

*Vote for ERA*

"FEAR MONGERS" are afield in efforts to influence the Wyoming Legislators to vote against the ratification of The Equal Rights Amendment. The goal is the same: "Defeat for the advancement of women". Only the strategy is different. FEAR is the weapon that opponents of The Equal Rights Amendment are flourishing. It is the vehicle upon which petitions are riding.

In the Wyoming Territory, 1869, ridicule, bitterness, derisiveness, sarcasm, and caustic remarks exemplified the attitudes in the attempt to defeat women suffrage - the right to vote. Louisa Ann Swain, Laramie, Wyoming, cast the first female vote in the world, September 6, 1870. Esther Hobart Morris of South Pass City in Fremont County, Wyoming, must have credit for bringing the franchise to women. The opposition again emerged when the time came for Wyoming Statehood, twenty years later. The women sent the following wire to the Territorial delegation in Washington, D.C., "Drop us if you must. We can trust the men of Wyoming to enfranchise us after our territory becomes a state". And the men of Wyoming proved their loyalty to their women and their trust in them. Their answer came back over the wire, "We may stay out of the Union a hundred years, but we will come in with our women". Congress yielded, and Wyoming became a state in 1890 - with the right of franchise for women. It was not until thirty (30) years later, 1920, that the 19th Amendment passed, giving women of the United States the right to vote. But it took fifty (50) years from the casting of the first vote by a woman in Wyoming before the other states permitted their women that right.

To date, twenty-two (22) states of the thirty-eight (38) needed have ratified ERA. In alphabetical order, they are Alaska, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Tennessee, Texas, West Virginia and Wisconsin. - also Delaware.

The National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, Inc., has worked for the ERA since its inception a half century ago ( since 1923). ERA has been before every Congress for fifty (50) years. The statements which I am submitting here in support of ERA are based upon research of that organization throughout the years. BPW has studied in depth, and has the judgments of the best legal minds in the United States, including those trained in Constitutional interpretation. Within the membership of BPW are judges, lawyers, doctors of philosophy and medicine, presidents of corporations, business administrators, etc. It has units active in approximately fifty other countries striving for improved working and living conditions, not only for women and children, but, also, for the men. One past national president, Texas Judge Sarah T. Hughes, administered the Oath of Office to Lyndon B. Johnson following the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

The approval of ERA has been on the platforms of both major national political parties, and has had the endorsements of Presidents Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon.

Senator Sam Ervin (D., N. Car.) tried, unsuccessfully, to tie "protective" or "restrictive" conditions to the Amendment prior to the Senate vote.

Never, in all probability, has any bill had such thorough hearing, study, and discussion. Yet, only Senator Sam Ervin's NEGATIVE views got the publicity, - not the positions of the TREMENDOUS NUMBERS OF PROPONENTS. Anyone in the news media will tell you it is the ONE who is different who makes news, and hence Senator Ervin's views were widespread since he stood almost alone. There were only eight (8) negative votes on ERA in the final count. A certain ~~SM~~ - TV extremist minister from Oklahoma is asking for money to spread Sen. Ervin's views as "the law and the gospel"

Outstanding Constitutional specialists overwhelmingly express their opinions for the need for ERA and see no such alarming results as are being expressed. The Congress of the US has, at the present time, the power to draft women. ERA would not affect that power. The fear that mothers will be conscripted from their children into military services if ERA is ratified is totally and completely unfounded. The prime reason we should not have a draft exemption IN THE CONSTITUTION is one of possible survival. During World War II England could not have survived had she not been able to draft women. Our country west of the Allegheny Mountains never would have been settled had not the wives and mothers known how and been permitted to defend their homes. ERA would apply only to governmental action. It would not affect private action or the purely social relationships between men and women. "Equality" does not mean "sameness" or "identical". Rather than down grading the roles of mother and housewife, the Amendment would give new dignity to these important roles. The right of privacy under the Constitution would permit separation of sexes with respect to such places as public toilets, sleeping quarters, etc. ERA will not invalidate laws which punish rape.

An impressive list of organizations have recorded their support of The Equal Rights Amendment. Among them are the following:

American Association of College Deans  
American Association of University Women  
American Association of Women Deans and Counselors  
American Association of Women Ministers  
American Civil Liberties Union  
American Federation of Soroptimist Clubs  
American Home Economics Association  
American Jewish Congress  
American Medical Women's Association  
American Newspaper Guild  
American Nurses Association  
American Society of Microbiology  
American Society of Women Accountants  
American Society of Women Certified Public Accountants  
American Women in Television and Radio  
Association of American Women Dentists  
B'nai B'rith Women  
Church Women United  
Common Cause  
Council for Christian Social Action, United Church of Christ  
Council for Women's Rights  
Ecumenical Task Force on Women and Religion (Catholic Caucus)  
Federally Employed Women  
General Federation of Women's Clubs  
Intercollegiate Association of Women Students  
International Association of Human Rights Agencies

*continued*

Organizations in support of ERA, continued

International Brotherhood of Painters and Allied Trades  
International Brotherhood of Teamsters  
International Union of United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural  
Implement Workers, UAW  
Interstate Association of Commissions on the Status of Women  
Ladies Auxiliary of Veterans of Foreign Wars  
League of American Working Women  
League of Women Voters  
National Association of <sup>Colored</sup> ~~Working~~ Women  
National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women's Clubs  
National Association of Railway Business Women  
National Association of Women Lawyers  
National Coalition of American Nuns  
National Education Association  
National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs  
National Organization for Women  
National Welfare Rights Organization  
National Women's Party  
National Women's Political Caucus  
Professional Women's Conference  
St. Joan's Alliance of Catholic Women  
Unitarian Universalist Women's Federation  
United Automobile Workers  
United Methodist Church - Women's Division  
Women's Christian Temperance Union  
Women's Equity Action League  
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom  
Women's Joint Legislative Committee for Equal Rights  
Women United



Fringe groups tend to hurt the cause: Those who would abuse the rights of others , and those who portray crude women.

Either these frightened people who are passing or signing petitions to keep ERA from ratification must believe that

1. the majority of the members of The House of Representatives and the members of the Senate, as well as BPW, are uninformed and ignorant compared to the very few Congressional opponents of the bill, or
2. the majority of the members of the House and the Senate do not have high morals, much respect for home life, or love of country,
3. or they do not know all the facts involved.

How many believe that Wyoming, truly, is the "Equality" state?

The following is only one example to the contrary: According to an item in The Casper Star Tribune of September 12, 1972, the state admits it must raise \$2.8 million to pay women if ERA passes. Teacher retirement in Wyoming is based upon figures which show that the AVERAGE length of life for women is longer than that of men. Therefore, women who pay in the same amount toward retirement as that which men pay receive less upon retirement.

Support the ratification of The Equal Rights Amendment and make

Wyoming, truly, "The Equality State".

*Letha L. Dickinson*  
Letha L. Dickinson  
1007 East Jackson Avenue  
Riverton, Wyoming 82501

January 26, 1973

Ms. Letha L. Dickinson  
1007 E. Jackson Avenue  
Riverton, Wyoming 82501

Dear Mrs. Dickinson:

Thank you very much for sending me your recent form letter urging my vote and support for the Equal Rights Amendment. As you probably know from the newspapers, this measure passed the Senate by a vote of seventeen to twelve. I was pleased to be able to vote for the bill and to give it my full support. I am glad it passed and think that it will prove to be an important piece of legislation. Thank you very much for writing.

Sincerely yours,

Thomas F. Stroock  
State Senator

TFS/nr