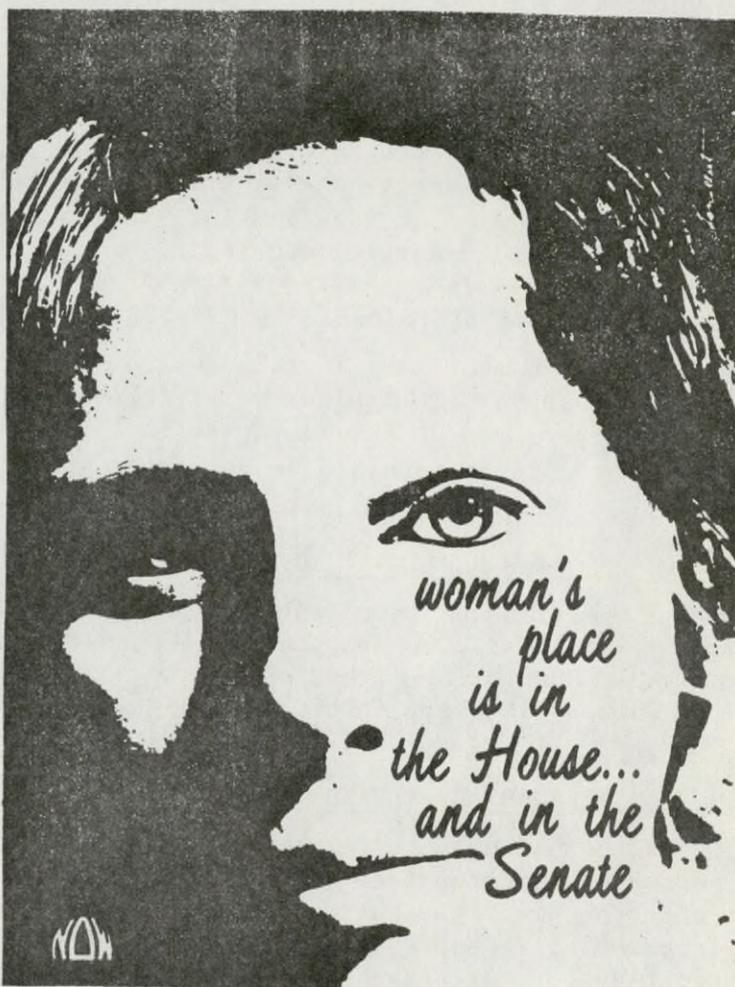
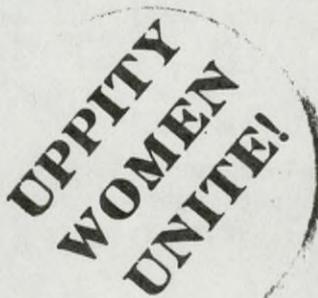


N.O.W. NEWS

Bay Area Chapter
National Organization for Women



VOLUME IV, Number 3 - March, 1976



Women and politics

Program/Business Meeting

8 pm

Thursday, March 4, 1976

Uniting Church

El Camino Real & Reseda

Clear Lake City, Texas

FEMINIST POLITICAL INVOLVEMENT, HOW & WHY?

Guest speaker Billie Carr, a Democratic National Committeewoman, will discuss her own development as a politician and tell how other women can work effectively in politics. She will describe her activities on the state level as Co-chair of the Texas Democrats and on the national level as one of ten National Committee members from Texas and as Co-chair of the New Democratic Coalition, a nationwide organization of liberal, progressive Democrats. Public is welcome. Information: Presiding Officer: Frances Hicks, 488-8574

BAY AREA TASK FORCE ON RAPE

Begun at a gathering of Bay Area NOW members in July, 1975, the Bay Area Task Force on Rape is rapidly developing strength in membership and community recognition. Help has been forthcoming in the initial stages from Houston Rape Crisis Coalition in the form of training sessions and a successful organizational model. Like the Houston Coalition, the Bay Area Task Force on Rape is an autonomous body, its membership not dependent on affiliation with other local organizations or institutions.

