

Remarks by US Consul General Alberta Mayberry
to the
NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF STATE LEGISLATURES
February 2, 2010
Western Cape Provincial Parliament
Cape Town, South Africa

Truth though crushed to the ground; though buried deep under the earth; though covered with the evils of apartheid, discrimination, bias, prejudice and hatred; truth and goodness though crushed to the ground will rise again. (Truth crushed to earth shall rise again. WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT, *The Battle-Field*)

Historic Day: 20 years ago a door opened to a non racial, non sexist democratic South Africa. Mr. deKlerk is given credit for saying it, but liberation's time had come. The words he spoke, the truth that was realized was applauded around the world. It was an inevitable, invincible truth that all men and women should be free.

Greetings to the speaker; the NC Deputy Speaker; the USA Training team; the Indian CG; Provincial MP whom I've met and new acquaintances and to my Consulate staff members present; my tasks today are to:

(1) **encourage greater participation of women in government,**

I applaud SA's recognition of women in large numbers as policy makers, legislators, and political leaders. You far surpass our numbers in the USA. Our nation has a great deal to do to catch up with your numbers and even though your method of ELECTION AND assignment is different from ours but we can learn from each other. On the Statewide legislative bodies, my adopted state of Oklahoma is second from the bottom with the percentage of female representatives. That leaves room for me to return home and run for office.

(2) raise awareness of women's issues and providing strategies to positively affect change in the political process,

The women I've met in my travels in Senegal, Mauritania, Algeria and Saudi Arabia.

A few things loom prominently in my mind when we talk about women's issues in South Africa and to a lesser sense in the USA.

Recently Secretary of state Hillary Clinton said, "If you give a man a fish. . . But if you teach a woman to fish, she will feed the village." Women as workers and entrepreneurs need to be the focus of recovery and improvement for the economic development of this nation. Especially, rural women!

Women in rural areas must be given training and jobs to better feed and raise their families. Those children will then be better able to receive education and job skills training. More of them will choose to stay in their rural home areas rather than to flood the already overcrowded, high unemployment zones of major cities.

I AM HAPPY TO SAY THAT WE ARE BEGINNING AN IMPORTANT DIALOGUE WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA ABOUT HOW TO PROMOTE RURAL DEVELOPMENT, WITH A FOCUS ON RURAL WOMEN.

It bothered my family greatly that I was coming to South Africa, when they heard that it was the "rape capital of the world." Why with so many women in government is SA still wearing that title? I'm delighted to note that the USA is helping to fund the Tutulhezela Centers to assist rape victims in the legal process

here in SA. But then I am told that the number of Prosecuting courts for rape cases has been decreased. We need to demand through every mean possible that this abridgement of female human rights stops immediately. It is one thing to think of rape as a tool of war. And as horrible as that is, rape in this nation is like a war against women every day, every day! Again, this is an issue that affects all of our families when we see our mothers, sisters, daughters and wives being brutally attacked and viciously raped.

And one female leader, not a politician, but a community activist said that we celebrate 349 days of violence against women when the annual 16 days of action against violence is heralded as a national protest period. The USG HAS SUPPORTED THE 16 DAYS OF ACTION AGAINST VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN over the years. WE NEED TO TAKE ACTION EVERY SINGLE DAY OF THE YEAR. THIS IS NOT JUST A WOMEN'S ISSUE, IT IS A NATIONAL ISSUE.

(3) enhance professional skills of women legislators,

You will always have the opportunity to enhance professional skills. You can take courses or attend workshops such as this one to learn negotiating skills, to improve communication skills, to perfect analytical skills or to learn budgeting and financial skills. Read widely, listen to intellectuals, attend these courses perfect your professional skills on a regular basis.

My desire for women legislators and their male counterparts also, is for them to daily perfect the personal character traits that got them elected or appointed; and when lost, those same attributes have them displaced them in disgrace.

Practice and be committed to these “Fruits of the spirits.”

Kindness — To those you serve; to those who work for you; and to those with whom you work.

Faithfulness – Stay on task, be faithful to your goals and the principles that got you elected or assigned.

Self-control - Be diligent and discipline exercising self-control

Patience – Rome was not build in a day; nor was it torn down in a day. The new democratic South Africa will require time and investment of talent over several years and maybe several generations.

Love – of country, of party, of principles and of the people you represent.

Don’t, on the other hand, deal in laziness, greed, ego, and false pride.

Remember, Pride goes before the Fall!! And don’t deal in lies! First and always to thine own self be true!

(4) **Develop leadership capacity to initiate legislation and motivate and empower other women in the political process**, through your own life experiences of being a female in leadership roles.

Five who have served me and mine.

Shirley Chisolm; Barbara Jordan; Shelia Jackson Lee; Hillary Clinton; Nancy Polisi.

My Mother, myself, my daughters-in-law and my granddaughters: four generations of leadership. I have given each of my four Granddaughters a tee-shirt that says “Future Secretary of State.” Now I know that with three women having already served as Secretary of State, I am aiming too low for my

grandbabies. I should help them to aspire to be anything that they want to become.

Finally, with my recent win of a seat on the Executive Committee of the Cape Town Consular Corps has inspired me to seek elected office when I retire and return home to Oklahoma.

Thank You for your service to the people of your nation!