



# The Phyllis Schlafly Report

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## Proposed Changes In NFRW Bylaws Reveal New Power Grab In Women's Federation

Dorothy Elston, immediate past president, and Gladys O'Donnell, president, of the National Federation of Republican Women, on December 20 sent out jointly a 12-page "Memo" setting forth the PROPOSED CHANGES they will attempt to put into the NFRW Bylaws at the NFRW Board Meeting on January 20-23 in Los Angeles. These PROPOSED CHANGES represent a bold attempt to:

1. Transform the NFRW from a "federation" of autonomous clubs — into a monolithic society whose national officers exercise dictatorial control at the national, state and local levels.
2. Deprive individual members of free speech and freedom of association.
3. Give so many new powers to the NFRW President that she and her clique can never be voted out of office.
4. Cover up the illegalities of the much-publicized NFRW Convention in May 1967 by adopting *ex post facto* bylaws.
5. Transform the Federation from a volunteer organization which welcomes all to the Republican banner — into a restrictive organization which excludes clubs without cause, and which subjects its members to expulsion by star-chamber proceedings.

If the Elston-O'Donnell PROPOSED CHANGES (hereinafter referred

to as the E-O'D PROPOSED CHANGES) are passed, they will drive women away from the Federation in droves because Republican women volunteers will not knowingly subject themselves to this kind of dictatorship. The apparent determination to ram these rules down the throats of Federation members in the crucial election year of 1968 proves that those who wrote them are far more interested in perpetuating their own political control than in building membership or winning votes for Republican candidates.

Here is what the E-O'D PROPOSED CHANGES in the NFRW Bylaws really mean:

### The End of Local Autonomy

The E-O'D PROPOSED CHANGES would require *every unit club* and state federation to put in its bylaws "a provision to conform to the objectives and bylaws of the National Federation." (See E-O'D Article III, Section 1 (d), and also Article III, Section 2 (c) and Section 3.)

If this provision goes into effect, local clubs will have lost their autonomy, and the NFRW will no longer be a "federation" but will be a monolithic society run by a little clique at the top. If this provision goes into effect, every local club might as well scrap its club bylaws, eliminate its revisions committee, and just wait for mailings from Washington, D. C. to dictate local club policies and procedure.

If this provision goes into effect, the little faction at the top can give any orders it wants to your local club. It can tell you that your county chair-

woman must be the president of your club. It can tell your club that it must distribute only Romney-for-President literature at your meetings. It can tell you that you must turn over all the funds you raise to the NFRW or to your state federation.

### Expelling Members

The E-O'D PROPOSED CHANGES *twice* provide for the removal from office of any NFRW officer or appointee for such vague and dictatorial reasons as "speaks to the detriment of the NFRW, its policies, objectives, or ideals." (See E-O'D Article III, Section 5 (b), and also Article V, Section 6.)

This is an attack on the right of free speech and debate unheard of in Republican politics.

The E-O'D PROPOSED CHANGES would also *require* all state federations to put into their bylaws a new statement that clubs and individual members can be expelled for similar vague and dictatorial reasons. (See E-O'D Article III, Section 5 (c).)

Our objective should NOT be to expel women from the Federation — it should be to attract them TO the Federation and to the Republican Party. Women will NOT be attracted to an organization if they are told in advance that they may be expelled by star-chamber proceedings, with no guarantee of notice, fair play or proper procedure, just because six women may meet in secret and vote that they "spoke to the detriment of the NFRW." If this E-O'D gag rule ever goes into effect, then no member could ever again exercise her right of free speech to try to change the

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NFRW Bylaws or any of these restrictive provisions. Nor could members ever criticize misfeasance or misconduct by any NFRW officer.

## Excluding New Clubs

The E-O'D PROPOSED CHANGES would *require* state federations to include in their bylaws a provision giving each state federation board or executive committee the exclusive power to admit new clubs, or to exclude them without any reason whatsoever. The E-O'D PROPOSED CHANGES would also *require* state federations to *exclude* new clubs which oppose the E-O'D PROPOSED CHANGES. (See E-O'D Article III, Section 1 (b) and (c).)

