



The Phyllis Schlafly Report

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The Real Goals of Women's Lib

The national media constantly use the expressions "THE women's movement" and "women's rights" while concealing from the public the real goals of the women who use those terms. The media consistently give generous and favorable, even fawning, coverage to a small selection of radical agitators who falsely pretend to speak for "women" while hiding from the general public the fact that they really define "women's rights" as a woman's right (1) to kill her unborn baby and (2) to enjoy public respect for lesbian sex and lifestyles.

What are the real goals of women's lib? What is the hidden agenda of those who are given such generous TV and press coverage as leaders of "THE women's movement"? Read for yourself their own plan of action. Everything printed below is quoted directly from (1) the official Resolutions adopted by the National Organization for Women (NOW) at its 1985 National Convention in New Orleans, July 19-21, and (2) Ellie Smeal's Platform distributed at that Convention which elected Ellie Smeal as president of NOW. NOW is the number-one promoter of the Equal Rights Amendment — in fact, there would have been no ERA campaign without NOW and the favorable coverage NOW receives in the media. Read for yourself NOW's own words and you will understand *why* NOW is starting a new campaign for ERA.

1985 NOW Resolutions

Vermont ERA Campaign

Whereas, we shall never lose sight of our dream of legal equality; and

Whereas, we must develop a viable national program for the Equal Rights Amendment; and

Whereas, it is essential that we start now to reinvigorate the climate for ERA by beginning a series of carefully selected state-by-state ERA victories leading eventually to a renewed federal campaign; and

Whereas, there will be an ERA on the ballot in Vermont in 1986; and

Whereas, Vermont is the only state that has a feminist woman governor, Madeleine Kunin, who was elected in 1984 by 52 votes and who will be up for re-election in 1986; and

Whereas, the re-election of Governor Kunin must be a priority for feminists, and the strategy of the Right Wing is to defeat Kunin and the ERA at the same time with a unified campaign against both; and

Whereas, Madeleine Kunin was instrumental in passage of the ERA through the Vermont legislature and strongly supports its ratification by the voters of Vermont; and

Whereas, the defeat of Governor Kunin would be

a tremendous blow to the cause of women in politics and would be a loss of national significance;

Therefore, be it resolved, that the National Organization for Women organize national support and funding for the 1986 Vermont ERA referendum; and

Be it further resolved that NOW work in cooperation with Governor Kunin and other Vermont feminists for her election and for ratification of the Vermont ERA in an effort that will include, as appropriate, a speaking tour by National NOW officers, voter education designed to expose the lies and rebut the distortions which are at the foundation of the Right Wing, anti-feminist, anti-ERA campaign; and

Be it further resolved that we develop for the Vermont campaign a hardhitting TV and radio campaign to counter the sensationalism of the homophobic and anti-abortion campaigns directed by the New Right against equality for women, in all ERA campaigns; and

Be it further resolved that we develop a detailed package to get out the ERA vote in Vermont that does not depend on either the Democratic or Republican parties; and

Be it finally resolved that NOW recommends to

the NOW Equality PAC that it make the re-election of Governor Kunin and the ratification of the Vermont ERA priorities in the 1986 election.

Lesbian and Gay Parenting

Whereas, the rights of gay parents, especially lesbian mothers, have always been in jeopardy; and

Whereas, in 25 states, lesbian mothers are consistently denied custody of their children because they are considered criminals under the interpretation of the sodomy statutes; and

Whereas, the recent decision of Massachusetts officials to allow only "traditional families" to provide foster care to children threatens gains made for lesbian and gay parents and any "non-traditional families," in recent years; and

Whereas, legislation that could jeopardize the rights of other lesbians and gay men who work with children has been introduced in several states; and

Whereas, the current rise in teen suicides, runaways, and abuse of teens may in part be connected with the lack of support systems for lesbian and gay teens and their families and the lack of adequate sex education; and

Whereas, this complex of issues is intrinsically connected to the stereotype that all gay people are child molesters; and

Whereas, there is a need for increased visibility of NOW's involvement in lesbian and gay custody cases;

Therefore, be it resolved, that the National Organization for Women opposes legislation and judicial practice that threaten the rights of lesbian and gay parents and other lesbian and gay people who work with children; and

Be it further resolved that, wherever possible, NOW shall actively work to repeal state sodomy statutes; and

Be it further resolved that we urge NOW-LDEF to take a leading role in defending or assisting in the defense of lesbian and gay families, and in joining with lesbian and gay legal organizations in challenging sodomy statutes; and

Be it further resolved that NOW, through its officers, staff and other appropriate bodies, initiate a strategy development program that will challenge the stereotypes on which such legislation is based and that can be used effectively to defeat such legislation; and

Be it further resolved that NOW supports and urges its state and local chapters to work for adequate and effective sex education programs that present a positive view of women's sexuality, and of lesbianism and homosexuality, and for the development of programs to support lesbian and gay youth; and

Be it finally resolved that all units of NOW shall increase their visibility on the issue through publicity, fundraising, and referral of appropriate cases to the NOW-LDEF.

