

# AMMOR

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## THE DEFEAT OF THE ERA IN

*Since 1971 when the Equal Rights Amendment was passed out of Congress and into ratification process, opinion polls have continually shown that the majority of Americans, women and men, support it.*

*Then why hasn't the ERA become law? And why does the opposition become more obsessive as the number of states needed to ratify becomes less and less?*

*The key to the mystery may be the control of state legislatures. For a lesson we never got in our civics books, keep reading.*

**W**earing a tiny gold cross on the lapel of his red-white-and-blue-striped polyester jacket, Nevada State Senator Eugene V. Echols said he "saw the hand of God" in the defeat of the Equal Rights Amendment by the 1977 Nevada legislature.

The ERA's backers thought they saw the hand of Jim Gibson. But then given the nature and extent of Nevada Senate Majority Leader Gibson's control over state politics, it's easy to get the two mixed up.

James I. Gibson is probably the single most powerful legislator in Nevada. The sixtyish, heavysset Mormon convert is also one of Nevada's two Representatives of the Council of Twelve, which is the governing body of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, as

the Mormon Church officially calls itself. As such, Gibson, representing the most populous area in Nevada, is probably the most influential representative of the church in the state, and the church has made the defeat of the ERA a national cause. Many ERA proponents believe that Gibson's heady, and some say dangerous, amalgam of political and religious power was the factor that convinced 11 Nevada legislators—every one of them supporters of the ERA in 1975 and 1976—to vote the Amendment a defeat in 1977.

Certainly, the ERA's defeat by the Nevada Assembly last February came as a shock. In 1975, the Assembly passed the Amendment by a wide margin only to see it defeated in the Senate. ERA's backers worked hard, and they felt successfully, to build legislative support for the Amendment during the 1976 elections. They thought that if they could only get the measure through the Senate in 1977, Nevada was sure to ratify.

The Senate was split on the ERA, 10-10; 11 votes were required for passage. The pro-camp saw two possible swing votes, either of which would put them over the top. One was Senator Echols, a born-again Christian, who had said all along and still says that he will vote for the ERA if Nevada has

a chance to be the thirty-eighth and final state to ratify. Another possible break in the anti-ERA dike was Senator Norman D. Glaser, who says he supported "equal rights" in the past as an Assemblyman, but who apparently changed his mind when he moved up to the Senate.

**E**RA backers managed to stall a vote during the month of January, hoping, with the help and pressure of State Democratic Governor Mike O'Callaghan, women's groups, and even the White House, to shift Echols or Glaser. But neither would budge. As Echols later bragged, he responded to Jimmy Carter's phone call by saying he shared only one thing with the President: "We're both Christians."

Another possibility was that Lieutenant Governor Bob Rose, an ERA proponent, would break a tie vote, as president of the Senate. Gibson, however, was ready for this strategy and, early in the session, he pushed through a resolution that would prevent Rose from voting in such a tie situation. With ERA backers willing to defend Rose's authority in court if necessary, the expected tie vote came up, and Rose broke it in favor of the ERA. Furious, Gibson rose, reminded the Senate of its earlier resolution prohibiting the lieutenant governor's vote, and made a

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EVADA BY LISA CRONIN WOHL

formal motion to repeal that vote. The Senate split again 10-10 on Gibson's motion, Rose broke the tie again, and the ERA was out of the Nevada Senate 11-10.

"Gibson was really mad," recalls State Senator Mary Gojack, a power in the pro camp. "He'd laid it on the line to defeat the ERA and he lost."

**N**ext it was up to the Assembly, where proponents basked in memories of last session's overwhelming pro-vote. But they had not counted on the enormous public and private pressure that bombarded the Assembly members. When the roll call was taken three days after the Senate vote, the ERA lost by a stunning 24-15. Eleven Assemblymen who had previously voted for the Amendment and had apparently been committed to it during their election campaigns in 1976 had switched their votes. Of the 11, eight had delivered solid promises to ERA backers shortly before the vote.

