

# Can ERA combatants become a team?

**L**AURA CALLOW AND Elaine Donnelly agree on only one thing about the proposed Equal Rights Amendment, which probably will die July 1. The two area housewives say the proposed amendment would remove gender from state and federal laws.

Donnelly is Michigan chairwoman of Stop ERA. Callow is co-chairwoman of the pro-ERA group, Michigan ERAmerica.

**EACH IS CERTAIN** her approach is doing the most for women.

Donnelly said laws should not necessarily all be sex neutral, pointing to the draft and service in combat. She likes laws that protect women in the work place.

ERA would not help women in employment because the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission address problems of sexual discrimination, she said.

But rather than mount hundreds of local campaigns against discriminatory practices, it would be

quicker and fairer to do it in one constitutional amendment, Callow said.

Callow's examples: Title IX outlaws discrimination only in educational institutions receiving federal aid. It does not cover institutions that don't.

A Michigan study in 1975 revealed women either can't buy disability insurance or must pay 150 percent more for it.

**WHOSE APPROACH** is better? Let's look at the deeds of both.

When the Civil Rights Act was passed in 1964, early-day feminists insisted that its Title VII forbid employers to discriminate on the basis of sex as well as race, color, religion or national origin. The women who were to oppose ERA simply were not there.

Subsequently President Richard Nixon signed another bill, passed under feminist pressure, which strengthened Equal Opportunity Employment Commission. Those who were to battle ERA weren't there.

Today, these laws now win Donnelly's strong endorsement. Ironically, she says they are the reason ERA is not needed.

Today's opponents showed little interest when the Higher Education Acts were lobbied through Congress and later amended to prohibit discrimination against women in university admission policies and extend provisions of the Equal Pay Act of 1963 to women professors, managers and administrators.

They sat out Michigan's 1974 passage of an equal credit law and the Sexual Assault Act, as well as establishment of First Step, the agency for battered women. The latter was the work of three local members of the National Organization for Women.

**ERA PROponents** and feminists have worn their own blinders. For years they ignored, even disparaged, the homemaker. They did considerable damage to their own cause before changing their views.

ERA opponents have been active in Congress recently to protect the homemaker's Social Security

rights, although there is disagreement between them and the pro-ERA forces over the best way to protect these rights.

Both sides have matured: ERA groups changed their ways on the homemaker issue, and anti-ERA spokeswomen praise what was once regarded as feminist legislation.

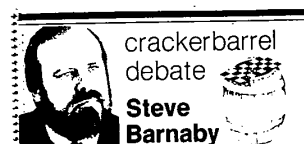
**THE TWO SIDES** should consider working together. It will be difficult because of rancor from the ERA fight and basic differences in philosophy.

Perhaps a bill to protect children? Efforts for equality in pensions and disability insurance? How about forming joint study groups to look at new issues? In a few instances, they might reach a consensus.

Both groups have had years of experience organizing, debating, rallying, researching, collaring legislators, counting votes and dealing with the media. That experience should not go to waste.

Combined on an issue, they'd be invincible.

— Sherry Kahan



## Personal tragedy

## Mideast crisis strikes home

"My parents are under seige and I'm worried sick."

These are the words, a cry of anguish, from a Lebanese-American who was able to get through, as his native land and his family are being destroyed.

He is only one of thousands who live day to day worrying and wondering about his family's fate. His tone of voice betrays his calm, outward exterior.

Outrage has passed him by. He seems almost resigned to the strife which tortures his homeland.

His 72-year-old father, a businessman/farmer, lives near Beirut on the road to Damascus where the heaviest fighting has taken place. One sister lives near the Beirut Airport, the one we see every night on television being bombed.

Another sister lives in a town called Alek which has been "shelled everyday," he says.

Although he came to this country when he was 16, much of his heart remains with his family, the family he is unable to talk with either by mail or telephone.

"I can't get through. But I know they're alive," he says. To find out about his family, he called a friend in Venezuela who was able to get through. It's a long way from Beirut to the suburbs of Detroit. In the last month to Lebanese-Americans it might as well be Mars.

**LEBANON HAS BEEN** used as a Mideast punching bag for nearly a decade. Once known as the pearl of the Middle East because of its beautiful terrain and seaside resorts, it now has become a living hell.

But to most Americans it is just another war we watch on the evening news.

"I am disappointed in what the U.S. is doing. This country is the moral leader of the world. I would hope that President Reagan would step in with both feet," says the Lebanese-American man.

No, he isn't talking about troops or arms. As a matter of fact, this man deplores what he sees as saber-rattling by Israeli and Arabic leaders.

"All sides must be willing to sit down at the negotiating table. The PLO must realize that Israel is here to stay, and Israel must realize that Palestinians need a place to live. But the key operator in this whole thing is the president of the United States," he says.

But the president will do something only when he realizes that American citizens are tired of spending millions of dollars on a cruel and brutal war.

Most importantly, it is the Jewish population in this country which must start talking sense to its cousins, brothers and sisters in Israel.

**"NEVER AGAIN,"** says Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin, referring to the World War II Holocaust.

And what an irony, what a shame, that it is a Jewish nation which threatens the existence of an entire ethnic group. Palestinians won't go away because America or Israel pretends they don't exist.

Neither will Israeli soldiers kill them all. The Lebanese invasion will only drive them to more militant action on an international scale.

Never again, Mr. Begin.  
Not in Germany, not in Israel.  
And not in Lebanon.



