



"We think the country is ready for women leaders," says Marie Wilson (center, with Barbara Lee, left, and Laura Liswood at Harvard).

Aiming High

This ballot's no secret: Three political activists list women they'd like you to think about as possible Presidents

Marie Wilson was 8 years old when she learned that life is not always fair. One day when she was riding on a city bus in racially segregated Atlanta, the driver told her to take a seat at the front. Wilson, who was happy to be sitting beside a friendly black woman at the back, refused to budge. The driver stopped the bus, scooped young Wilson from her seat and moved her to the front to be with the rest of the bus's white passengers. "I was terrified," recalls

Wilson, now 57. "I thought, 'How could this be happening?'"

These days Wilson, president of the feminist Ms. Foundation in New York City and the mastermind behind Take Our Daughters to Work Day, no longer sheds tears over injustice; she's too busy fighting it. Last year she launched the White House Project—an effort to encourage women candidates to run for President by disseminating 8 million ballots listing the names of 20 top female achievers drawn

from politics (Gov. Christine Todd Whitman of New Jersey), the military (Lt. Gen. Claudia J. Kennedy) and business (Maxwell House president Ann Fudge).

The ballots are being published in magazines (including PEOPLE) and distributed in stores in 12 states, and the results will be published by the White House Project. The idea, says Laura Liswood, vice chairwoman of Harvard's Council of Women World Leaders and Wilson's partner in the project (along with wealthy Boston social activist Barbara Lee, who put up \$500,000), is to encourage voters, both male and female, to think of women as worthy of the White House. "It's the last bastion," says Liswood, 48. "We've had governors. We've had generals. But we haven't had Presidents yet." ●