

"Writing the truth  
as I see it;  
trying not to  
offend  
those who will  
disagree."

# The truth as I see it™

Idaho Common Sense™



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## Sarah Palin and the feminist movement

September 15, 2008

The feminist movement must be rejoicing. After four decades of advocating equality for women, we are witnessing the real possibility of a female Vice-President of the United States. The National Organization for Women (NOW) should be congratulated for the doors they opened for women, the doors opened to equality. Their advocacy for women's rights started in 1966 with a statement of purpose to "take action to bring women into full participation in the mainstream of American society, exercising all the privileges and responsibilities thereof, in truly equal partnership with men." Wasn't that a reasonable expectation? Women had been too often second-class citizens in far too many ways. NOW continued to admire the stay-at-home moms; they just wanted it to be by choice rather than by expectation and convention. They simply wanted women to have equal opportunities and treatment. If women chose to work, they asked they be treated equally. They wanted simple civil rights and simple fairness.

The years they spent educating our country laid the foundation to foster the growth of a Sarah Palin; the new face and the next generation of women in politics. Sarah Palin benefited from the opportunities won by NOW. She realized a woman could run for Vice-President of the United States without giving up being a woman. Palin recognized she did not have to try to act like a man to become their equal; she could still be a woman and their equal.

But, what support is the feminist movement offering Sarah Palin. Shouldn't she be their poster child, showing their success at gaining equality for women? Apparently not.

Kim Gandy, NOW's PAC chairman, said "Palin is not the right woman. Sadly, she is a woman who opposes women's rights." Gloria Feldt, former leader of the National Planned Parenthood Federation of America, and a well-known women's advocate who has devoted her life to equality for women, describes Palin as under qualified but attractive and ambitious..., a faux feminist with a masters of women's subjugation...and a curled mouth with a sneer."

Is this the equality NOW helped earn for women? CNN's John Roberts added to this attack, "How much time will she have to dedicate to her newborn child?" Washington Post's Sally Quinn then added, "When you have five children, one a 4-month-old Down syndrome baby, I don't see how you cannot make your family your first priority." Isn't this the discrimination NOW fought so hard to eliminate? Are they advocating a return to "barefoot and pregnant?" Maybe they are advocating for a different feminist movement, a different NOW.

Sarah Palin has lived NOW's original statement of purpose. So, why the attacks? What went wrong? Wasn't it all about simply advocating for women's equality, supporting all women; working women, working moms, and stay-at-home moms? Perhaps NOW has changed, with a purpose for a narrower group of women rather than all women. Did the progressives change the rules of membership in the movement, supporting only select women who share the "correct" agenda? NOW still works for equality for women, but 35 years ago they added a litmus test. To be in the "club" you must support abortion on demand. Wait a minute.

Doesn't that suggest NOW has changed from being mainly a women's advocacy group for all women to mainly an abortion on demand group for those with that shared view? Should it continue to be called the National Organization for Women or would it be more accurate to call it the National Organization for Abortion?

Palin worked for, benefited from, and reached the equality NOW fought for. Unfortunately, she has committed several cardinal sins. She failed to have an abortion, her daughter failed to have an abortion, and she refuses to support abortion on demand. Would she have received accolades and admiration from NOW and the feminist movement if she had been sensible and aborted her "Down syndrome" baby or if her daughter had been practical and aborted her "unplanned pregnancy?" Would that have better showed she was a liberated woman, a true feminist, and a role model for NOW? NOW has indeed changed from its founding. At the top of their list of goals are abortion rights. Constitutional equality and economic justice are at the bottom of the list. No doubt NOW will claim their goals are not about abortion, but about choice. Isn't pro-choice just a polished way of saying pro-abortion? Perhaps they claim to be about choice, but the only choice they accept is to choose to support abortion on demand? Is that really allowing choice? Sarah Palin simply made the wrong choice; she made the choice that abortion is wrong. She refused to abandon her personal values to stay in the "club."

Did Sarah Palin abandon the feminist movement or has the feminist movement abandoned Sarah Palin?