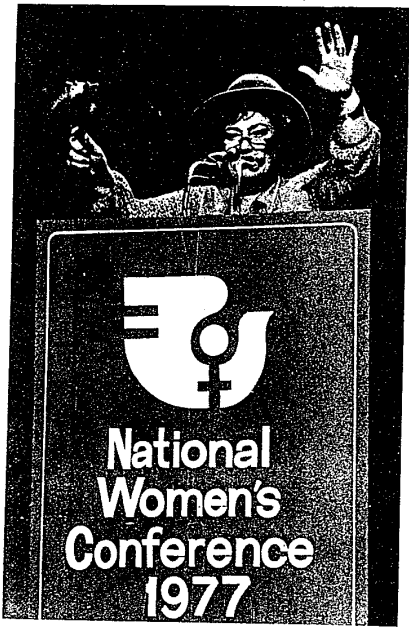


Monday's Commentary

One year later

It's been one year since Bella Abzug addressed the National Women's Conference in Houston. Since then there has been some action on proposals initiated at the conference. Much, however, is still undone. Shirlee Iden attended the conference and, in the column below, gives her assessment of what has and hasn't happened. She also notes that President Carter, for one, has been reminded that the year-old conference is still alive and pushing forward. (Staff photo by Shirlee Iden)



Shirlee's sallies

by Shirlee Iden



Don't promise us roses

Trying to assess progress one year after Houston is like "through a glass darkly," feminist Millie Jeffrey told me a few days ago.

Millie and I are both veterans of the week-end conference where women met to map out an agenda for equality and for feminism. Mildred, a long-time leader in labor circles and active in party and feminist politics, was on the scene in Houston making things happen, as she always does.

On the other hand, I was besting the bushes in the Michigan delegation and with Michigan women present as observers. I wanted to see what was happening through their eyes, to record, report and photograph the Houston conference for Observer & Eccentric readers in 12 communities.

Even as an observer, I couldn't help but be imbued with the unique spirit and togetherness that permeated that conference. No one who was in Houston will ever forget it. The women may have been upstaged by Anwar Sadat's visit to Jerusalem, but their's was a special time too.

Now, a year later, although the bets on ERA may be even money, there's no mistaking the fact that the women's movement in this country is a force to be reckoned with.

Jimmy Carter found that out on Wednesday when instead of marking this anniversary of Houston with a toast and flowers, he blew it.

TO BE FAIR I should say his staff blew it. In arranging an appointment with the 40 member National Advisory committee for Women, an errand aide allotted the women 15 minutes with the president.

The full committee met, voted to cancel the appointment, and told the president so in a formal letter.

It would have taken the feminist leaders a lot longer than from 1:15 to 1:30 that afternoon last week to fill Carter in on the concerns of women and the issues affecting them.

Progress on the initiatives set forth at Houston last year has been uneven and some of the short fall can be laid to the door of the administration.

Feminist leaders like Millie Jeffrey, and co-

chairpersons Bella Abzug and Carmen Delgado are concerned about how the president's crash program on inflation will affect women in the society and a multitude of other real problems.

The National Advisory Committee for Women said in its letter they would not be fulfilling their function if they engaged in a token meeting without time for listing their concerns or a real exchange of information.

Carter got the message all right. And he got on the phone to the women, apologizing, and promising to meet with them for a more substantial piece of his time.

According to Barbara Walters, Ms. Abzug said the apology alone took about 10 minutes.

SIGNIFICANCE of the cancellation by the women's group may go right by some people, but as Ms. Jeffrey points out, it's a first.

"No one, not labor or business, no one before this cancelled a presidential meeting," she said.

So where are we a year after Houston? Most women leaders believe the odds are very tough on ERA ratification despite success in getting Congress to extend the deadline.

There are still those three states needed to get to the magic number of 38 required for ratification.

Women did well in the off-year elections recently with Nancy Kassebaum even winning a senate seat on her own in Kansas. In Michigan a woman was on the ballot for lieutenant governor for the first time, and though she lost, she acquitted herself well.