There is an interesting history behind this. Prior to the May 1967 Convention, there were at least two state federations which refused to charter new clubs under conservative leadership. This exclusion was clearly contrary to the letter and spirit of the NFRW Bylaws which state: "Membership in this organization shall be voluntary and shall be extended to all Republican women's clubs who are in sympathy with its objects." (See Article III, Section 1 (b).) The Michigan Federation refused to admit twelve new clubs on the spurious grounds that they did not cooperate with the Romney organization. The Tennessee Federation did not bother to give any reason for excluding two conservative clubs. After a long drawn-out battle for recognition, the NFRW Executive Committee finally (over the opposition and delaying tactics of Mrs. Elston) voted to demand that the Tennessee Federation write a letter giving the reasons for excluding the conservative clubs. This E-O'D PROPOSED CHANGE is obviously designed to make sure that no state federation need ever give any reason for excluding a conservative club.

This E-O'D PROPOSED CHANGE, and the peculiar mandatory clause in it ("this provision shall be enforced"), gives every state federation board or executive committee absolute power to admit **ONLY** the clubs it wants, and to exclude every club not subservient to the viewpoint of the state board or executive committee. No recourse or appeal is provided at any level.

Those who support such a rule are obviously interested only in perpetuating political control for the sake of control. They apparently are not in-

terested in winning votes for Republican candidates, spreading Republican principles, or extending membership to new Republican clubs.

## Bypassing Bylaws Altogether

The E-O'D PROPOSED CHANGES would give to the NFRW Board of Directors unprecedented power to do practically anything by giving it the power "to approve any Standard Operating Procedures giving specific implementation for the article in the bylaws to which they refer." (See E-O'D Article V, Section 2.)

This is nothing but a crude power grab by which the Board can make *any* Bylaws change, and then claim that it was merely "implementing" the Bylaws. If this E-O'D PROPOSED CHANGE is incorporated, there really is no reason to have any Bylaws at all — the President and the Board would make all decisions.

A similar dictatorial provision in the E-O'D PROPOSED CHANGES is the attempt to have the Recording Secretary, who takes the minutes, also "serve as Chairman of the Committee to approve minutes of the Biennial Convention." (See E-O'D Article IV, Section 5.) This is as irregular as having the Treasurer serve as chairman of the committee to make the annual audit of the Treasurer's books. Recognized procedure requires that *other* persons conduct the audit and approve the minutes.

## Denying Freedom of Association

The E-O'D PROPOSED CHANGES would require that nominees for any NFRW office "shall be in accord with the objectives, bylaws, and policies of this Organization, the Republican Party and its Platform, and shall not be a member of any organization whose activities, policies, or objectives are not in agreement with the above." (See E-O'D Article VII, Section 1 (c).)

This sly section would permit the Elston-O'Donnell faction to sit in judgment on what other organizations Republican women may choose to belong. If this E-O'D PROPOSED CHANGE is passed and enforced, no future NFRW officer could be a member of any church. There is no church which would meet the requirement stipulated above, namely, to be "in agreement" with "the objectives, bylaws and policies of this Organization (the NFRW), the Re-

publican Party and its Platform", because this would forfeit its tax-exempt status and alienate many of its members. For the same reason, there is scarcely any social, literary, academic, veterans auxiliary, charitable or welfare organization which would admit to being "in agreement" with "the objectives, bylaws, and policies of this Organization (the NFRW), the Republican Party and its Platform."

If this E-O'D PROPOSED CHANGE is accepted, no NFRW officer could be a member of any union, because unions are not "in agreement" with the Republican Taft-Hartley and Landrum-Griffin Acts; no NFRW officer could be a member of the PTA or NEA because those organizations support massive Federal aid to education.

