

sion, understanding and compromise, wrote, revised and ratified a general conference statement, a seven-page list of action plans, and 56 resolutions with emphasis directed towards 16 countries and the relationship between national problems and international intervention. As one woman remarked, men could not do that even *with* secretarial help!

Although the content of these documents was in itself important, it was the exercise itself which demonstrated women's alternatives for negotiating Peace. Flexibility was the key word: when it became apparent that the needs of the delegates were not going to be met by the conference design, the design was changed. By comparison, flexibility is notably absent from the present negotiating system.

These were the formal sessions but the women's alternatives for negotiating Peace which emerged from them were in evidence elsewhere in the conference. On

Sunday, the delegates from China, Russia, the United States and the German Democratic Republic spoke in turn, not from political affiliations but from the common experience of the desired quality of life throughout the world. One of the workshop sessions entitled "Creating Conditions of Partnership Between Arabs and Jews," originally scheduled as a two-hour session, grew to four hours stretched over two days. Women from Egypt, Lebanon and Israel – both Arabs and Jews – talked about their lives in the Middle East; they explained how, without foreign intervention, peaceful co-existence could be established. We do not hear that in the West: we hear only that foreign intervention is necessary.

Celebration, too, was a key note to the conference, reaffirming the necessity of joy in all our lives. There were mime performances before the official opening on Wednesday night; an evening of multicultural entertainment on Thursday;

Salome Bey sang on Friday before the National Film Board's screening of "Speaking Our Peace;" and on Saturday a number of Halifax groups and individuals sang and entertained, finally coming together at the end of the evening to lead the delegates in a song of celebration which ended in a spontaneous snake dance through the auditorium, dismantling even the private barriers of self-consciousness.

In retrospect, the conference itself was a demonstration of women's alternatives for negotiating Peace. Under the assumption of peaceful co-existence and with attitudes of compromise, trust and flexibility, women discussed world problems, defining the roots of the conflicts and describing the comprehensive nature of the solutions. *Is that not the true formula for Peace negotiations?*

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## PRIÈRE À FRANÇOISE

Femme trop belle  
Eprise d'absolu  
Femme immortelle  
Salie, souillée, perdue

Degradée, abaissée  
Du mal des autres  
Fustigée par un défilé  
D'apprentis apôtres

Fille trop gaie  
Trop aimée, trop adulée  
Trop pétulante  
Trop ravissante

Fille éblouissante  
Avenante, intelligente  
Inquiétante, offensante  
Enrageante, "dérangeante"

De l'ordre établi  
De poitrines rabougries  
De seins affaissés  
Sur leur débordement

De mauvaises pensées  
de plein consentement  
De ferme propos,  
D'orgasme au repos

De mâle en chasse  
D'ignorance crasse  
D'effort morts nés  
Fruits d'une société

D'autorité en place  
D'autorité en masse  
Le beau, le bien, le bon  
Le bon bout du bâton.

Merci Seigneur!  
Vous m'avez tout donné  
A moi les honneurs . . .  
A moi la bonté . . .

Amen

*Hermine Leroux Perron*  
Laval, Québec