Reproductive Rights Strategies

Be it resolved that the National Organization for Women:

1. Organize a massive march and rally in Washington, D.C. and the West Coast simultaneously, in 1986 of our supporters to show — dramatically — the overwhelming majority support for legal abortion and birth control;

2. Launch a campus campaign to organize the millions of women of child-bearing age who have no memory of back-alley abortion, but have a major stake in the battle for women's lives;

3. Refocus the debate about abortion by:

a. Asking the tough questions surrounding whether abortion and some birth control will remain legal or illegal — driving home the unenforceability and unpopularity of making abortion illegal;

b. Linking the anti-abortion movement (through their cut-back in international family planning and the failure of our anti-abortion national government to provide adequate funds to feed those who are starving) to death and starvation in the Third World, especially Africa; and

c. Organizing Vatican Embassy Days of Outrage to protest the Pope's continual interference in our political arena and the Catholic Church Hierarchy's work to outlaw abortions and birth control;

4. Develop a media campaign of radio, television and print ads and expand our public relations department so that we can use modern technology to reach and mobilize the pro-choice majority;

5. Restore the nationwide phone bank/message brigade system to once again provide instant action to protect abortion and birth control rights;

6. Continue the highly successful clinic escorts and clinic vigil actions as needed; and

7. Provide financial and technical assistance to the State NOW organizations with anti-abortion rights referenda in the 1986 elections.

1986 Senate Strategy

Whereas, NOW has a basic electoral strategy that has as its primary goal the election of feminist women and men at all levels of government; and

Whereas, NOW is committed to this primary goal as its first priority in the 1986 election cycle; and

Whereas, the 1986 U.S. Senate elections could have a major impact on abortion rights and other women's rights since a large number of incumbent anti-women Senators who are up for re-election are also members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, the committee which has jurisdiction over confirmation of accessibility to sex education programs; and

Therefore, be it resolved, that NOW recommend to the NOW/PAC that it develop an additional electoral strategy for 1986 to take advantage of the unique opportunity to make changes in the anti-abortion composition of the U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee, a committee crucial to the preservation of abortion rights; and that

NOW further recommends that such election strategy be developed in cooperation with the state NOW leadership of those states with anti-abortion Senators

serving on the Senate Judiciary Committee and shall focus on those races where we have the best opportunity to defeat anti-abortion Senators.

Child Care

Whereas almost 60% of women with children are in the paid workforce; and

Whereas, quality child care options are necessary for women joining the paid workforce, single parents, troubled families, and women in crisis needing appropriate support services; and

Whereas, there is an urgent national need for affordable, accessible and quality child care programs and facilities; and

Whereas, public policy at the federal, state and local government level should reflect critical child care needs of American families at all income levels;

Therefore, be it resolved, that the National Organization for Women incorporate child care as an important element of its national agenda by assigning a paid staff member to facilitate federal child care legislation and to assist state and local chapters in developing strategies to encourage and support comprehensive quality child care policies, programs, and facilities.

Central America

Whereas, the feminist movement and the National Organization for Women are opposed to war; and

Whereas, the Reagan administration's increasing

military intervention and threatened escalation in El Salvador, Nicaragua, and throughout Central America are developing into a regional war similar to Vietnam; and

Whereas, NOW opposed the war in Vietnam; and

Whereas, the increasing U.S.-funded and directed conventional and chemical warfare and government repression have claimed 55,000 lives in El Salvador, with civilian women and children being the primary victims of massive bombings, rape, massacre, and assassinations; and

Whereas, the Reagan administration is threatening an illegal invasion of Nicaragua, where attacks by CIA-backed "contras" have already caused over 8,000 casualties in their effort to forcibly overturn the 1979 revolution, which with the active participation of Nicaraguan women has achieved important feminist goals, including equal rights under the law, low-cost child care facilities, child support legislation, public health care, literacy, and human rights; and

Whereas, our tax dollars are financing this war — already costing over \$80 million to the "contras," and a million dollars every day to the Salvadoran government — through Reagan's drastic cuts in food stamps, child care, job training, housing subsidies, and other vital domestic programs which have forced millions of American women and children into poverty;

Therefore, be it resolved, that the National Organization for Women go on record as opposing United States intervention in Central America.

Ellie Smeal's Platform

The Equal Rights Amendment

A viable national program must be designed for the ERA. We cannot ever lose sight of our dream of legal equality.

We must adequately fund a campaign to ratify the Vermont ERA referendum which will be on the 1986 ballot. On the same ballot Governor Madeleine Kunin will also be seeking re-election; she is supporting the Vermont ERA.

The Vermont ERA will provide us the opportunity to develop a hard-hitting TV and radio campaign to counter the sensationalism of the homophobic and anti-abortion campaigns of the New Right. We will develop excellent media which will expose their bigotry and turn it into a plus for our issues.

The Vermont ERA campaign also provides us the opportunity to develop a detailed package of how to get out the vote which does not depend on either the Democratic or Republican party. Vermont can become a model program around which we develop a formula for winning future referendums at a price we can afford. I estimate a program of \$250,000-\$300,000 will not only bring victory in Vermont but also a package for successful referendum campaigns. It will aid us in

conducting not only ERA referenda, but also campaigns against homophobia and for legal abortions.

