



The Phyllis Schlafly Report



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What Really Happened in Houston

The weekend of November 18-21, 1977, in Houston was the decisive turning point in the war between Women's Lib and those who are Pro-Family. "Houston" was the "Midway" battle that determined which is the winning side.

For those too young to know the significance of "Midway," let us explain that the Battle of Midway Island was the decisive turning point of the World War II conflict with Japan. Most people didn't realize it at the time, because the war continued for three more years. But later, when historians looked back on the course of the war, they saw clearly that the Battle of Midway determined which side would win. The Japanese never recovered from their crucial losses in that battle (four aircraft carriers). Midway was one of the most decisive battles ever fought in all history.

Likewise, the Battle of Houston dealt a crippling blow to the anti-family forces of Women's Lib. The war isn't over. The fight for the Equal Rights Amendment will continue for at least 16 more months (and maybe longer, if the proponents get an extension of time). The fight for a Human Life Amendment will probably continue for years. But there is now no question which side will win.

What happened in Houston proved:

1. That the Pro-Family Americans have the dedication and the determination to win over ERA, over abortion, and over other attacks on the moral, social, and economic integrity of the family.

2. That the Women's Lib movement has sealed its own doom by deliberately hanging around its own neck the albatrosses of abortion, lesbianism, pornography, and Federal control.

Houston was selected by the Commission on International Women's Year as the site of its national women's conference -- the big national consciousness-raising session planned to follow the conferences in each of the 50 states. In a weak and unthinking moment, Congress appropriated \$5 million of the Federal taxpayers' money to finance those conferences.

But more people came to the Pro-Family Rally held in Houston that same weekend than came to the IWY Conference subsidized at the taxpayers' expense! The *Houston Post* reported that 20,000 persons came to the Pro-Family Rally on Saturday, November 19. The IWY Conference was held at the Albert Thomas Convention Center, which has a seating capacity of about 9,000, and it was never full. It had large blocks of empty seats most of the time.

Houston: A Media Event

The IWY Conference was really a "media event" -- not an authentic convention at all. That means it was staged for the benefit of the media coverage. The entire IWY operation was designed as a charade to go through the motions of state conferences, and then a national conference, where thousands of women would be induced to pass resolutions about women's issues that were pre-planned and pre-written a year and a half ago. The IWY Resolutions were published in June 1976 in the IWY \$5 book called *To Form a More Perfect Union*.

Then, in order to secure media coverage in Houston, Chairman Bella Abzug and other members of the IWY National Commission put out phony tips to the media that pro-family persons and groups would cause a "confrontation," "disruption," and possibly "physical violence." These predictions didn't have a shred of truth in them. They were merely bait to get the press to travel to Houston.

Every reporter who bothered to check with Phyllis Schlafly ahead of time was told positively that she did not intend to attend the IWY Conference in Houston (because she was deliberately excluded by the IWY), and that absolutely no confrontation, disruption, or even picketing was planned by pro-family women. Every reporter who bothered to check with Phyllis ahead of time was told exactly which resolutions would be passed by the IWY Conference, and exactly by what margins. For the reporters who listened to Phyllis, the IWY Houston event contained no surprises.

But some 2,500 media personnel chose to listen to Abzug's prognosis and traveled to Houston. They found that all IWY functions merely played out a scenario that was pre-scripted long in advance.

The Pro-Family Rally, on the other hand, was a genuinely authentic and exciting event. No one could have possibly predicted that such a large crowd would turn out. Unfortunately, it didn't get the coverage it deserved.

So many pro-family women worked on exposing how the Commission on International Women's Year is working for radical goals at the taxpayers' expense that it is literally impossible to list them all. Because of the informal nature of the pro-family coalition, there are many dedicated women and men who labored long and effectively whose names I do not even know. I wish it were possible to give proper credit to all who deserve it. All we can say is, thanks to everyone who helped!

Pro-Family Rally Attracts 20,000

The Pro-Family Rally at the Astro-Arena on Saturday, November 19, in Houston was one of the most amazing events that ever happened. Some 20,000 people assembled, coming from every state in the Union. Most remarkable was the tremendous personal sacrifice involved in the task of getting there. Thousands of those who attended came by bus and had to travel 20 to 44 hours *each way* in order to attend that three-hour Rally.