Kate Butler, coordinator of Nevadans for ERA, charged betrayal. "These were people we supported in 1976 with volunteers and campaign donations," she said. "They indicated their support for the ERA to us then, but clearly they were talking out of both sides of their mouths."

The switch voters had plenty of excuses. Assemblyman Donald R. Mello, for example, claimed that if a "clean" majority—without Rose's tie-breaking vote—had passed ERA in the Senate, "I would have voted for it in the Assembly."

Assembly Speaker Joseph E. Dini, Jr., claimed to be voting the views of his constituency. "I had twelve hundred and seventy phone calls and letters against and seventy-six for," he said.

Majority Leader Daniel J. Demers produced a sheaf of papers certified by a CPA, showing he had mailed a questionnaire to each registered voter in his district and that the results had been overwhelmingly against the ERA.

Harley L. Harmon, Speaker Pro Tem, said he too had polled registered voters in his district with results negative to the ERA. All these men voted for the ERA in the 1975 session. In addition, many of the switches had accepted campaign funds from ERA backers. (Harley Harmon, however, claimed that he kept his \$400 campaign donation in his top bureau drawer and didn't spend it.)

**S**o, if you believed the lawmakers, their polls overrode their prior pro-ERA stance. But ERA backers had gone door-to-door in key districts and

they reported a wide margin of ERA support. "The polls are excuses," says Harriet Trudell, aide to Governor Mike O'Callaghan. "Every day they found a different reason to switch their votes. We'd argue them out of one reason and they'd come up with another. It was sickening."

Trudell recalls a conversation with Assembly Majority Leader Demers the Sunday before the Senate vote. "He told me he would vote for the ERA, but we'd never get it past the Senate.

"I said, 'Danny, we're going to get it out.' Then on Tuesday night, right after the Senate vote, a friend came up to me and told me Demers was going to vote against us. I couldn't believe it so I went and found him. When he saw me, the blood drained right out of his face.

"I'm committed against it," he said.

"I said, 'You gave your word.'

"He just shrugged. 'That's the way it goes,' he said, and he walked away.

"Jimmy Carter called, and we had the Governor, Judy Carter and Maureen Reagan," she added. "Some of the top people in the gaming industry, leading businessmen, the people these guys go to for political donations, lobbied for us. But we couldn't move a vote. They were nailed."

## WHERE DO WE GO FROM FLORIDA?

It was a similar story in Florida: the ERA went down on April 13, after a couple of previously committed pro votes switched at the last minute. This, despite a poll commissioned by the Democratic National Committee that showed Floridians in favor of the ERA by 62 percent to 16 percent; and national polls that consistently show a large majority in favor of ratification.

But why haven't the legislators listened to their constituencies? Eleanor Smeal, President of the National Organization for Women, points to Nevada, Florida, and other states and says that many "who have voted against it

have been involved in straight political horse-trading; they're not emotionally committed."

So what's next; and what do those most actively involved think is going to happen? Sheila Greenwald, executive director of ERAmerica, says, "It really all depends on the 1978 elections. I think Florida will eventually ratify because of the intensity there; there's a lot of anger."

Presidential assistant Mark Siegel claims he hasn't given up and neither has Jimmy Carter: "I think the President is going to continue to speak out . . . I'm still optimistic that we will pass the ERA."

If anyone is angry enough to

keep fighting, it's Eleanor Smeal. "We need a national campaign of increasing outrage," she argues. "We need to recruit people to go to all the states, create caravans to go into every small town and hamlet and build a grass-roots organization like we did in Indiana. . . . We need national boycotts, economic sanctions. . . . We have to make this too hot an issue to trade on."

That's what it seems to come down to—organization and pressure, massive amounts of both. "And in the long run" says Smeal, "they will regret having made us fight so hard."

—Ann Northrop

Who or what nailed them?