Winning state ERAs and implementing them in a few carefully selected states where we choose the battleground will be the beginning of a new and growing momentum for ERA again. After Vermont we will go to another and perhaps slightly larger state. We will perfect the package and roll to others until we pick up the momentum and change the climate enough to blast the ERA out of Congress and into the States.

We cannot underspend in Vermont as we did for the Maine ERA in 1984. In 1986 if we spend from the national level only some \$10,000 as we did in Maine — and are outspent by a magnitude of several times, we will lose again. There comes a time a movement must stand and fight and I believe the Vermont ERA is such a time. We can afford it and we can learn for the future. I know we can raise the budget and move if we describe its importance as a strategy for the future. If we don't, an opportunity will be lost which may not arise again in this decade or in this century.

Plans are already underway for a celebration of the bicentennial of the United States Constitution in 1987. We must use this as an opportunity for a public

relations and a media campaign to raise the awareness of *the* significant shortcoming in the U.S. Constitution — the lack of an Equal Rights Amendment.

The NOW insurance and pension project has done excellent research and legislative work to combat sexism in insurance. This project must be supported more adequately with national organizing assistance and support. Eliminating the profit motive in sex discrimination is an essential part of passing the Equal Rights Amendment.

Lesbian Rights

We must step up our fight for ordinances and legislation to prohibit discrimination against lesbians and gay men. Never has the attack on lesbians and gay men been stronger. The Right Wing's disgraceful use of the tragedy of AIDs has caused unquestionable harm. The issue of lesbian and gay men's rights needs more support than ever before. . . .

We must join the effort to repeal state sodomy statutes which classify lesbians and gay men as criminals in 25 states. The sodomy statutes do not just affect gay men. Lesbian mothers are consistently denied custody of their children because they are considered criminals in states that have sodomy statutes. Lesbian mothers' rights to their children are under increased attack. NOW must be in the forefront of defending these mothers' families. We must also urge the NOW LDEF to be the cutting edge of the legal community to defend these families and to join lesbian and gay legal organizations challenging the sodomy statutes around the country.

Ellie spoke for NOW at the first national Congressional briefing and teach-in for Civil Rights of Lesbians and Gay Men held in April, 1980. She declared:

"The National Organization for Women is committed to fighting for, and achieving a country in which human rights are indivisible. We support Lesbian and Gay rights. We believe that there cannot be full civil rights in our country when one group of people are persecuted. Many people ask if this is a feminist issue — an issue the woman's movement should be concerned with. We say YES and we say YES emphatically!"

Saving Legal Abortion

We must immediately step up our limited campaign and create a massive, highly visible, and comprehensive campaign to save legal abortion and birth control. We must go on the offensive, place the opposition on the defensive, seize the moral imperative, and organize far more people. We must:

Launch a campus campaign — Young women's futures are on the line. They must be organized. Major conferences and events must be held on campus. Organizing kits must be developed. Organizers and students must be recruited to coordinate the activities. A network between women's studies programs, women's centers, and the campaign must be built. Events must be made exciting and compelling. In 1984, the Gender

Gap Action Campaign which I chaired, sponsored events on 71 campuses. We used Soap Opera stars to increase audience size. The potential for organizing is stupendous and only limited by our imaginations. At each event students will be recruited to help with future campus activities and mass actions such as a march on Washington.

Organize — for the first time — a massive march and rally in Washington, D.C. of some 200,000 supporters to show overwhelming support for legal abortion and birth control. I propose the event be held in early March, 1986. For the front line of this and future public events, we will organize a Women Saved by Abortion and Birth Control Brigade.

Develop a media campaign of radio, TV, and print ads. In 1984, with pro-bono work, I developed radio and print ads utilizing celebrities for the Gender Gap Action Campaign. It *can* be done! Signature ads raise money, expand lists, and carry messages. They should be used.

Expand our public relations department so that the amount of press briefings, materials, and impact can be increased.

Expand the clinic vigils and escort service as possible and needed.

Establish a national watch on Reagan's judicial appointments. More attention must be placed on Reagan's judiciary appointments which have included shockingly few minorities and women. A force to stop outrageous Supreme Court appointments must be built.

A petition and message brigade campaign should be launched.

A nationwide phone bank system should be redeveloped and utilized.

Oppose Military Expansionism

NOW must be firmly against bloated military budgets, and for a nuclear weapons freeze. I will help build a strong alliance between NOW and the peace movement. As a member of the SANE Board and Nuclear Freeze Voter, I understand these issues and their crucial importance to eliminating the feminization of poverty and sexism in the world.

NOW efforts to fight the expansion of the military budget must be increased. It is a feminist issue because it leads to a decrease in jobs for women and a devaluation of life itself. I deplore NOW's half-hearted fight in 1984 for the minority planks to the Democratic Party Platform on reducing the military budget and for a no first-strike policy, and I pledge such actions will not happen with my leadership.

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