## British win another 'war'

I sat in a parked jeep on a grassy hill overlooking the Miller Drop Zone last week and waited for the British troops to arrive.

A few moments later, four Huey helicopters — flying low and fast — appeared over the trees in front of us.

The choppers set down on the plain and about 30 British soldiers jumped out. They sprawled in the grass until the helicopters lifted off and then scurried into the woods.

No, it wasn't a closing battle in the Falklands. It was Camp Grayling, the 122,000-acre training site for the Michigan Army National Guard.

I was at Grayling doing my annual bit for the Guard. Also at Grayling this summer were 120 members of the Queen's Own Mercian Yeomanry, a home guard British army reserve unit.

The British had swapped places for two weeks with 120 Michigan Guardsmen as part of a military exchange agreement between the United States and the United Kingdom.

**BRITISH SPECIAL** liaison officer Capt. Robert Wharton had told me to drop by if I had any questions. As the press officer for the Michigan Guard, I was working with him to coordinate visits from local television stations and newspapers.

I found Wharton standing amid a group of English reservists shortly after the helicopters left the Miller Drop Zone. They were dressed in camouflage battle fatigues, toed hefty field packs and M-16 rifles and had smeared their faces with camouflage make-up.

"I delivered several messages to Wharton and was about to discuss a proposed press release with him when he stopped me."

"We have to go this way about one kilometer," the Birmingham attorney told me in perfect English, pointing into the woods. "Then we must take care of some business. After that, we will talk."

One kilometer is slightly more than half a mile. I figured I could walk that far.

We started tramping through the woods in single file, cutting a path through the ferns and the bugs as we went. None of the British soldiers talked. They



communicated with hand signals and bird chirping sounds.

I tagged along, toting my clipboard. A few minutes later, somebody gave a signal and everybody belly flopped onto the ground. I hesitated and then followed suit, not wanting to betray their position to "the enemy."

We waited and then resumed the march. Twice more we stopped and hid. When we came to a road, we stopped and scurried across, one person at a time.

**WHARTON EARLIER** had used the expression, "In for a penny, in for a pound." I began to wonder how much this experience would cost me. I had sought him out for a short chat. Suddenly, I was at war.

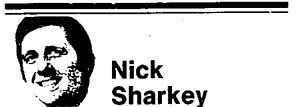
Eventually, we came to a small knoll and the British soldiers began crawling up it. I stayed below. Without warning, the "battle" erupted. Small explosions shook the trees and rifles cracked with the sound of blank ammunition being fired. The war was on.

After about 15 minutes, the British won. They pushed ahead to a higher hill. There they set up a defensive perimeter. I sat down at the top of the hill and watched Wharton check out the soldiers who were digging into the hillside.

By the time I caught my breath, he was back. "Hello," he said. "We can talk now."

With that, he took the material I had brought for him to review. While he read, I talked to British Sgt. Major Robert Blackburn. He told me he didn't mind the bugs or the wet Michigan weather. But there was one question.

"Do you have any tea?" he asked.



## Watergate's grim lesson is very local

**I**F YOU WANT to live up a dull suburban cocktail party, mention two words: "Richard Nixon." I guarantee a lively discussion.

Even now, nearly eight years after he left office in disgrace, suburbanites have strong feelings about this ex-president.

Many conservatives still believe that one day historians will regard Richard Nixon as one of our finest presidents. They praise his efforts in foreign affairs. They maintain he was "hounded out of office" by a liberal press.

**THOUGHTS OF** Richard Nixon came to mind last week during the 10th anniversary of the Watergate break-in, which happened on June 17, 1972. That was the beginning of the end of the political career of Richard Nixon.

As time goes by, memories begin to dim. Those staunch defenders of Richard Nixon usually go unchallenged as the facts of the Watergate era are forgotten. Many younger people have no recollection of 1972-74.

Because of that, I made my children sit in front of the television last week and watch a special program on the anniversary of Watergate. They learned something far different from an effective president who was unfairly forced out of office.

Nixon was a man who, a few days after the break-in, tried to begin a coverup that would involve the Central Intelligence Agency and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. He counseled his closest advisers to be evasive when giving sworn testimony. He gave advice in the Oval Office on how \$1 million could be raised to keep people quiet.

**SOME HISTORICAL** events cry out for recall. I think of the preposterous theory, stated every few years, that perhaps there really was no Holocaust. As painful as it may be, all of us must remember that six million Jews were murdered in concentration camps.

We must remember historical events because there are lessons to be learned and old lessons to be relearned.

Watergate proved that a check-and-balance system for government is a necessity. The executive branch must be examined by the legislative and judicial branches with the assistance of a free press. An executive branch left by itself may well have brought down our national government during the Watergate era.

This "watchdog" function is not only necessary at the federal level, but also at the local. That's why newspapers serve such a vital function. Often we are the only representatives of the public checking out facts and information at the city or township hall.

A scandal as important as Watergate may never be uncovered by your local newspaper. But the principle is the same: Without a free and independent source of information, any government is likely to abuse its powers.

**IF YOU NEED** a reminder that Watergate-type situations can happen again, consider Detroit's continuing Magnam Oil controversy. The developing parallels are uncanny.

Where in Watergate the shield was "national security," in Magnam Oil it is "racism." As in Watergate, the details of Magnam Oil are being slowly revealed. The press is being strongly criticized for its coverage. It appears the executive branch has abused its power to work against the public interest.

No, Watergate cannot become a relic relegated to the historians and librarians. Its lessons are too important for 1982 and the future.