One major party has promised their 1980 convention will be in a ratified state.

Feminists are girding up for a battle they consider is their last chance for equality in their lifetime. "This is it for ourselves and our kids," NOW leader Eleanor Smeal said.

ERA is the symbol of the progress the women hope to make. After all, what they are asking is that we include in the U.S. Constitution a ban against bias for reasons of sex.

On Houston plus one, no one sent roses, but as President Carter found out, neither do we want the thorns.

The Flip Side by craig piechura



Don't buy bottle, rent it

The law isn't even in effect yet, yet I already hear party store owners griping about returnable bottles and cans.

The guy with a white apron had to interrupt his frenzied price stamping routine to count up the bottles I brought in. And, no, he didn't take the Nehi bottle that has been rolling around my back seat for months and you can forget about ever redeeming that Rolling Rock beer bottle, kid.

Despite a multi-million dollar ad campaign lodged by the bottlers and store owners of Michigan, the voters of the state voted 2-1 to ban throw-away bottles and cans in 1976.

In a gesture of magnanimity, the legislature gave the bottlers more than two years to adjust to the change-over to deposit bottles. Now, two years later, they're still trying to get an injunction to stop the law before the Dec. 3 deadline.

Let them pop off. The people have spoken.

Now I'm not Mr. Ecology by any means. I never once put a brick in my toilet's holding tank to save our diminishing water resources. I leave my radio on during the day so my parakeet can sing along to the rock 'n' roll when I'm away.

But I'm all for the ban on no-deposit, no-return bottles and cans. In fact, for years now I've been buying returnable beer and Coke wherever I can get it.

Maybe it's psychological, but the beverage seems to taste better when it comes in a returnable bottle. Beer tastes fresher in a long-neck beer bottle and Coca-Cola is more carbonated in those dinky, 6 1/2-ounce bottles that are pop art's finest creation.

LONG-NECK Strobs bottles will be a thing of the past in Michigan under the new law. I'm sorry to report. There was something masculine and reassuring about drinking beer straight out of a long neck. But I'm not crying in my beer. I've tried its replacement—the squat-neck—and I can live with it.

The main thing is that when we drive our cars to

a secluded beach, the panorama won't be spoiled with pop-tops and countless empty cans of Miller's Highlife.

Not at 10 cents a can deposit. You're throwing away \$1.20 on every 12-pack. Parks like Stoney Creek, Kensington and Hines Park will be a bonanza for little kids. The art of bottle scavenging will be bigger than ever, I predict.

If I see a couple returnable beer cans rolling around the parking lot, I'll retrieve them and turn them in. I'm not too proud to make a dime on every pop bottle or beer can and a nickel on a beer bottle. My brother made \$9 last weekend by combing the stands after a football game.

ONE THING bothers me, though. Store owners are already inventing new rules to the game. They say they'll give you credit instead of cash and claim they won't take back cans that have been crushed to the point where they won't stand up.

There's nothing in the law that says the cans have to be in mint condition. Just because some slob flattened an aluminum can against his forehead in a fit of drunken bravado doesn't mean that can is worthless. Cans have to be flattened to be recycled anyway.

Unexpected benefits of the new law are turning up. For one, it makes it more economical to drink beer out of bottles. Beer bottles which can be used by any manufacturer only carry a nickel deposit on them while all cans carry a dime deposit.

Hopefully, thinning-beer in cans will decline in popularity. There will still be unenlightened imbibers out there who argue that you never know what the guy before you put in the bottle before he turned it back in.

Just tell them that with a can you never get a good look at what the brewery put in. At least with a bottle you've got a fighting chance.

Yes, victory against the litter lobby tastes sweet.

Now, if we can only get legislation that outlaws diet pop with its devastating after-taste and lo-cal beers that taste like cold hot dog water...

from our readers

Alkateeb's stands are questioned

Editor:

I read Councilman Joe Alkateeb's recent letter to the editor wherein he attempts to justify his untenable position as a supporter of the recall petition being circulated in our community.

