (women and men) aged 40 to 70 now are filing claims of age discrimination. Older women doing office work suffer a double whammy of discrimination.

Example: Last November the EEOC reaffirmed that sexual harassment violates Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. It is an outrageous abuse that must be stopped by the actions of public officials, business managers, and other workers.

This is no time to economize on equality. Indeed, there is never such a time. But the cuts keep coming. . . .

The Administration proposes to eliminate legal services for the poor in FY 82. This hurts women disproportionately because over two-thirds of Legal Services clients are women.

The Administration is reviewing contract compliance rules—the basis of the federal affirmative action program. Since 1965 a Presidential Executive Order (No. 11246) has barred job discrimination. It has required businesses with federal contracts to develop specific plans for recruiting and hiring women and minorities. Now the government may abandon specific plans for contractors, in favor of broad performance standards.

Affirmative action may limp along in some form—but the staff in charge of it will be scaled down. This means major backlogs in handling complaints. By definition, justice delayed is denied. This is not "regulatory reform."

We have every right to be concerned. The Administration seems to need assertiveness training in this area. The new mood is mellow; the pace is minimal. But an end to sex discrimination is not a distant ideal for working women. It is the minimum demand, the legal mandate. We must send them this message again and again in every available way.

Legal action has been one of the major tools that 9 to 5 has used to assert basic legal rights. Your record is impressive. It includes major victories on behalf of large groups, as well as support in individual grievances. If a boss is giving a female worker the business, your track record may encourage reason to prevail without legal action. Your ability to apply the law to discriminating businesses is all the more vital now that the federal commitment is falling.

As many of you know, there is one legal issue with potential for breaking fresh ground. It is summed up in the phrase "equal pay for comparable worth." Basically, if 99 percent of secretaries are women, the fact of equal pay for equal work may miss the point. Secretarial and clerical work is said to be chronically undervalued and underpaid because it has been considered "women's work." The theory of comparable worth looks beyond the word processing section to areas where males prevail. It asks for equal pay for work that requires comparable skills and has comparable worth to the organization.

The Supreme Court is reviewing this issue now in the case of County of Washington v. Gunther. I believe this idea will grow stronger and stronger regardless of the High Court's decision. It will help raise your work's perceived value in terms of attitudes and salaries.

But contradicting this new concept is the overall federal line: "Let it be." The fact is that leadership on these issues will come from groups like yours. It will come from

Boston and Cleveland, from Seattle and Pittsburgh. Change will come here and there by your using the tools of law and politics to increase justice for working women.

#### THE ECONOMICS OF JUSTICE

In the past you have used another tool effectively—economic force. You have used organizational strength to make it clear that office injustice will cost employers more than the cost of meeting legitimate grievances. Hardheaded economics is an extremely powerful tool for winning workplace rights. It doesn't involve political or legal debate. It looks to the bottom line on a balance sheet.

The economic force for workplace rights is a strong argument. It doesn't depend on the short-term cost of bad publicity. It is based on the long-term benefit of better productivity. The fact is that discriminating against a working woman is unjust, illegal—and economically irrational. It means artificially holding someone beneath her potential to produce. Discrimination against a working woman is a tragic waste of a human resource.

I believe that any business leader ought to expect your "Bill of Rights for Office Workers" to increase productivity by increasing job satisfaction. U.S. productivity is declining, and we simply cannot afford to ignore improvements in office working conditions that could help employees produce more.

Today's faltering economy is a latent danger to all working women and men. When the American economy isn't expanding, wage increases and promotions are harder to come by. When U.S. output is falling, different groups are at each other's throats trying to hold on at the other's expense.

So I cannot limit my remarks to Washington and the workplace. I can't just leave you with the argument that rights for working women are in the real economic interest of business. The overriding reality is that the American economy has serious ills. All of you need to take an interest in their cure, because all of you have an interest in America's economic recovery. No strategy for working women can succeed if the national economy itself isn't working.

We need tax cuts targeted at industrial revitalization. We need policies to favor savings over consumption. We need to boost productivity through more careful regulation and more extensive research and development. We need to stop the dollar drain for foreign oil, which topped \$70 billion last year.

You and I must speak up for hardheaded priorities that recognize economic reality and rebuild our economic strength. One basic decision on federal spending dwarfs all others in importance—the choice between an arms race for military superiority or a goal of equivalence and arms control.

Massive arms spending takes away vital technical expertise and capital needed for reindustrialization and the energy future. Chasing after superiority requires a military budget increase of 9-12 percent. Equivalence and arms control would still boost military spending 3-5 percent in real terms for next year. Let me make the difference concrete by contrasting the low end of superiority (9 percent) with the high end of equivalence (5 percent). I hope that you will remember this 9-to-5 comparison.

What's the difference between 9 percent real growth for defense and 5 percent real growth in military spending during the next decade? \$497 billion. What does \$497 billion represent in real alternatives?

1. Energy: We could properly insulate every home in America and provide half of them with a solar power hot water heater (meaning less dependence on OPEC): cost—\$174.6 million.

2. Capital Formation: We could enact the so-called 3-4-7-10 accelerated depreciation proposal for 10 years, providing funds for capital investments: cost—\$157.2 billion.

3. Industrial Research: We could enact the 25 percent tax credit for business sponsored research and development for 10 years: cost—\$7.0 billion.

4. Basic Research: We could double the budgets of both the National Science Foundation and National Institutes of Health for 10 years: cost—\$43.5 billion.

5. Education: We could fully fund one million college students for four years; cost—\$22.5 billion.

6. Quality of Life: We could double the National Endowment for the Humanities for the 1980's: cost—\$1.41 billion.

In addition, there would be \$30 billion left over with which to give each family a tax rebate of \$555.

This option recognizes limits. There is a limit to the national security that billions upon billions can buy. There is a limit to our billions at any time—which requires hard budget priorities. We must target major investments to get our economic strength growing again. Renewed economic growth will make your specific agenda more reachable.

Ultimately, no one who's not a member of a group that suffers discrimination quite knows what it is like. But as a public official, as a lawyer, as a person, I reject the indignities and inequities that too many working women suffer. As a father of two young girls, I feel a personal stake in working against the sex discrimination that still pervades so much of American life.

I applaud you today for 8 years of hard work and hard-won victories. Let's work together in breaking down the barriers, and rebuilding a strength shared fairly by all.