

IWY

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR CITIZENS' REVIEW COMMITTEE

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Dear Legislator:

This letter is in further reference to the State Conference put on by the Commission on International Women's Year in Normal, Illinois on June 10-12.

Enclosed is the report on the irregularities in the election for IWY Delegates, which was inadvertently omitted from the mailing I sent you last week.

In the large packet that I sent you last week, I enclosed a copy of the Resolutions passed at the IWY State Conference in Normal. It was a document of 39 pages. On page 1, there is a resolution about Social Security marked #7, with four "whereases." That one resolution was not passed by the IWY Conference. All the other resolutions were passed -- all 39 pages of them.

Representative Tom Steed (D., Okla.), Chairman of the Treasury-Postal Service-General Government Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee, has been asked by Chairman George Mahon (D., Tex.) to investigate complaints against the Commission on International Women's Year that have been cited in Illinois and in numerous other states experiencing similar problems at their IWY State Conferences.

We would appreciate your encouraging Representative Steed to conduct a prompt investigation of these charges. The elections at the IWY conference in Normal were conducted with Federal funds, and we think we had a right to expect that minimum standards required for the conduct of honest elections would be observed.

Sincerely,

Rosemary Thomson

ILLEGALITIES AND IRREGULARITIES OF ILLINOIS IWY DELEGATE ELECTION

1. The IWY election committee was made up of candidates officially slated by the IWY. This committee directed and controlled the entire election procedure, including the counting and tabulating of the votes.

2. Non-IWY candidates were not permitted to have poll watchers at the time instructions were given to computer programmers, or when the totals were taken off the computer tapes and collated with names on the ballot. (Linda Dorian, IWY legal counsel, objected to poll watchers for non-IWY candidates.

3. There is no such thing as an honest election when candidates or their representatives are not permitted to observe counting of ballots. Elementary procedures of fair elections should be observed since IWY elections are conducted with Federal funds.

4. Election officials indicated to some voters that, regardless of the way ballots were cast, they would have to assure "balanced" results, and that if the results were not to their liking, they would change them to satisfy the IWY definition of "balance." This is in direct conflict with a National IWY Position Paper on Reconciling the "Diversity of Representation" and "Open to the Public" Provision in Public Law 94-167, issued March 17, 1977, which reads: "Ultimately the choice of the electing body must be relied upon and trusted." (Co-authored by Linda Dorian, p.4.)

5. The ballot consisted of four pieces of paper: two sheets with names of candidates; and two color-coded computer sheets to be marked with #2 lead pencils. In addition, the color coding of the candidate sheets had been reversed by penned notations making voting extremely confusing. When these two computer ballots were counted, each color was run separately, so there was no way to determine if ballots had been spoiled by voting for too many candidates.

6. While ballots could not be invalidated because of overvoting, many ballots were invalidated for arbitrary reasons at the discretion of IWY officials.

7. There were no secret polling booths, no sealed ballot boxes, no checking of empty ballot boxes before voting began except ostensibly by the IWY Election Committee, many of whom were candidates for election themselves!

NOTE: At no time or place during the entire Illinois IWY Conference was the American Flag displayed or a Pledge of Allegiance given, even though the meeting was conducted with Federal funds!