In addition to gathering relevant rape statistics and planning training sessions for hospital employees, the Task Force promotes community familiarity with its goals of rape prevention and assistance to rape victims by establishing communication with local law enforcement officials, and with the public through newspaper articles. Persons interested in working with the Bay Area Task Force on Rape can contact Evie Whitsett (488-1777) for further information.

CONTINUING TASK FORCE ON EDUCATION FOR WOMEN

Task Force representatives from Bay Area NOW have scheduled interviews during the past month with textbook selection committee members in a number of local school districts. Many teachers are becoming aware of the negative influence of sexism in textbooks - as well as in the classroom - and welcome the opportunity to discuss it with us and to study the documentation which we provide. Results of committee balloting in these districts are most gratifying. A heavily sexist spelling series has been uniformly rejected, having been judged out of date in all respects. Both the math series and the spelling series which come closest to being non-sexist are being well accepted, thus demonstrating the truth of our contention that the best publishers have been the quickest to perceive the disadvantages of sexist content and the most intelligent at discovering how to eliminate it from their textbooks.

-- Twiss Butler

INFORMATION FROM THE STATE N.O.W. COUNCIL

- 1) Address for National N.O.W.: NOW National Action Center
425 13th Street NW
Suite 1001
Washington D.C. 20004
- 2) Texas NOW has 628 members and a current treasury balance of \$1056.83.
- 3) State Task Forces and Standing Committees:
 - a. Rape Task Force--Alice Schrader--2042 Alta Vista, Houston, Tx. 77023 (needs C-Director)
 - b. 3rd World Women Standing Committee--Gloria Guardiola, Brenda Lewis--Hou. Inner City NOW
 - c. Lesbian Rights Task Force--Lea Sherman--Dallas County NOW--3219 N. Haskell, Dallas 75204
 - d. Rural Organizing Standing Committee--Susan Silver (NE Texas NOW), Ruth Thornton (Dallas County NOW)
 - e. Criminal Justice Task Force--Micki Treadwell (Huntsville NOW)
 - f. Education Task Force--Kay Whyburn, Mary Buxton, Marjorie Randal, Twiss Butler
- 4) State NOW Conference May 29-30 in Abilene. Call Frances Hicks, 488-8574, for details on transportation, and volunteer your talents for workshops, registering, voting chores, etc.

--Frances Hicks, Representative

 Total Woman, Circa 1838: "Now that you are married, do not always expect the lover. Be more than ever anxious to please, study his interest, make it yours. If any little domestic care troubles you, such as indifferent servants etc. let it not ruffle your temper. Is it not better to endure this than wear him by not being amiable? We undergo soon after marriage a trying change in our constitutions. We feel cross because we feel badly & scarcely know what ails us - not one gentleman in ten can make allowance for our peevish fits. Now dear if you ever feel them, conquer it and be only what you seemed to be when first you won his love. Be more cautious of wounding the feelings of a husband than you were ever anxious to please the lover. If you are fond of any amusement he does not approve and cannot share, give it up - you will find your reward in so doing. You are to keep him happy & cheerful & to make sacrifices if necessary without murmuring. You may see faults in him that in your fondness you never dreamed of. Be as blind to them as you can. If by gentleness & love you cannot alter them, then conform yourself to your circumstances, for reproaches will never do good. Better feel the secret pain than let him fear you love him less than when you thought him faultless."

--American Heritage, 12/67, p. 35.

NEWS FROM THE FRONT - A Compilation of Communiques From Our Correspondents

A letter dated Feb. 5, 1976, from Karen DeCrow and Eleanor Smeal addressed to Chapter Presidents, Task Force Coordinators, & National Board Members enclosed "a summary of Board decisions as prepared by the Secretary, Jean Conger" in addition to an elaboration on the abortion mobilization approved at the Board meeting and the funding of our \$150,000 pledge to the ERA fund drive. The abortion proposal adopted "focuses on the issues of separation of church and state in this bicentennial year", and ERA funds are to be raised through sale of the Board-approved ERA medallion and through a request for each member's 75¢ contribution at membership renewal time. Also announced in the letter was the following:

From Karen DeCrow and Eleanor Smeal, dated Feb. 5:

"This is the time for membership renewal. We urge you to forward your chapter transmittals as soon as possible. In an effort to facilitate membership processing and accounting, we are asking that all dues and transmittal forms be sent directly to:

National Organization for Women
Box 8068-5119
Philadelphia, PA 19177

This address is a bank lockbox. This method will allow us to earn interest on dues as soon as they are received and will reduce the volume of paperwork. The bank will immediately deposit all funds, reconcile all checks to their support documents, and record all transactions. We hope you have success in increasing your chapter membership. National NOW will be sending renewal notices shortly."