When this E-O'D PROPOSED CHANGE is combined with the E-O'D PROPOSED CHANGE recommended in Article V, Section 2 (which would give the NFRW Board the power "to approve any Standard Operating Procedures giving specific implementation for the article in the bylaws to which they refer"), the NFRW Board could then pass a rule providing that no one could be nominated as a NFRW officer who is a member of the Episcopal Church, the YWCA, the Red Cross, the Urban League, or the American Legion Auxiliary — and this would all be completely legal because the *non-partisan* objectives of these organizations are *not* "in agreement" with the *partisan* political objectives of the Republican Party.

Do we want the NFRW to be such an authoritarian organization that a tightly-controlled clique at the top can decide to what other organizations its members may belong?

## How the President Can Perpetuate Her Power

The E-O'D PROPOSED CHANGES would vest *exclusively* in the NFRW *President* the duty and authority "to obtain the names of all clubs and number of members of each club whose dues are paid and received by the National Federation at least 60 days preceding the Biennial Convention", which is NOW vested in the Executive Committee. (Compare Article V, Section 6 of present Bylaws, with Article IV, Section 3 (15) of the E-O'D PROPOSED CHANGES. Compare also Article III, Section 4 of both present Bylaws and the

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E-O'D PROPOSED CHANGES, where it is again made clear that the E-O'D PROPOSED CHANGES try to vest the ownership of the club lists exclusively in the hands of the *President*, instead of in the *Federation*.)

This E-O'D PROPOSED CHANGE will make the NFRW President a dictator over the Federation and enable her to perpetuate herself or her pals in power. Possession of the list of clubs is one of the principal means of controlling the Biennial Convention. The purpose of this E-O'D PROPOSED CHANGE is to give the President the *sole* power to use this valuable asset for herself and for her candidates, and to *exclude* the other members of the Executive Committee from access to it.

Mrs. Elston used the 1967 list of clubs to send out mailings in behalf of her candidate (Mrs. O'Donnell) and attacking the NFRW First Vice President (Mrs. Schlafly). When Phyllis Schlafly went into the NFRW office to secure partial access to this list, which as a member of the Executive Committee she had every right to have under present Bylaws, Mrs. Elston was so infuriated that she put out the infamous "cockroach" story accompanied by other falsehoods. Mrs. Elston then leaked the complete list of clubs to candidate Mrs. O'Donnell before permitting Phyllis to have it.

## Living in Washington

The E-O'D PROPOSED CHANGES would require the NFRW President "to reside in the Metropolitan area of Washington, D. C., during her term of office." This is emphatically stated, not once, but twice. (See E-O'D Article IV, Section 3 (1), and Article V, Section 6.) The E-O'D PROPOSED CHANGES make this *the number-one duty* of the President. According to the E-O'D PROPOSED CHANGES, the President has *no* duty which ranks in importance ahead of the "duty" to live in Washington.

How silly can you get! *Why* is this requirement so important to the Elston-O'Donnell faction?

In the spring of 1967, the false statement was repeatedly made that it was a Federation "rule" that "the President must be willing to reside in the Federation apartment in Washington, D. C." The fact is that there was *never* any such rule binding on the Federation, and the Federation

does not even have an apartment. (It merely paid the rent on an apartment which Mrs. Elston selected and lives in.) Mrs. Elston made this matter of the "Federation apartment" a principal issue of the O'Donnell-Schlafly contest for the NFRW presidency. The purpose was to give the false impression that this "rule" barred Phyllis from the presidency because everyone knew she could not put her six children in a one-bedroom apartment.

Now, the E-O'D PROPOSED CHANGES are trying to cover up these false statements and "legalize" them *ex post facto* by putting this dictatorial provision in the Bylaws.

Requiring the NFRW President to live in Washington, D. C. is NOT a good rule if you believe the Federation should be a voluntary federation of autonomous Republican clubs, for which the President is spokesman and liaison. The Federation has 4,224 clubs — only two of which are in Washington, D. C. Requiring the President to live in Washington is just as unrealistic and discriminatory as it would be to say that the president of the Illinois Federation *must* reside in Springfield, or the president of the California Federation *must* reside in Sacramento, etc.

