

Why Rep. Griffiths Fights On Rights

By KATHY MARTIN
Special Writer

Congresswoman Martha Griffiths told a Redford Township audience at St. Agatha parish last week that the U.S. Constitution grants women two and only two rights: voting and holding public office.

Rep. Griffiths (D-Detroit) surveyed the problems of women in today's world by stressing social security laws and their benefits which don't apply equally to both sexes.

She is the top-ranking woman Democrat in the Congress and the only woman on the Ways and Means Committee. She is a lawyer and former Detroit judge.

"A WORKING COUPLE," Mrs. Griffiths stated, "works more hours, yet collects less money and social security benefits than a couple in which, only the man works."

It was in her 17th Congress-

sional District that a young man wrote to her after his wife died of cancer, leaving him supporting their three children on his own income alone.

Although his wife had worked two years, the law refused any right on his part to collect social security for her work. It took five years before Mrs. Griffiths could help him begin to draw some benefits under government regulations.

Mrs. Griffiths received extended applause with her remark that "every worker should get the same wage benefits. What difference does it make if the worker is a man or a woman?"

IN CONGRESS, Mrs. Griffiths has made special effort to fight what she considers injustices confronting women in employment. She is sponsor of the equal rights amendment and has successfully guided its passage

through the House in the 91st Congress. According to the proposed Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution, a state government can not make laws discriminating against equal rights for women. Protective laws which unions drew up to protect women were labeled "scare tactics" by Mrs. Griffiths. "Protective legislation never did protect women."

If a woman applies for a job, she can not be turned down on the basis of sex, and she wouldn't apply for a job where she did not think she could handle any manual labor demanded.

However, Mrs. Griffiths pointed out, there is not a single woman vice president in a Michigan bank despite the fact that 60 per cent of banks' employees are women.

MRS. GRIFFITHS was elected U.S. representative to the 84th Congress in 1954. Re-

election has brought her to the present 92nd Congress.

Viewing U.S. Supreme Court rulings on women, she commented that "the Supreme Court sees women as being born of rich fathers who marry them off to rich men, and after their husbands' death they are left with an abundance of money."

She would like to see women treated as "humans . . . We even have thousands of women in the armed forces today, and the only difference between them and the men is that women aren't treated as people."

Extensive applause follow-

ed Mrs. Griffiths' statement that her grandmother "wanted to vote for a woman for president some day."

Mrs. Griffiths remarked that she doesn't know if she will live to see that day, but "I'd like to see the day they put a woman in the Supreme Court." Many politicians are promoting her for such an appointment.

ON THE SUBJECT of women in colleges, she told the audience that she believes both men and women should take advantage of educational opportunity, because "both views are presented."

Mrs. Griffiths said that she "stays clear" of the discussion of abortion laws because "it is not a federal issue." She later commented on the subject saying that "abortion is between a man and his wife, and the man has a right in the decision. I think a man has rights, too."

The congresswoman received enthusiastic applause with her concluding remark in which she congratulated the men in the audience (20 per cent of 200 total) for their attendance. "I really think it was brave for all these men to accompany these women to discuss their rights."

"My grandmother wanted to vote for a woman for president some day . . . I'd like to see the day they put a woman in the Supreme Court."

--Martha Griffiths



Economist Rips Navy On Valerie

ANN ARBOR President Nixon should countermand the secretary of the Navy's decision to reject two female candidates for the Naval Academy at Annapolis, a University of Michigan business economist insists.

Ross J. Wilhelm says the Navy decision to deny admission to Barbara J. Brimmer of Staatsburg, N.Y., and Valerie Schoen, U-M student from Redford Township, is wrong for two reasons:

1. The secretary of the Navy has made it more difficult for all the military services to switch from reliance upon the draft to volunteers, many of whom will have to be women.

2. Rejection of the two women will mean that the Navy Department and the entire Department of Defense will have a more difficult time in securing passage of the military budget in Congress during the coming year.

PROF. WILHELM, a member of the U-M Graduate School of Business Administration, contends that the Navy decision runs counter to current employment trends in the United States. He discussed the subject on his radio program, "Business Review," produced by the University Broad-casting Service (WUOM, WJMR).

Women now constitute about 37 per cent of the work force, Wilhelm notes, and about six out of 10 of new persons available for employment are women -- a growing percentage of whom are married.

"As a consequence of the increasing number of women who are working and the growing proportion who want to work," he adds "it is obvious that any employer who wishes to hire new employees will have to plan to hire more

women than would have been the case in the past."

With the military establishment seeking to convert its manpower policies from the draft to a reliance upon volunteers, "it must be expected that an increasing proportion of the military establishment will be women," the U-M economist says.

"IN VIEW OF the growing importance of women in the work force, it is difficult, if not puzzling, to understand why the secretary of the Navy turned down the applications of the two women for the Naval Academy," Wilhelm says.

"Over the coming years it is a certainty that if the Navy, as well as the rest of the military, is to become a volunteer force it can be expected that a large proportion of the new recruits -- perhaps over half--will have to be women. There simply is no way the military can convert to a volunteer force in today's labor market without increasing the proportion of women in the military services."

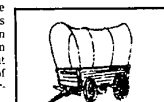
"Further, a very strong argument can be made that a military career or a period of time in military service could have a strong appeal to women and that this would be the easiest, and least costly means for the military to convert to a voluntary force."

"Not least costly because women would be paid any less than men, but simply because the pool of potential volunteers would be larger and less

effort would have to be expended on recruiting."

THE DECISION not to admit women to the Naval Academy will have very serious--and unnecessary--consequences for the entire military establishment, Wilhelm concludes, adding: "Regardless of how one feels about the military and its size, the military budget and the shift to a volunteer force should not be determined by the fact that the secretary of the Navy made a poor decision on the admission of two girls to Annapolis."

"The president of the United States should countermand the decision rejecting the two girls' admission. Further, the president should request the Congress to repeal all laws limiting the use of women in the military."



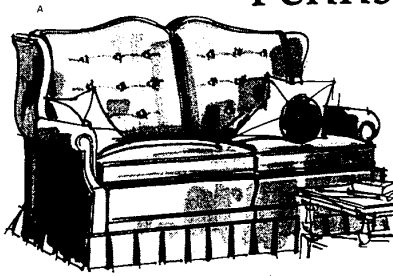
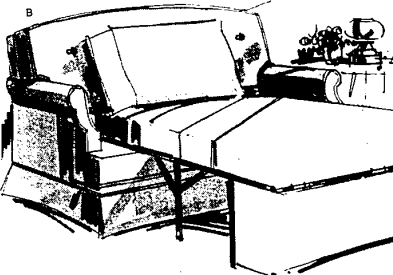
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