The summary and other materials have been used to write this report regarding the outcome of the Mary Lynn Myers letter regarding Board actions taken at the December meeting (still no official minutes). The Myers letter raised concerns about the intent of the new board toward the future of NOW, and since then a letter from Elaine Latourell, Vice President Legislation, has been received. She was concerned enough to write abhorring the Board's actions in closing all of NOW's offices and opening a "NOW Action Center" in Washington, D.C., with NOW's 15 employees being unilaterally fired after dedicated service to the organization. Further, she felt that the Legislative Program had been destroyed by disconnecting "the political and legislative network which made NOW - the National Organization for Women - one of the most powerful lobbying forces in Washington". Both women had serious doubts about the new Board's actions and the lack of openness displayed by those actions.

Since those two letters, we have also received: working papers prepared by four different persons for distribution to the January Board meeting; an agenda for that meeting; Guidelines for Submitting Expenses dated January 1976 (allowing lodging up to \$25 per night single and \$20 double, receipts required, and \$15 daily meal allowance - not a per diem - with receipts required for those over \$5); the "Phoenix Board Summary", a synopsis of major board actions at Phoenix; and a joint letter from Myers and Latourell written post-Phoenix which is "cautiously hopeful" while remaining seriously concerned about some Board actions at not only at the December meeting but some at the January meeting. Items below are taken from the Phoenix summary with comments excerpted from Myers & Latourell, etal. including me.

Issues, Actions and Mobilizations

- 1) NOW calls on the U.S. Conference of Mayors (and individual mayors) to observe the traditional American principle of separation of church and state and to reaffirm that principle at the Feb. 27 Conference. (This refers to the practice of declaring a "right-to-life Day" on Jan. 22.)
- 2) The Board spent, applauded Myers & Latourell, "a good deal of time on Program! Mobilizations on right to choose and ERA were approved, substantial funding for displaced homemakers legislative and direction plans was approved, the Board recommended to the LDEF support and partial funding for the Mary Jo Rissler lesbian mother custody appeal -- these highlights among other substantive actions."

- 3) Called for repeal of those provisions of PL 93-467 (child support law of 1975) that force the caretaker of a dependent child to reveal the paternity of the child and that assign support for the child to the state.
- 4) Approved the joining of the Coalition to End Grand Jury Abuse, with other major civil rights groups.
- 5) Established a Task Force on Feminism in Rural America, to include representation from all four regions.
- 6) Voted to oppose S. 1, the Criminal Justice Reform Act, on the basis that many provisions are repressive and loosely defined, open to broad interpretation (almost any act of protest against government policy or activity could be interpreted as a threat to national security, and therefore a felony, subjecting a person convicted to extreme penalties).
- 7) Approved use of the vacant smaller half of the former NOW National Office on South Wabash Street in Chicago by the Illinois ERA Mobilization Committee for four months.
- 8) Resolved to support Patricia Veldon and Carmen Banos, members of the U.S. Navy and Air Force respectively, who are struggling to live open life styles as lesbians despite harrassment from military authorities.