ERA's backers believe the answer lies with Senate Majority Leader Jim Gibson and the Mormon Church. As a chief leader of the church in Nevada, he is seen as the head man in an intricate interplay of grass roots and legislative power that gave the church an effective veto on the ERA and perhaps any issue in Nevada politics.

Could Nevada, land of glitter, gambling, and G-strings, be Mormon-controlled? Given the puritanical teachings of the church, the notion appears ludicrous. Moreover only about 10 percent of Nevadans are Mormons; the state's governor and lieutenant governor are not Mormons; and Nevada regularly sends non-Mormon representatives and Senators to Washington.

**I**n Nevada state politics, however, the action lies in the Senate and Assembly, and the three most powerful Senate committees are led by Mormons. Most prestigious is Senate Finance, headed by Mormon Floyd Lamb with Gibson in the second spot. Gibson himself chairs Government Affairs, and Mormon Mel Close, president Pro Tem of the Senate,

heads the Judiciary Committee.

Some ERA backers believe that Gibson and Lamb may have kept the two possible Senate switch votes—Glaser and Echols—in line by appointing them to the Finance Committee this year. Glaser is only a freshman in the Senate, and as Kate Butler noted, "It's hard to believe that a new Senator makes it into the top committee over the heads of people who wanted it badly and were in the Senate before." Echols won his Finance Committee appointment this year despite serious financial problems that led to his business's bankruptcy in 1976. "That's not my idea of a qualification," noted one pro-ERA Senator. (Both deny deals, Glaser citing previous experience on the Assembly Ways and Means Committee, and Echols asserting that his own money troubles do not affect his ability to conduct the state's business.)

The fact remains that members of the Mormon Church were very much in evidence lobbying against the ERA. Leading church members button-holed lawmakers, and anti-ERA calls and letters deluged the legislature switchboard. Joe Neal, the only black in the Senate, claimed, "The church has been act-

ing like a political party. Those aren't prayer meetings they hold on Sundays. Those are precinct meetings."

Some devout Mormons are concerned about their church's venture into politics. Beatrice Marchant, a respected church member and runner-up for Utah State Mother of the Year, wrote in a letter to the *Las Vegas Sun* that she was "deeply disturbed" when "the church is being used to promote issues and candidates in spite of the fact that their Prophet has warned his priesthood members not to use the church for political purposes."

**M**ormon Church opposition to the ERA only surfaced openly in 1975, when an editorial in *Church News*, a Mormon publication, labeled the ERA "dangerous" and "a step backward in time." That same year, Barbara B. Smith, president of the 917,000-member Relief Society (the church's main women's organization), declared her opposition to the ERA, claiming that it would "destroy many safeguards enacted through the years to protect women, children, and the home." In 1976, the church-

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A MORMON CONNECTION?  
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owned *Deseret News*, a Salt Lake City, Utah, newspaper, editorialized against ERA—no news to the ERA's backers who had all but conceded that the Amendment didn't have a chance in the church's home state.

Finally, on October 30, 1976, just six days before the 1976 general elections, Spencer W. Kimball, President of the Church, issued an anti-ERA statement that made opposition the official policy of the church. Since then, top Mormon officials have traveled across America to fight the ERA. Boyd Packer, a member of the church's Council of Twelve, attacked the ERA in a Pocatello, Idaho, rally during the successful drive to rescind Idaho's ratification of the ERA (though some legal opinion, including U.S. Attorney General Griffin Bell, indicates that such rescission is probably ineffective). More recently, Neal A. Maxwell, former President of the Quorum of 70, another key governing body of the church, appeared in Florida with Phyllis Schlafly, national head of STOP ERA.

To feminists, Church President Kimball's arguments appear antediluvian: "We recognize men and women as equally important before the Lord, but with differences biologically, emotionally, and in other ways." But Kimball's statement against the ERA has effectively sealed its fate among most Mormon Church members.

