

Party poopers?

ERA marchers upstage GOP

By MICHAEL W. REGULSKI

Monday's pro-ERA march and rally in downtown Detroit managed to light a fire under an otherwise lackluster, routine and admittedly choreographed political event.

Republicans gathering in Detroit to anoint their standard bearers this week were thrown off guard when an estimated 10,000 people marched to Cobo Hall to protest the GOP's recent dumping from its platform support for the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution.

ERA backers, singing "Are you sleeping, Are you sleeping, G-O-P, G-O-P..." and shouting "Ratify the ERA, Ronald Reagan go away," marched from the Kern Block to Cobo Hall to a rally in Kennedy Square, where their displeasure with the GOP's move overflowed onto Woodward and Lafayette avenues.

In the front line of the orderly demonstration was Michigan First Lady Helen Miliken, a strong ERA proponent who has vowed to continue to fight for women's rights despite the GOP rebuff.

The majority of the marchers wore white with purple or yellow sashes, symbolic of the suffragettes, and green and white "ERA Yes" buttons or patches.

AMONG THE groups taking their message to the streets were 11 members of the Plymouth branch of the American Association of University Women, led by Mary Uhl, branch president.

"I thought it (the turnout) was fantastic," said Mrs. Uhl, who added that she was unable to attend a May rally in



Chicago and this gave her a chance to show her support locally for the ERA.

She said more than 200 AAUW members were on hand for Monday's march, including Dr. Nancy Joyner, AAUW national officer who is heading the group's national task force for the ERA.

Mrs. Uhl, who lives in Plymouth Township, expressed disappointment that former First Lady Betty Ford and Maureen Reagan, daughter of Presidential hopeful Ronald Reagan, did not attend. The two women have been strong ERA boosters.

"It's a sad thing as an observer looking in at how they all start playing politics and softening their stands," Mrs. Uhl said. "If people believe in something strong enough I've always felt they should stand up for it."

Janet Evans, a Farmington Hills resident and president of the Northwest Wayne County chapter of NOW, helped in organizing the coalition of groups that marched.

She said the national NOW organization originally hoped to attract 3,000-5,000 marchers. Like Mrs. Uhl, Mrs. Evans was pleased with the turnout.

Mrs. Evans said she doesn't see the GOP's move as a setback, however, she is concerned that gains like Title IX and changes in credit laws could possibly be rolled back.

Her impression from discussions with other members is that NOW is no where close to endorsing a candidate and the group is taking a wait-and-see attitude.

"I think they (the GOP) feel a little threatened," she said. "Depending on what poll you read... I don't think you can just ignore that many people (who favor ERA ratification)."

She said NOW is going to work at the "grass roots level" to help elect people who favor ratification. "It's an idea whose time has come, and it will eventually."

OTHER GROUPS represented were the North Oakland County chapter of the National Organization for Women, the American Association of University Women, the Association of Suburban People, the Business and Professional Women, Normans for ERA, local, state, and national teacher organizations, several UAW groups, a gay political group, and anti-nuclear energy forces.

Rally organizers also announced that Republican delegates made a strong showing.

Placards carried included one bearing a portrait of a saddened Abraham Lincoln. It asked, "Will the party that freed the slaves be the party to enslave women?" Others: "ERA is AMERICAN" and "Reagan for Skah."

Free Press FIRST FOR CONVENTION COVERAGE

You can't believe everything you read. A strike by the Teamsters at the Detroit Free Press closed down that paper for a day, making this coin box poster's claim an unlikely possibility.

Free Press strikes out

By KEVIN ROSEBOROUGH

Perhaps the most disconsolate group at the convention is the 21-member reporting team from the Detroit Free Press.

Some of the staff, mostly Washington Bureau members, had prepared for the event for a full year. The entire group, along with the rest of the paper's reporters, is now idle amid a flurry of history-making convention activity.

On Saturday members of Teamsters Union Local 372 representing Free Press drivers voted to reject a three-year pact offered there. They also went on strike.

"Most of the editorial staff had no inkling, no indication it would happen," said Free Press reporter Patricia Montemurri. "We thought, like you're joking. We really couldn't believe it. We thought that they'd be able to work it out."

That was not the case, as the Free Press did not publish a Sunday edition. On Monday, however, a joint edition of the Detroit News and Free Press was printed by the News, which has agreed to print an abridged edition of the Free Press for the duration of the strike.

Teamsters at the Detroit News were continuing to work under a contract similar to that rejected by the local at the Free Press.

sending reporters, photographers, copy editors and advertising sales and computer services personnel at the Free Press — is honoring the Teamsters picket line, putting its members out of work.

The skeleton edition of the Free Press being put out in conjunction with the News contains work done by staff reporters prior to the walkout. Much of the material is also produced by reporters employed by the Knight-Ridder chain which owns the Free Press.

Seeing the paper come out without their work makes the situation even more agonizing for the reporters.

"Later on, I sunk in more and more," said Ms. Montemurri. "You could see the despair, the agony going on. The color was just drained from people's faces."

Still in possession of their media credentials, several reporters and photographers sat gloomily around a table in the Civic Host Committee's media room Monday.

Montemurri said she believed the sudden elimination of the prized convention coverage could constitute an unbearable wound in the minds of many reporters.

"For Free Press reporters, this is one of the biggest stories of the decade. To be deprived of that at the last moment..."

"If they were going to strike the Free Press if the contract wasn't rat-

fied, they could have said that a week ago," she said.

"I never dreamed this could happen," Ms. Montemurri said, shaking her head. "The possibility never occurred to me."

She quoted a saying being circulated by Free Press reporters this way: "Take a Teamster to lunch at the Machus Red Fox."

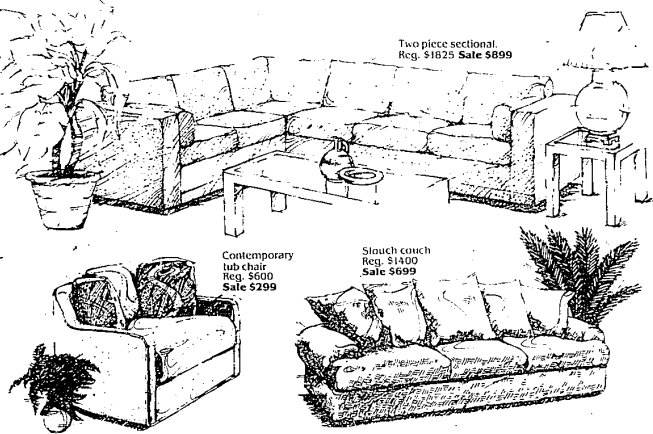
The remark is a rather bitter allusion to the Bloomfield Township restaurant where former Teamsters President Jimmy Hoffa was last seen before disappearing in 1975.

Ms. Montemurri said she thought the strike could be a lengthy one, particularly if Teamsters at the News stopped work in sympathy for those at the Free Press.

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