

"Women in Decision"

(Editor's Note: The following was read to the Alaska Native Women's Convention held in Anchorage last month by author, Carolyn Demientieff. Tundra Times has had requests to print it.)

By Carolyn J. Demientieff

In today's society women have lost their identity for a number of reasons. From time not too far distant in our memory come insistent tales of women marching to cast a simple vote; A war inside our borders!

To be recognized as even being! Had to cry aloud shouting in unity, simply to know and show if others who surround them who could see them their eyes, could, in fact, see them!

Today, we gather knowing at last that, our Government does stand defending their women, In part, for we see it on walls in various buildings - Equal Opportunity Employment, etc., The full effect of which has not come to the total consciousness of the entire population!

In these days of division, easy divorce, lack of unity to protect a family unit, dull eyes and dusty brains who can't reach a decision to cover their offspring with even the protection of their name.

Women at work, creating correspondence and in day-to-day decision making.... Where on the bottom line appears another's name, O you women are fair game!

These same women locked in prison of having to hold these positions because at home are younger women caring for the very, very young.

Standing there, minds are bare being robbed of a vision of their own dreams; What's the reason for this mission?

The dead are burying the dead alive! Wee see a crying need, for mature, orderly, healthy caring DAY CARE! O, do we dare?

On every side comes criticism, A wary glance, A haughty look! How dare you carry a book, unless... It's TRUE ROMANCE and furthermore... You should be watching AS THE WORLD TURNS!

Yes, I've seen it where a walking policeman saw my own mother slip and fall on the ice and because she was Indian assumed she was drunk and took her to jail

What could I say then...I was only a tyke.. After hours of waiting, talking..persuading..frustrating The decision came; she wasn't drunk and apologized! And we could go free!...Free!

Let me tell you! They'd already stamped

an indelible brand upon my heart And my hand - it wasn't that great to have a brown skin, It became thin!

Not only that but we always were taught that policemen there for our protection - My lips became tighter - It's harder to trust when they arrested my mother that day - I thought my heart would burst!

Sometimes, tears come now and I wonder why? When I look at my mother now older and hope that her kids now could more firmly uphold her...

And be the much wiser when we take the helm In pursuit of law-making strength drawn from a well of heart breaking

Have you ever tried to start legal action against a man who slapped and kicked at your six children and then took a gun at you, the mother? In the presence of approximately 60 witnesses?

While he attempted to slap at the mother the police hadn't got there - going on 20 minutes - The crowd of young boys and mothers trying to dissuade him, then when he ran for a rifle!

A black woman came deliberately walking Rolling her sleeves up straight toward the man with his gun, saying, I've had enough of this facade, now I'll put a stop to this action, BY GOD!

The rifle disappeared into the crowd and then the police came and this man leered He was treated with respect and handled with care, even while kicking and screaming into the car...

He spent one night in jail and then went scot free he pointed his fingers - O Boy, Good me!

I became skin color conscious in a powerful way A woman came to rescue a woman the difference is not night and day for it takes a night and a day to make a full day

It's because of this thorn in my memory's side, that I look with some apprehension and a grain of disparity at the new criminal code which shall come into being January 1, 1980, after 70 years of hodgepodge law'n lack of clarity!

Take courage then, when meeting in the public forum that we speak from knowledge for we are inseting precedents

That we, as women strong and bold borne from pain and suffering untold since we outnumber the NUMBER that we may flex the laws aright!

Guarding our young with care and attention lest we all fall disregarding our heritage! But now we must turn in evaluation And take a fresh look at our backbone, EDUCATION!

Joining together, speaking in harmony we shall begin to stand hand in hand embracing an old vision of a new home a new nation through sheer numbers

A new woman, Power of the Hour! So speak softly, O world You've forced a new kinda girl and we'll set the pace...So Race... Race...Race...

You watch, we teach to run with style and grace you smile, we laugh, as we wend our way to the top of the STAFF!

May 12, 1979 copyrights