Mormons are obliged to obey the General Authority of the Church—President Kimball and two Counselors, who are said to speak with divine inspiration. Each member is interviewed annually and asked to swear allegiance in return for a "temple recommend," the right to enter the Mormon Temple for religious rites. In other words, doctrinal obedience can be a precondition for spiritual salvation. The church denies that religious sanctions have been used against ERA supporters. However,

the pressure to obey the "moral" teachings of the church are considerable.

**O**n a more earthly plane, the church is one of the most thoroughly and tightly organized institutions in the United States. In a typical Mormon family, the husband belongs to the church's lay priesthood, which excludes women and blacks; the wife attends Relief Society; the children go to Mormon Sunday schools and socials, belong to Mormon-run Scout troops and athletic teams. Church representatives, called Home Teachers, visit the family at least once a month to discuss religious or personal matters.

In addition, the family tithes. Each Mormon wage earner is encouraged to donate 10 percent of before-tax income, a practice that has made the Mormon Church one of the richest religious organizations in the United States. (These tithes, plus business income and other contributions, add \$3 million daily to the church coffers—that's \$1 billion a year—which allows the church to have business interests more extensive than any other church in the United States.)

The person who bears the brunt of much of this church activity is the wife at home. In an article on "Oneness in Marriage," Church President Kimball warned against newly married wives who "leave home, where their duty lies, to pursue professional or business pursuits," thus establishing an economy that becomes stabilized so that it becomes very difficult to yield to normal family life." Though the church hasn't solemnized polygamous marriages since 1890, the church teaches that polygamy may be practiced in heaven. Married couples are "sealed" for eternity. A Mormon man may be sealed to more than one woman, but a woman may be sealed only once in her lifetime.

Of course, contrary to what the church appears to be preaching, home-oriented women and strong families will not be threatened by the Equal Rights Amendment. The

ERA refers to government action and will not change private relationships between men, women, and children in their families.

**R**eligious doctrine aside, Mormon opposition to the ERA may be representative of the church's economic and political conservatism. While assiduously avoiding stands on parties or candidates, Mormon church officials tend to share the conservatism typical of the Mountain West and of huge, rich, and closed corporations. Church leaders typically warn that the ERA represents a threat from "big government."

Opposition to the ERA by the John Birch Society surfaced early in Utah, the home state of the church. Moreover, the man expected to be the next President of the Church, Ezra Taft Benson, former Secretary of Agriculture under President Eisenhower, has championed the Birch Society as "a most effective way to defend the Constitution and fight the Socialist-Communist menace." (Benson has also been quoted as describing civil rights legislation as "part of the pattern of Communist takeover in America.") The church, however, denies any affiliation whatever with the Birch Society.

The growth of radical conservatism among Mormons bears watching because the political impact of the church is far greater than its numbers—3.4 million members—would indicate. Mormonism teaches that voting is a religious duty. In Nevada, one survey found that although Mormons made up only 10 percent of the vote in one district, they constituted more than 30 percent of voters who actually went to the polls. The church advises its members of political events from primaries to conventions, and Mormon politicians have a reputation for getting their homework done.

In Nevada, however, church participation on the fight against the ERA went way beyond the bounds of merely encouraging its members to vote.

Mormon *Alice Hale*\* reports that Relief Society women began to organize against the ERA in Nevada back in 1975. "We were given leaflets suggesting that we write letters against the ERA," she said. "They told us there was no need to stamp them. The Relief Society teachers would come pick them up. The letters were saved and sent to legislators in the 1975 vote on the ERA."

The ERA was condemned at Sunday Sacrament Meetings, *Hale* added, and at a High Priesthood meeting attended by her husband. She asked for a chance to state the pro case, and was invited to speak at a meeting where, she was told, a prominent ERA opponent would also speak.

"I felt tremendously encouraged," *Hale* said. "The church was going to play fair and hear both sides." But shortly before the date of the meeting, *Hale* was again called and told her talk was canceled. She later learned that the ERA opponent spoke as scheduled.