Requiring the NFRW President to live in Washington IS a good rule IF you believe that her only function is to serve as an unpaid aide to Ray Bliss. The Federation has a cubby-hole office in the very middle of the headquarters of the Republican National Committee, where all NFRW mailings and phone calls are supervised. Naturally, those who want the Federation to be a handmaiden of the liberal establishment favor keeping the NFRW President in Washington working in the middle of Bliss's office.

## What About Present Bylaws?

The present NFRW Bylaws are good Bylaws — and if they had been adhered to, we could have had a fair and honest Convention in May 1967. For example,

\* If Article X ("Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, shall govern this organization in all matters of procedure not covered in these Bylaws") had been adhered to, we would have had a Credentials Report "as soon as the opening exercises are concluded, so that it may be known who are entitled to vote." (See Robert's Rules

of Order, Revised, #71.) Since no Credentials Report was ever submitted to the Convention, all its proceedings violated the Bylaws.

\* If Article VIII, Section 2 (c) ("Only such certified clubs [*whose dues are paid in full*] shall be entitled to representation at the Convention") had been adhered to, New York and Pennsylvania would not have been permitted to vote in the May 1967 Convention. Had Article III, Section 4 been enforced, New York and Pennsylvania would have reported the total "number of members in *each* club" and clearly revealed their failure to pay the per capita dues required for representation at the Convention.

## What the E-O'D CHANGES Failed to Cover

However, some clarifications and additions are needed in order to make sure that the power of the NFRW President and of the headquarters office cannot again be abused as it was in 1967. Here are some suggested Bylaws improvements which the E-O'D PROPOSED CHANGES *failed* to mention:

1. Add to Article IV, Section 3, the following two additional "duties of the President":

\* *To make sure that Federation dues money is NOT used in any way (by mailings, telephone, staff, headquarters facilities, etc.) in support of any candidate for any Federation office, or in support of any candidate in a primary.* EXPLANATION: This is needed to prevent the dues money of unit clubs from being misused to support or oppose NFRW candidates, to interfere in the election of officers of state federations, to favor one candidate for the Republican nomination for U. S. President, etc. This is designed to prevent a repetition of the misuse of the headquarters office prior to and during the May 1967 Convention.

\* *To make the lists of club presidents, delegates and alternates promptly and completely available to all candidates for NFRW office on an equal basis.* EXPLANATION: This was certainly NOT done prior to the May 1967 Convention. This provision is needed to assure fair play in a NFRW election.

2. Change Article VI, Section 2 (b) to read as follows:

\* *No later than 15 days before the opening of the Biennial Convention,*

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*the Chairman of Credentials shall mail to every candidate for an NFRW office, and have available for inspection by any woman who is a member of any NFRW club, a Temporary Roll of Delegates and Alternates which shall include their full names and addresses, and the names and locations of the clubs represented by unit club delegates.* EXPLANATION: This is the only way to ascertain that delegates are bona fide delegates, voting under their real names, and authorized by the clubs which they are listed as representing. (Prior to the opening of the Republican National Convention, every delegate and alternate is provided with a printed copy of the Temporary Roll of Delegates. This gives delegates from each state the opportunity to check the authenticity of other delegates from the same state.)

\* *Not less than eight hours before the opening of the polls, the Chairman of Credentials shall furnish to the Chairman of Elections and to all candidates for NFRW office the Permanent Roll of Delegates and Alternates who are entitled to vote and are registered in person at the Biennial Convention. Only persons on this Permanent Roll shall be entitled to vote.* EXPLANATION: This is to prevent a reoccurrence of the sorry spectacle at the May 1967 Convention when busloads of women were brought in to vote from New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Michigan many hours after the polls had opened. They never went to the Convention floor, many did not even know the names of the candidates, and there was no possibility of ascertaining whether they were voting under their own names or aliases, and Mrs. Elston refused to allow a check of the signature cards they signed when they voted. (Robert's Rules of Order, Revised provides in #71 that no one shall be on the list of delegates reported by the Credentials Committee "who has not registered as present.")