Although the success of the Pro-Family Rally was a team effort that involved many dedicated people, the indispensable leader was Lottie Beth Hobbs. She had the vision to see that the Pro-Family Rally could be accomplished despite almost insurmountable odds. She had the courage to set a goal that appeared to be beyond human reach. She had the determination to do the hard work, and to motivate others to do likewise, so that that goal would be reached. We salute a great lady who saw her "impossible dream" crowned with the glory of success.

Of course, no one could do such a great job alone. Special tribute must be paid to Shirley Curry and Tottie Ellis of Tennessee. Shirley Curry was the first one to say, "We'll bring 500 people from Tennessee." She gave the rest of the country a standard to match and the enthusiasm to motivate them to do it. I'm sure there were moments when she was sorry she had made that commitment, but she over-delivered. Ultimately, 50 buses rolled to Houston from Tennessee.

Dianne Edmondson of Oklahoma was responsible for hundreds, and perhaps thousands, of those who traveled to Houston for the Pro-Family Rally. Her excellent cassette on Women's Lib and its attack on the family was heard by thousands in the months prior to the IWY Conference. It persuaded those women that they could do something constructive for God and Country by attending the Pro-Family Rally in Houston.

Suzanne Thomas deserves our thanks for her skillful and effective job in handling public relations for the Pro-Family Rally and in speaking on the issues in all the media.

Catherine Lemm was of crucial importance to the success of the Pro-Family Rally. Serving as treasurer for the Rally, she handled the contributions, most of which came in dollar bills and even silver. This turned out to be a huge job, and required the help of her entire family.

300,000 Pro-Family Petitions

The Pro-Family Rally at the Astro-Arena was an exciting program, well worth the long, tiresome bus trip to Houston. It presented a star line-up of speakers. Lottie Beth Hobbs explained "Why a Pro-Family Rally" and presented the four pro-family resolutions to the overwhelming and enthusiastic approval of the crowd. Attorney Nellie Gray, president of the March for Life, and Dr. Mildred Jefferson, president of the Right-to-Life Federation, both gave eloquent speeches on the right to life of the unborn child. Representative Clay Smothers, Texas legislator, spoke on how society must defend itself against the homosexuals. Elisabeth Elliott, author and missionary, spoke on "Let Me Be A Woman." Phyllis Schlafly spoke on "ERA: An Attack on the Family." Congressman Robert K. Dornan gave



Lottie Beth Hobbs

President, Association of the W's

the final speech on "Let Your Voice Be Heard in Washington."

The most exciting part of all was when Lottie Beth Hobbs announced that there were 300,000 pro-family petitions massed on the stage, and they are still coming in. The Pro-Family Rally and the pro-family petitions do speak for the majority of Americans.

There were many differences between the Pro-Family Rally at the Astro-Arena and the taxpayer-funded IWY Conference at the Albert Thomas Convention Center. The Pro-Family Rally opened with a prayer, and the asking of God's blessing was part and parcel of the entire program. The IWY Conference did not permit an opening prayer.

At the Pro-Family Rally, there was a beautiful spirit of happy and loving people. They all have their share of life's burdens, handicaps and disappointments; but they have the serenity of knowing that eternal life awaits those who fulfill the mission that God has planned for *their* lives. The IWY Conference had people who wake up in the morning with a chip on their shoulders, and who are grossly intolerant of any views other than their own.

I must confess that I did not believe a Pro-Family Rally of any important size could ever take place. There were too many obstacles. Houston is so far away from most of the U.S. population. The IWY Conference would be paying the travel expenses of delegates to its conference -- but those who attended the Pro-Family Rally would have to dig deep in their pockets to pay their own way. I did not see how as many people could be persuaded to attend the Pro-Family Rally as would be subsidized to attend the IWY Conference. Besides, the IWY officials had reserved every public meeting place and hotel in Houston in order to make it impossible to meet without IWY approval.

But Lottie Beth Hobbs and her associates in the Pro-Family Rally Coalition made the impossible come true -- despite all the Doubting Thomases. I am happy to have been proved wrong -- and proud to have been invited to participate in their remarkable success.

