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**Declaration of Sentiments**

Seneca Falls Convention was called by Elizabeth Stanton and Lucretia Mott as a result of the humiliation they faced when they tried to attend the Anti-slavery Convention in London in June, 1840. Such was the discrimination against women at the time that they were not even allowed to speak up and provide their input after allowing them into the convention. This event led women across America to start believing that the only difference between slaves and women was that women’s chains were invisible. In all aspects of society, women were thoroughly discriminated against. This encouraged Mott and Stanton to seek out like-minded women as well as men who shared their vision of a future where women will have equal rights as men. Thus, the Seneca Falls Convention took place, and became the birthplace of the movement for women rights for generations to come.

One of the most important declarations among the Declaration of Sentiments was the right of political enfranchisement or suffrage. The ability to vote and take part in the political process is the cornerstone of any democracy and one half of the population of America was blatantly deprived of this fundamental right. When a certain group of people cannot vote, they are effectively taken out of the political process. This stifles their voice and reduces the perceived political importance of that group which is then marginalized and disaffected. In women’s case, their importance in the political scene is drastically reduced which leads legislators to ignore them. This is because legislators are assured that even if they do not listen to women and their pleas, it will not affect their vote bank among women, because they simply cannot vote. The legislative and executive branches conveniently ignored women altogether, enabling the forces of discrimination to take firm roots in national institutions. Therefore, the call for women suffrage at the Seneca Falls Convention was significant in the long run as it galvanized women to believe they were being deprived of this right. This spurred a national movement with leaders such as Carrie Chapman Catt who led women to gain this fundamental right with the passage of the nineteenth amendment by Congress in 1919.

Another major declaration was the sentiment of being deprived of equal access to education. This was a major issue for women as they were systematically marginalized from higher education. They were still taught basic literacy but the purpose of this was so they could educate their sons who would go on to attain higher education. The deprivation from education is was a huge blow to the chances of women succeeding in their professional lives as they could not become lawyers, doctors and scientists. This would further reinforce the notion by the misogynists that women were intellectually weaker than men, thereby, ensuring they never got access to higher education. Thus, the resolution related to access to educational facilities was extremely important as it gave birth to the idea that women were also capable of having professional careers. This would later result in thousands of American women attaining higher education and having successful professional lives.

Perhaps the most important resolution was the one pertaining to economic and fiscal rights of women. Women were methodically excluded from the financial sphere as they were not even allowed to apply for important posts or ones that could culminate in promotions and higher wages. They were reduced to working menial jobs with pathetic wages that ensured their perennial financial disadvantage compared to men. In this particular arena, the Declaration of Sentiments was successful in galvanizing women to ask for better jobs so they could attain a decent financial standing that would enable them to be independent of their male counterparts. This can be termed as the start of a movement and a mindset that would give America financially powerful women and billionaires such as Oprah Winfrey.

Works Cited

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