**I**n Clark County, home of Las Vegas and the most populous and politically powerful county in the state, an organization called Citizens' Quest for Quality Government surfaced during the '76 elections to promote right-wing causes including opposition to the ERA. Leading Clark County Mormons appeared on the Quest board, and at least some of Quest's organizing appears to have been done through the church.

*Lucille Stevenson* reports receiving a call from her Mormon bishop asking her to serve on a Quest committee. "I told him I didn't think the church should be involved in politics and I refused," she recalls.

"A few days later a woman who was with STOP ERA and also in Relief Society came by my house and asked me to join Quest. She said that the church's Regional Representative had asked that each ward send two people to act as church representatives on the

Quest committee, and that non-Mormons would also be on the committee."

*Stevenson* assumed that the Regional Representative in this case was Senate Majority Leader Jim Gibson. (Although Gibson is considered the top Mormon in Nevada, the state is also administered by Lenard Robison.) In interviews, both Gibson and Robison denied any involvement in organizing Quest, and also said that to their knowledge the church facilities or organization in Nevada were not being used to fight the ERA.

Quest committees interviewed candidates on five political issues: abortion, marijuana legalization, ERA, pornography, and capital punishment. (Quest was against all but capital punishment.) Answers to the questions were compiled in a box-score leaflet and distributed in neighborhoods, in Mormon Church parking lots, and, according to some sources, through Relief Society.

Cynthia Cunningham, a director of Nevadans for ERA, tangled with Quest when she ran unsuccessfully in 1976 for the Assembly. After her interview, information sheets appeared in her district which she charged seriously misrepresented her position on marijuana, pornography, and capital punishment. As Cunningham later wrote to the Democratic Fair Campaign Practices Committee, "Although the sheets were unidentified as to source, my immediate conclusion was that the questionnaire could only have been compiled by the Citizens Quest for Quality Government, for although the responses are distorted on three of the five issues, no one else asked me about the same combination of issues. . . . Whoever Quest really represents and whatever their motives, their tactics are typical of dirty politics at its worst." The Fair Campaign Practices Committee has yet to make a recommendation on Cunningham's complaint.

*Ellen Wright*, a Mormon mother of six, thinks she can account for

the barrage of phone calls and letters that hit the Senate as soon as the ERA came up for a vote. "The Sunday before the ERA came to the floor, we were told from the pulpit to write to the Senators against the ERA and to get our letters in immediately," *Wright* said. "Apparently the church knew that a vote was coming a week before the pro-Senators did." According to these and other sources, anti-ERA speeches were given at church gatherings; Relief Societies organized letter-writing campaigns; and STOP ERA literature was distributed in the foyer of at least one Las Vegas Mormon church.

The church's official policy is that its members are involved in politics "as citizens," and leadership has repeatedly admonished its members that church buildings and organizations are not to be used for ERA or any other political or legislative purposes.

Asked about evidence of church organization against the ERA, Jeffrey Cahill, Mormon Church director of press relations, said that "an anti-ERA meeting should not be convened in church facilities." He added, however, that Church President Kimball's statement against the ERA was probably read in some places and people would have spoken against the ERA. "The Church will speak out as a Church on issues which we define as moral issues," he said.

This apparent attempt to skirt the charges of political involvement by defining the ERA as a moral issue doesn't wash with ERA supporters. In the aftermath of the ERA debacle, the mood in the legislature and among both sides was bitter. Although there was no evidence to connect the incident to anti-ERA sources, Nevada ERA coordinator Kate Butler found her car window smashed; and Nevadans for ERA discovered that their headquarters' telephone had been wiretapped. On the other side, opposing legislators charged that they had been offered bribes, one citing a half-million dollar offer from women's organizations, in-

\*At their request, the names of Mormon women discussing the church's use of its facilities against the ERA have been changed; these names appear in italics.