Houston Proves Radicals and Lesbians Run IWY

There were no surprises in the national conference financed by the Commission on International Women's Year. The IWY state conferences were so rigidly controlled that the IWY had a big majority of delegates dutifully eager to vote as they had been pre-programmed. The principal resolutions passed in Houston were:

1. Ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment. (This has always been the number-one priority of the IWY. At its first official meeting in 1975, the IWY voted unanimously to make ratification of ERA its "highest priority" and resolved "to do all in our capacity to see that the Equal Rights Amendment is ratified at the earliest possible moment.")

2. Privileges for homosexuals and lesbians to teach in the schools, to rent from any landlord, and to have custody of children.

3. Federally-funded abortion on demand; the requirement that abortion be included in privately-financed medical services; and the approval of abortions for teenagers without parental knowledge or consent.

4. The Federal Government should assume a major role in directing and providing funding for comprehensive child care.

Due to the tactics used by the IWY at the various state conferences, including total control of the delegate election machinery and steamroller parliamentary tactics, there were only about 20 percent pro-family delegates among the some 2,000 IWY delegates assembled at the Albert Thomas Convention Center.

The pro-family delegates faithfully fulfilled their commitment to serve in the IWY conference. They sat like ladies in their seats through hour after hour of harassment, procedure instead of substance, pro-ERA propaganda speeches, and sheer boredom. They had to make the biggest sacrifice of all because they remained inside the IWY convention hall listening to offensive speeches or trivial procedure, and enduring the hostility of the lib delegates, while having to miss the fun and inspiration of the Pro-Family Rally. The some 400 pro-family delegates who made that great sacrifice deserve our admiration and thanks.

The Floor Leader of the pro-family delegates was Senator Joan Gubbins, who was also chairman of the Indiana delegation. She and her lieutenants, such as Betty Hanicke, chairman of the Kansas delegation, did a magnificent and dignified job in the face of overwhelming odds and obstacles.

Senator Gubbins and other pro-family delegates made valiant efforts to debate the radical IWY resolutions, but were almost uniformly denied this basic right. The IWY conference was designed and planned to prevent substantive debate on the major issues, such as ERA. The IWY conference can be accurately described as a "card play." Hours were spent discussing the different colored cards that had to be held up before delegates could be recognized. This was just a device to allow the IWY chair to control who was recognized at the microphones, and to prevent pro-family delegates from speaking at all. In three days of sessions, pro-family delegates were only allowed to make one one-minute statement against ERA, and two two-minute statements against abortion. Pro-family delegates were not allowed to speak against Federal child care or lesbian privileges.



*Senator Joan Gubbins
Indiana Legislature*

Most outrageous of all, the IWY Chair refused to allow the pro-family delegates to present their Minority Report. This was a clear violation of all rules of parliamentary procedure and evidence of the intolerance of the IWY toward non-IWY views. Special thanks should be given to Dianne Edmondson and Rosemary Thomson, who drafted the Minority Report of the Pro-Family Coalition which the IWY Conference Chair refused to admit.

Lesbian Arrogance

Anyone who doubts the total commitment of the IWY Commission to homosexuals should get a copy of the official 38-page IWY booklet called "A Lesbian Guide." On the cover it states proudly: "This booklet was prepared by the National Gay Task Force and officially approved by the National Commission on the Observance of International Women's Year."

The IWY permitted the lesbians to display and peddle their booklets, buttons, and devices which were offensive, obscene and pornographic at and near the conference. The lesbian pamphlets openly distributed and sold there included: "What Lesbians Do," "The Playbook for Women About Sex," "High School Sensuality: A Teaching Guide," "Good Vibrations," "Getting in Touch: Self Sexuality for Women," "Our Bodies Ourselves," "The Love My Body Book," and "For Yourself: the Fulfillment of Female Sexuality."

The buttons worn and peddled at the IWY Conference included "Mother Nature is a Lesbian," "Everyday is Mother's Day (And I'm Sick and Tired of It)", "Women Stop Giving it Away," "Trust in God, She Will Provide," "Out of the Closet and into the Street," "Ordain Women or Stop Baptising Them," "F--- Housework," "A Woman Without a Man is like a Fish Without a Bicycle," and one about the Pope too indecent to quote here.

It is noteworthy that the IWY Conference failed to include one word of condemnation of the worst exploitation of women -- pornography. The reason is obvious: Women's Lib itself has too big a stake in an alliance with pornographers. The lesbian pamphlets are just as pornographic as the smut peddled by the pornography profiteers in the adult bookstores.

IWY Citizens Review



Rosemary
Thomson

Through the months preceding the Houston conference, the IWY Citizens Review Committee, under the chairmanship of Rosemary Thomson of Illinois, and with splendid assistance of Nellie Gray of Washington, D.C., carried on a watchdog effort to expose the irregularities and illegalities of IWY activities. This Committee monitored IWY state conferences, assembled the facts, collected the documentation, and developed a monumental record.

This IWY Citizens Review Committee assisted in getting the witnesses who testified at the Congressional ad hoc hearing chaired by Senator Jesse Helms in Washington, D.C., on September 14 and 15. According to Senator Helms' statement in the *Congressional Record* of October 3, the testimony of the 70 witnesses who traveled from 40 states at their own expense to relate their experiences with their own state's IWY conference identified the following problems:

1. IWY Coordinating Committees loaded to represent only feminist groups and viewpoints.
2. Hostility and discrimination against non-radical women.
3. Lack of publicity to non-feminist women's groups.
4. Lesbian workshops and pornographic entertainment.
5. Anti-religious activity.
6. Operation MMOPP and fraudulent voting.
7. Parliamentary violations.
8. Railroaded resolutions.
9. Rigged elections and voting irregularities.
10. Lobbying for Equal Rights Amendment and abortion on demand.

Congressman Robert K. Dornan held another Congressional ad hoc hearing on November 18, 1977 at the Ramada Inn Civic Center in Houston in order to hear additional testimony about the illegalities and irregularities connected with the IWY state and national conferences. Again, women attended from many states at their own expense in order to spell out their eyewitness observations of the unfairness, bias, and misuse of Federal funds by the IWY.

Phyllis Schlafly testified about the way the IWY had violated its promises during the original Congressional debate to represent "every point of view," and how the IWY has been in constant violation of the two principal requirements of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Public Law 92-463), namely, (1) that the membership shall "be fairly balanced in terms of the points of view represented," and (2) that it "not be inappropriately influenced . . . by any special interest."

Eagle Media Coverage



Elaine
Donnelly

A large part of the success of pro-family efforts in Houston was due to the excellent job done by the Eagles in counteracting the dominance of the media by the IWY.

Eagle Forum set up a press headquarters at the Ramada Inn Civic Center in Houston. We had a news conference each morning at 8:30 A.M. participated in by spokesmen for the pro-family coalition. It was a modest but comfortable press room in which we supplied typewriters and telephones for the press.

Our Eagle Public Relations Chairman, Kathleen Teague, who is also Virginia Stop ERA Co-Chairman, gave sound advice and skillfully handled many of the tense press and public relations problems about IWY that arose. Kathy deserves special credit for setting up the initial arrangements in Houston, as well as the press breakfast in Washington, D.C., two weeks before the IWY Conference at which Phyllis was able to explain our opposition to the ERA Extension Bill.

Our Eagle Media Chairman, Elaine Donnelly, who is also Michigan Stop ERA Chairman, did a tremendously effective job. She wrote and printed a press packet to provide background on IWY. She put out many press releases giving our update comment on fast-breaking developments. She arranged press conferences, and skillfully cooperated with the press so that they might cover our views.

Nothing would have been possible in connection with our press operation in Houston without the special dedication of our Headquarters Chairman, Ann McGraw, who is also Missouri Stop ERA Chairman. Ann went to Houston ten days ahead of time to make arrangements and to organize a smooth-running operation. She was assisted by about a dozen other Eagles who gave generously of their time to handle the thousand details that arose.

Finally, special mention must be made of Chris Collins, who served as Literature Chairman in Houston. Chris deserves a merit badge for courage in braving the hostility and rudeness of the libs who harassed her steadily while she manned the table with Eagle Forum and Stop ERA literature.

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Box 618, Alton, Illinois 62002

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