Financial Matters

- 1) Approved a temporary maximum allocation of \$400 per state. Under current reimbursement procedure, money expended will be factored into future revenue sharing allocations of the states. The matter of the budget allocation to states is remanded to committee for report at the April Board meeting. Myers & Latourell report that the inability to work out the details was "due to substantial difference of opinion (across factional lines for a pleasant change as to the most equitable method of disbursement (geography, stage of development and need, population, or a combination method)."
- 2) Approved a budget allocation of \$100 for the Committee on Implementation of Budget Allocation to States.
- 3) Approved the contract with Graphic Communications Consultants, Inc., for ERA medallion, a major fund raiser for ERA and chapters. (While not named specifically, this apparently was the contract involving two members of the board which concerned Myers and Latourell because guidelines on conflict of interest, having been rescinded by the Board in Dec. 1975, were lacking in the interim procurement procedures. Hopefully the problem will be resolved by passage of a motion that "the committee appointed to develop new procurement guidelines be mandated to include conflict of interest guidelines in its product.")
- 4) Proceeds from the medallion are restricted for ERA. (How this agrees with the description of being "a major fund raiser for ERA and chapters" given in 3 above is a mystery to me.)
- 5) Dollar amount limits were set on advances for projects, and a time certain of 90 days following completion of the project was set for expense receipts to justify advances. Myers and Latourell were encouraged by this action.
- 6) Approved completion of two half-hour films on the 1975 national conference to be used by chapters and states as fund raisers at a nominal cost. A budget allocation of \$4900 was approved for the project, which will yield three copies of each film.
- 7) Voted that every existing task force be allocated \$2,000 as a minimum for 1976, except for the Sexuality and Lesbianism Task Force, which has had its budget determined by the national conference. (I can find no mention anywhere in the material I have what that figure might be)
- 8) Still of concern to Myers and Latourell is the budget, which, in their opinion is "over-projected by at least \$200,000 in income. A mathematical error of \$10,000 was corrected in Phoenix, but direct mail and new member projections remain at levels up to \$189,000 more than we have ever achieved, even in 'good' times. Further, interest income of \$6000 is projected, though no reserve (fund balance) exists on which to draw such interest income. These financial questions are very serious and must be addressed." (Looking back to DeCrow & Smeal's letter regarding the interest we will earn "on dues as soon as they are received", I wonder if this is where such an item originated. And if so, why was it not discussed at the Board meeting so all could be informed?)

Administrative and Procedural

- 1) Board adopted the July 1975 and October 28, 1975, National Board meeting minutes.
- 2) Rescinded previous policy of distribution and approval of minutes and approved new policy.
 - a) As soon as possible following the board meeting the minutes will be mailed to the board members.
 - b) The members of the Board will have 10 days to respond in writing to make any corrections.
 - c) The minutes with these corrections will be mailed to the leadership list 5 days from the mailing to the Board members.
 - d) Minutes will be approved at the next Board meeting. Any additional corrections to the previous minutes will be mailed to the leadership list with the minutes of the current Board meeting. While it may be reassuring to receive a synopsis of major decisions at the NOW National Board meeting, it is less reassuring to me to realize that it is February 27, we have a summary dated Feb. 3, only 5 days have to elapse before being distributed to "leadership", and we do not have a copy of the complete minutes yet.
- 3) Voted that NOW members in attendance at Board meetings may be recognized to speak by the Chair, and that all meetings be open to NOW members and the press (heartily approved by Myers and Latourell).
- 4) Approved a policy for Board approval of national mobilizations.
- 5) Approved hiring a half-time legislative assistant for the Action Center, in addition to the full-time aide (also approved of by Myers and Latourell). Bev Jones, Chair, Committee on Board Organization, says in an undated letter to Members of the National Board, "Ultimately, the effectiveness of a lobbying effort depends not on the number of lobbyists employed by an organization but on that organization's size and political strength." I cannot help but wonder if lobbying is really so simple. I tend to think it a highly complex activity requiring an infinite amount of skill if done successfully.
- 6) Empowered the President to appoint a committee to publish the current issue of Do It NOW, if it is not in the hands of the membership in two weeks. (Myers & Latourell were concerned that a committee was appointed to publish Do It NOW in this eventuality for two reasons: a) the committee was given only a week after deadline to get it out, and b) the decision was made in the absence of the PR Vice President, who left early and was not sought out before she left to determine why the delay in publishing it. "Instead" say M & L "the authority to publish the newsletter was, in effect, removed from her in her absence." Even so, their hope is that the issues be resumed soon.) One of the reasons for the lack of a newsletter may be the idea stated by Bev Jones: "There is no question that much of the discontent and dissatisfaction in NOW has been fostered by irritation with what most members consider an insipid, uninformative, and untimely journal; namely, "DO IT NOW." (At least it was more timely than none at all, I think.)
- 7) Voted a code of behavior and practice of Board members. Myers & Latourell report that this motion by Latourell was made "after extended and open discussion of the difficulties caused by factions and the divisions within the board and NOW," passing 24 to 3, 5 abstaining. Motion urged that: a) all communications from board members to members be calm and factual; b) no discussions or actions personal in nature be undertaken; c) members will carefully preplan for board meetings and openly lobby each other on issues to be brought before the board in order to insure that there are no surprises on substantive policy and administrative actions; and d) each board member will encourage all NOW members to accept this same norm for future conduct."
- 8) Agenda items for Board meetings and related materials should be received by the Chair 30 days prior to that meeting. Materials for agenda items should be precirculated, either by mail or the night before the meeting. (Considered by Myers and Latourell as giving future board meetings an opportunity to be "considerably more deliberative in nature, with more opportunity for member and chapter input."
- 9) Affirmed the actions of the President, the Chair-One, and the Legal Vice President regarding Bonn Gilbert Insurance to protect the copyrighted name of NOW.
- 10) Voted that appointments to special committees will be announced to the Board, either at the meeting, or mailed to Board members before the committee begins to function. Funding for the special committee will be addressed at that meeting also. Myers & Latourell say this was passed because DeGrow had not been advising Board of appointments prior to beginning of committee operations. They also say that "The diversity in NOW and even on the National Board is not being recognized by the President in her appointments to task forces and committees. They point out of 40 appointments announced since this motion was passed, "75% have