## Stimula Sheaths:

The Now, Safe Contraceptive

More and more couples are switching to a new kind of latex sheath as their regular method of birth control. In this interview, Tamar Fitzgerald, one of the founders of Stamford Hygienic, Inc., gives reasons for the sheaths' surprising new popularity.



### Q. Tamar, why have Stimula sheaths become so popular?

A. First, a lot of women and their husbands are frightened by the potential side effects of the Pill and the IUD. Stimula sheaths are the logical alternative—they're more effective than creams, foams, gels or diaphragms. They're inexpensive. And you don't need a doctor's prescription.

### Q. Don't Stimula sheaths have side effects?

A. No. You don't have to worry about delicate hormonal balances, gaining weight, depression, blood clots or heart attack. Condoms don't alter your blood chemistry in any way. You don't have to wait months to conceive when you decide to have a child. And condoms are the only contraceptive that protects you from venereal disease and other communicable vaginal infections.

### Q. You keep talking only about your sheaths. Aren't there other sheaths available? And aren't they all the same?

A. No. Some name-brand sheaths still on the market are cold, don't fit well, and have none of the features that make our sheaths appealing.

### Q. What's different about yours?

A. They feel warm because they're lubricated with a "Dry" silicone. They fit well because they're anatomically shaped. They're made with a "nude" latex that transfers body heat instantaneously. And Stimula goes even further.

### Q. What do you mean?

A. Stimula has 877 tiny, patterned ribs to give a woman extra contact. We've received many letters from men and women saying good things about this special feature.

### Q. One last question. Would you recommend Stimula to every couple?

A. I think every couple owe it to themselves to try a sample.

### Send for Samples

Stamford Hygienic is offering a special introductory sampler along with a full-color catalog and a leaflet—"Everything You've Wanted to Ask About Condoms"—for \$4. The package will be mailed in a discreet wrapper to your home, office or any other address you specify. Send \$4 to: Stamford Hygienic, Inc., Dept. SS-8, 114 Manhattan Street, Stamford, Conn. 06904.

Stamford Hygienic, Inc., Dept. SS-8  
114 Manhattan Street, Stamford, Conn. 06904

Please send me: (Check Box)

\$4 sampler of 12 Stimula

\$4 sampler of 3 Stimula and 12 other condoms

\$25 super sampler of 120 condoms including Stimula, Huggo and Conture

Free catalog sent with order.

Check  Cash  M.O. Enclosed

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

cluding the National Organization for Women.

"That's ridiculous," answered Dorothy Frehner, chair of Nevada NOW. "We wouldn't do that and couldn't if we wanted to. We don't have anything like that kind of money."

Indeed, feeling ran so high that the Monday after the vote the Assembly chaplain opened the session with a special "rite of reconciliation" instead of the usual morning prayer.

But the peacemaking has not stopped the speculation, and proponents ask, was there a specific deal that killed the ERA? No one knows for sure what actually led to the defeat in the Assembly. One of the unanswered but intriguing questions is the role of lobbyist Charlie Bell. The former chief aide to the late Congressman Walter Baring, Bell, according to a report in the *Valley Times*, a Nevada newspaper, "has moved in mysterious ways at all levels in Nevada and Washington, D.C. He knows how to 'get things on' and how to stop them too."

Some ERA supporters claim that Bell, with his cowboy boots and cow-country manners, was active against the ERA. "Hell, no," says Bell. He explained that he was on the Assembly floor the day of the vote because Speaker Pro Tem Harley Harmon had been unable to persuade his wife not to attend that session with her daughter. Bell explained that the session was very emotional and "I was there protecting Harley Harmon's wife and baby."

Indeed, said one proponent and Nevada political veteran, "Bell is not the kind of guy to be for or against an issue like the ERA, so when I saw him buttonholing his pals in the Assembly, I knew something had to be up."