It was mundane, rhetoric, complete with contradictions and inconsistencies.

He (Alkateeb) stated recall is justifiable for "any reason or no reason at all." This suggests a governing body, and Mr. Alkateeb in particular, can function effectively in an atmosphere of constant threat and turmoil if decisions made do not meet with the approval of any segment of the electorate.

This, of course, is an absurd premise. From a more practical viewpoint, elected officials are charged with the responsibility of "leadership, not following," and the yearly election process insures acceptable representation.

State statutes require measures must be passed by a majority vote of the entire council and in some instances a two-thirds majority vote.

This belies the premise of irreparable damage thrust upon the community, since the recall petition attacks a minority, only three female members, of a seven-member council.

Certainly, Mr. Alkateeb should have sufficient confidence to know he could

control the four votes necessary to be responsive to the Committee United for Recall (CURE), if not responsive to the best interests of the community.

There is no value in the recall movement.

Concerning value, Mr. Alkateeb, in supporting the recall, opposes mid-rise housing for senior citizens because "high leads to higher." It was interesting to watch as he urged the council to approve a zoning change this past Monday.

The purpose, to increase the height of a commercial building from 30 feet to 40 feet. His premise for this change was stated as: "When we rezoned, we must consider the parcel, its location and intended use. In this instance, I cannot see how council cannot pass favorably on this requested change."

I guess he forgot "high leads to higher."

He did abstain from voting, as it was later indicated Mr. Alkateeb has a business relationship with the firm of Siegal-Tuomola Associates, proponents of the zoning change for North-western Highway and Middlebelt southwest corner.

I do not believe that fact would influence his desire for "higher," or would it?

I am appalled that a member of council could be so inconsistent when he is calling for consistency; that he could be party to a movement to recall

a "minority of the council." Mr. Alkateeb should be a cohesive factor on the council and demonstrate leadership rather than become a divisive factor and a pawn for those who manipulate him.

THOMAS STARK,
Farmington Hills

Fr. Anthony thanks

Editor:

On behalf of the Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church and community, I would like to express the sincere thanks and appreciation of the parish council and officers and members of all of the parish organizations for your most kind and excellent treatment in your columns for the past year.

We feel that it is one of the most valuable things to have the constant cooperation and friendly assistance of the press, and your newspaper has given us this kind of treatment consistently throughout the past year.

We know that your services to community organizations often times goes unacknowledged even though much appreciated. We hope that through this letter some of that fine public service and assistance can be recognized.

FR. S.J. ANTHONY,
Holy Cross Orthodox Church,
Farmington Hills

Your Ecology Calendar

Ecology-minded persons living in Southfield and Lathrup Village who wish to save cans, bottles, scrap metal, aluminum or newspapers in the interest of the ecology may use the recycling facilities listed here.

To prepare glass for recycling, thoroughly wash the container, remove all metal caps and rings from the glass and separate the glass by color.

All cans should be flattened. It is not necessary to remove the paper labels. Newspapers should be tied in bundles with heavy string or rope or secured in heavy paper bags.

SOUTHFIELD Recycling Center is located at 26000 Berg Road, just north of Civic Center Drive. The center is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Newspapers, glass, scrap metal, cans and aluminum are accepted.

LATHRUP VILLAGE Recycling Center is maintained at the public services building, 19101 Twelve Mile, adjacent to Southfield-Lathrup High School. Only newspapers are accepted. The center is open 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on the first Saturday of each month.

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Farmington Observer

"Successor of the Farmington Enterprise"

Steve Barnaby
Editor

22170 Wind-Ning-Mile
Southfield MI 48075
(313) 352-5400

John Reddy, General Mgr.
Thomas A. Flordan, Executive Editor
George J. Hagan, Advertising Director, Fred J. Wright, Circulation Director