been persons who are recognized leaders of the Majority Caucus....All committee chairs are Majority Caucus members, except for the Conference Coordinator for 1977, who was recommended by the Detroit area chapters. An investigating committee, whose existence was previously unknown to the board and which is investigating some non-Majority Caucus candidates for office in Philadelphia and former national officers of NOW, is composed entirely of Majority Caucus members. No Majority Caucus members are being investigated." My question is, investigated for what purpose?

11) Voted the next Board meeting in Washington, D.C. on April 3-4.

12) Of concern to Myers and Latourell is the fact that the post conference issue of NOW Acts which was supposed to report news of the October Conference as well as the American Arbitration Association's report on the elections was allocated \$6000 by the board at the October meeting. According to M & L, it was to be completed by Dec. 1 and mailed to every member, but such report from the conference has not yet been produced and no information is available on its fate. I did find the item listed in the agenda for the January meeting, but nothing was mentioned in the summary of board actions about it.

Finally, Myers and Latourell were pleased to report that "There were no motions to limit debate, full and fair discussions were the rule rather than the exception, little use was made of cloture -- the motion to close debate. Happily, this openness was not abused and tension was considerably eased. There was even laughter and general good humor at times." They strongly felt that the positive actions taken by the Board at the Phoenix meeting were "in direct response to the substantial input received from chapter presidents, state coordinators, and members throughout the country" and hope that we will continue to make our wishes known on issues of interest to us.

And finally, finally, my only excuse for the length of this report is the fact that we have had no Do It NOW to read at least some of this in over a period of a couple of months. All of it seems important to me for the organization.

Betty Gancy

Susan B. Anthony: "The moment women begin to fear the opinions of others and hesitate to tell the truth that is in us, and from motives of policy are silent when we should speak... we cheat humanity out of their rights and check our own development."

JOIN N.O.W.

_____ I would like to become a member of Bay Area NOW and National NOW. (\$15)

_____ I want to join but can only afford \$_____.

_____ I am not a member but wish to receive NOW NEWS for a year. (\$3)

_____ I would like to make a contribution of \$_____ to NOW.

NAME _____ HOME PHONE _____ OTHER PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY AND ZIP _____

Bay Area N.O.W. has my permission to include my name, address, and phone number on its membership roster. YES _____ NO _____

Interests and/or skills which I can contribute to Bay Area N.O.W. projects:

Criticisms of Bay Area N.O.W.'s programs, organization, and goals: