

# Democratic women come to the aid of their party

By TIM RICHARD

NEW YORK — On the podium it was a man's world on the closing night of the Democratic National Convention.

A male presidential nominee named Jimmy Carter, a male vice presidential nominee named Walter Mondale, introductory speeches by male governors and senators and congressmen, opening and closing invocations by male clergy. The men were in the big slots.

"I don't know that women made an effort to get on the speakers platform," said Kennedy delegate Carolyn Forrest of Westland. She pointed instead to two major amendments to the platform — abortion and sanctions against political candidates who fail to support the Equal Rights Amendment — saying, "They wouldn't have been passed without women."

FIFTY PERCENT of the delegates and alternates on the floor were women, under a new party rule, and three Michigan women are convinced the female voice is being heard.

Ann Mastey, a Carter delegate from Livonia, went even further. "We (women) are working closer together than the men because we were not heard for so many years."

A quiet, grandmotherly sort who lives in a Livonia apartment, Ms. Mastey explained how Democratic women work together.

"Women listen to the women. If a woman is not meeting standards, they (other women) tell her."

Ms. Mastey is treasurer of two groups — United Steelworkers Retirees and the 2nd Congressional District-Wayne Democratic organization.

She is on a state Democratic task force on accountability in which the party is making an effort to measure how well its candidates do in support of the platform, and she is on the Steelworkers union screening committee.

KAY BEARD, a Kennedy delegate and Wayne County commissioner from Inkster, agreed women are really listened to, but added:

"It depends on which woman's voice. The majority have been heard but not the minority."

A Catholic, Ms. Beard was unhappy that the convention supported a plank on "reproductive freedom as a fundamental human right." Its purpose was to endorse government-funded abortions for poor women although the word "abortion" was never used.

The voice of Democratic women that made party leaders and reporters head was the Gloria Steinem type. That made Ms. Beard unhappy.

"But we women have an equal number of convention votes. That's the bottom line. And we have had more women speakers than I've ever seen at a national convention," she added.

"I WAS HERE in 1976 when we were one of only two delegations with 50 percent women," said teacher Gail Nolin, a Carter delegate from the 19th Congressional District.

"Carter listened to us."

"In some cases, there may be tokenism. A woman delegate may be a big wig's wife. But it is improving," said Ms. Nolin.

By "some cases," she made it clear she didn't mean the Michigan delegation.

One measure of women's status in Michigan may be that the party chair is Olivia (Libby) Maynard of Flint. Last year Ms. Maynard was the party's nominee for lieutenant governor, the first woman in Michigan history to be nominated for that office.



ANN MASTEY



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