3. Add to Article VIII, Section 2 (c): *No delegate shall vote as a representative of any unit club who does not present a statement signed and countersigned by two of that unit club's officers. The unit club itself is the final authority on whom its delegate shall be — NOT the state president.* EXPLANATION: This is the only way to preserve the voting rights of the unit club. In the May

1967 Convention, unit clubs in many states were deprived of their voting rights, and some state presidents simply appointed women to "represent" unit clubs without the knowledge or consent of those unit clubs.

4. Change Article VI, Section 2 (a) to read: *Election shall be by paper ballot.* EXPLANATION: This is needed to avoid a repetition of illegalities attendant upon voting machines in the May 1967 Convention. There are probably more women skilled in the efficient and fair conduct of an election in the NFRW than in any organization in America. The 1967 Convention of the California Federation of Republican Women in San Francisco, where there were more than 2,000 credentialed delegates, proves that a large paper ballot election can be conducted quickly as well as honestly.

5. Add to Article VI, Section 2 (c): *Each candidate shall be entitled to have a Challenger at each voters' registration table (and voting machine, if latter is authorized) to challenge all not presenting proper credentials, to copy the names and addresses of all voters, and to check signatures against driver's licenses or other identification. All voters' signature cards and election materials shall remain available for inspection by the candidates for 60 days after the election.* EXPLANATION: This is necessary because of our experience at the May 1967 Convention.

6. Add to Article VIII, Section 3: *The business of the Convention shall take precedence over any entertainment, music, and outside speakers.* EXPLANATION: This is apparently needed to prevent the incredible performance at the May 1967 Convention, when delegates were subjected to literally thirty "unity" speeches in one day, but were ruled out of order by Chairman Elston and subjected to discourteous insinuations when they tried to transact the Convention business for which they had travelled to Washington.

7. Add to Article V, Section 2, listing the duties of the Board of Directors: *To select the time and place of the Biennial Convention.* EXPLANATION: One of the principal actions of the Elston regime was to take away this right from the Board of Directors (on which every state has a vote) and give it to the Executive Committee. This was part and parcel of the continuing drive to con-

centrate power and privileges in the hands of fewer and fewer, so that decisions can be more easily dictated from the top. This was how Mrs. Elston succeeded in moving the 1967 NFRW Convention to Washington, D. C., after the Board of Directors had voted for California.

## What To Do Now

This *Report* covers only the principal bad features of the E-O'D PROPOSED CHANGES. There are more which we do not have space to include. Every local NFRW club president should have received a copy of the 12-page "Memo" which gives all the E-O'D PROPOSED CHANGES.

Here is the procedure which will be followed. The E-O'D PROPOSED CHANGES will be voted upon by the NFRW Board of Directors at the meeting on January 20-23 in Los Angeles. Every state president sits on this Board. If the E-O'D PROPOSED CHANGES are passed there, then they must be ratified "by a majority vote taken by mail of the state federations after a vote of their Board of Directors or convention."

It is up to local clubs to make sure that their own state president truly represents her state when she votes at the Los Angeles meeting. If the E-O'D changes are passed there, then it is up to the local clubs to make sure that their own state "Board of Directors or convention" casts the right vote when they consider ratification.

Without the immediate, energetic opposition of Republican women all over the United States, the E-O'D PROPOSED CHANGES will be passed without most clubs realizing what happened. It was planned this way. The E-O'D PROPOSED CHANGES were mailed on the last possible day of the 30-day required notification, so that they would reach club presidents about Christmas Eve — the busiest time of the year for most women. This leaves only about two weeks for action prior to the January 20-23 meeting.

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