A lobbyist for many causes, Bell's latest sales effort is to legalize in Nevada two drugs not approved by the federal Food and Drug Administration. One, laetrile, is made from apricot and peach pits, and is claimed to be a cancer

cure. American Medical Association reports cite extensive U.S. tests which indicate that laetrile, while not harmful, is ineffective, but victims of cancer flock to Mexico where laetrile treatments are available. Bell also boosts Gerovital, a formula drug from Rumania. Gerovital is officially promoted by its makers as an antidepressant, but some supporters have claimed that it combats the effects of aging.

An FDA spokesman said that laetrile could be legalized only for *intra*-state manufacture and use. If the drug or its ingredients involves interstate commerce, "we'll move against it," he said. Gerovital is now under consideration by the FDA as an antidepressant, but so far is not approved. Even if it is approved, any sales claiming an antiaging effect and involving interstate commerce would also bring FDA action.

Majority Leader Demers introduced the laetrile legalization bill in the Assembly, claiming that unless a drug is shown to be harmful, people have a right to take it. Demers's logic—or something—worked because the Assembly overwhelmingly passed the legislation to legalize both drugs, and legalization swiftly followed in the Senate. In an unusual move, Senate powerhouse Gibson abstained, though he had indicated his support for what laetrile proponents call "freedom of choice," and some political observers doubt that the bill would have passed in the Senate without his tacit support.

Consider the money to be made in Nevada now that the drugs have won approval. For example, the stock of Rom-Amer Pharmaceuticals Ltd., maker of Gerovital, soared from 38 cents a share in October, 1976, to \$12 a share the day the legalization bill passed the Nevada Assembly. The *Valley Times* reports that "influential and powerful Las Vegans" hold Rom-Amer stock. "They can do much to help or harm a politician's career," the report continued. "And the legislators know it."

The ERA's backers note that Gibson had made stopping the ERA a personal crusade and no doubt wanted badly to deliver an ERA defeat in Nevada as a victory for his church leadership. Gibson *thought* he could handle it in the Senate, but it turned out that he needed the Assembly vote to do the job. Bell, on the other hand, with lots of strings in the Assembly, wanted his wonder drugs safely through the Senate. If, in fact, Bell was lobbying against the ERA, the question is why? Some speculate that he may have worked against the ERA in the Assembly because he hoped to get Gibson's help in the Senate to legalize his drugs. But Gibson has denied making any deals.

"Each of the 11 Assemblymen who switched their votes had made promises to us," said Assemblywoman Sue Wagner, one of the ERA's most vocal backers in that body. Although outsiders don't know the behind-the-scenes truth, Wagner is only one of the ERA supporters who believes "there had to be something very powerful to make them change their minds."

Most of the Nevada legislators who switched told me they do not personally oppose the ERA. Despite all their excuses it's clear that they see the ERA as merely a "woman's issue" and were willing to give it up.

National polls show that a clear majority of women and men are in favor of the ERA, and both political parties have endorsed it. But in state after state this year, the will of the majority has been defeated by the conservative juggernaut of state legislative power politics.

Right now the mood in the pro-ERA camp is one of enormous frustration and disappointment. But frustration can become anger, and anger can be transformed into action. ERA proponents have 19 months left for that to happen.

*Lisa Cronin Wohl is at work on a book about the ERA.*

#### "NO COMMENT" OLYMPICS CONTINUED FROM PAGE 50

**Male Liberals:** This category was originally named after Patrick Moynihan, now Senator from New York, to commemorate his invention of the Theory of the Black Matriarchy, as well as the Theory of Benign Neglect. In the interest of timeliness, however, it has been renamed **The President's Citation for Male Liberalism**, thus honoring Jimmy Carter's willingness to use federal funds for damn near anything—except abortion.

#### The Jimmy Carter Award for Male Liberals goes to . . .

. . . Demetrio Carneiro, a Brazilian city councilman, who fought gallantly to get chairs for women store clerks, noting that women who stand all day get sexually excited.

. . . The Wisconsin State Senate for its 1973 consideration of an Age Confidentiality bill, which would allow any woman over 21 to conceal her exact age.

. . . The Ohio General Assembly for passing legislation that "No person may require another person to perform, participate in, or undergo an abortion of pregnancy, against his will."

. . . Alfred Howard, a parks director in Miami, who barred breast-feeding women from his parks because "breast-feeding is . . . an act for the home, not a public park where kids play."

#### The Male Radical Award goes to

. . . William Kunstler, who said: "I'm not entirely upset by the Kennedy assassinations. In many ways, two of the most dangerous men in the country were eliminated."

#### A Lifetime Supply of Day-Old Bread and Wilting Roses goes to

. . . George Meany, President of the AFL-CIO, commenting on its 33-member, all-male Executive Council: "We have some very capable women in our unions but they only go up to a certain level. . . . They don't seem to have any desire to go further."

. . . Albert Shanker, President of the United Federation of Teachers: "Teaching is no longer seen as a woman's job. Teaching is seen as a tough, exciting place where things are happening."

#### And They Say the Women's Movement Has No Sense of Humor!

. . . Patrick Moynihan was given a 1976 Doublespeak Award by the National Council of Teachers of English for this statement made while he was U.S. Ambassador to the UN, and just before he ran for the Senate: "I would consider it dishonorable to leave this post and run for any office, and I hope it would be understood that if I do, the people, the voters to whom I would present myself in such circumstances, would consider me as having said in advance that I am a man of no personal

honor to have done so."

Did he accept the Doublespeak Award and leave bad enough alone? No. He fired off a long, soreheaded protest. "You must understand," he wrote in part, "that you may have intended to question my honor, which I cannot let pass lightly." When last heard from, the National Council of Teachers of English was considering awarding the Senator the 1977 Doublespeak Award for his letter.

#### Last Laughs or Where Are They Now?

. . . "Katie Graham is gonna get her tit caught in a big fat wringer if that's published." John Mitchell, former Attorney General of the United States, commenting on Watergate coverage in the *Washington Post*.

. . . "I think a man belongs in Congress, no matter who he might be." Rodney Fertel, unsuccessful candidate for Congress during his campaign against Lindy Boggs in 1973.

#### The Lester Maddox Award for Honesty in Politics goes to

. . . *S.I. Hayakawa*, Senator from California, for his campaign quip: "We should keep [the Panama Canal]. After all, we stole it fair and square."

#### Runners-up are:

. . . *Gerald Ford* for describing Ronald Reagan as "simplistic" and "rash," but not unfit to be President.

. . . *Frank Fitzsimmons*, President of the Teamsters Union, for his 1976 statement: "To those who say it is time to reform this organization and that it's time the officers stopped selling out its members, I say, 'Go to hell.'"

#### Ode to the Patriarchs or The Ladies Auxiliary (sob!)

. . . *Mary Bacon*, jockey, while speaking for a Ku Klux Klan rally: "Maybe when one of your wives or one of your sisters gets raped by a nigger, maybe you'll get smart and join the Klan."

. . . *Midge Decter*, author of *The New Chastity and Other Arguments Against Women's Liberation*: "The pursuit of an orgasm for a woman is an entirely irrelevant undertaking."

. . . *Navy Wives Clubs of America*, in a letter to "All Enlisted Men": "Do you feel the woman's place is in the home? So do we! . . . We would like to request your permission to invite your wife to attend one of our meetings."

. . . *Female director of a Washington state institution for retarded women*: "Retarded women make excellent wives."

. . . The teenage girls who mobbed Roman Polanski for his autograph when he appeared in court for arraignment on charges of drugging and raping a 13-year-old girl.

#### Surrealism Citation, Women's Media Division

. . . *Rona Barrett* to *Cher*: "Would you ever sell your body to survive?" *Cher*: "No, man, I'd edit *Vogue* first."

*Compiled by Ann Northrop and Gloria Steinem.*