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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

~~H. P. Goldfield~~  
~~112 OEOB~~

*file - women's  
issues*

Updated version of "Legal and Economic Equity for Women."  
Please discard earlier copy.



White House Office of Policy Information

# ISSUE UPDATE

Washington, D.C.

Number 15

September 19, 1983

## LEGAL AND ECONOMIC EQUITY FOR WOMEN

### Executive Summary

President Reagan is working actively to ensure legal and economic equity for women. His Administration is vigorously enforcing anti-discrimination laws, and has submitted legislation to eliminate almost all remaining gender distinctions from federal statutes. In addition, the President's policies have helped produce an economic recovery that is creating new economic opportunities for women who choose to work outside the home. These legal and economic opportunities have been supplemented by tax reform that has significantly reduced the tax burden on all Americans. For those women who want to work outside the home but lack the experience to secure a job, the Administration has developed effective job training programs. Further, the Administration is working to strengthen child support laws to improve enforcement efforts against delinquent fathers. The President's commitment to women's rights is also illustrated by his excellent record of appointments of women to important federal posts.

### Introduction

Women have always played major roles in American society. Now, because of recent social, economic, and legal changes, women are assuming increasingly diverse responsibilities. Greater numbers are undertaking careers. Many are focusing on the family and the home. Others are seeking political office. And some doing all of these things.

With their varied interests and concerns, women therefore do not form a large, monolithic special interest group: a female entrepreneur has different concerns than a divorced mother trying to support a family; a young single, female professional does not have the same needs as a newly-widowed senior citizen.

Despite different goals and concerns, however, all women share at least one objective: the opportunity to choose their own destinies and attain individual self-fulfillment as fully participating citizens. President Reagan is committed to providing that freedom. For women working outside the home, he has supported equal pay, adequate day care, effective job training programs, and a strong economy that creates more jobs. For homemakers, he has increased the ability to participate in Individual Retirement Accounts, reduced the estate tax, strengthened enforcement of child support obligations of absent fathers, and provided pension protection for military wives.

Moreover, President Reagan has worked to continue ferreting out all vestiges of discrimination. As he said on June 3, 1983:

We must work together to ensure women can participate [in our national life] in the manner they choose and that they are treated equally. We, in this Administration, are committed to eliminating, once and for all, all traces of unjust discrimination against women.

#### Legal Equity for Women

President Reagan is fully committed to equal opportunity for women in all areas. On August 26, 1983, he emphasized that it is "time to cut through the fog of demagoguery that surrounds this whole issue. All of us are interested in one goal: ensuring legal equity for women."

To this end, President Reagan has called for and produced stronger enforcement of protections already written into the statutes. These laws are extremely powerful weapons against discrimination. The Equal Pay Act of 1963, for example, requires equal pay for equal work, regardless of sex. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (as amended by the Equal Employment Act of 1972) prohibits sex discrimination with regard to hiring, job classification, promotion, compensation, fringe benefits, and termination. The Small Business Act of 1973 prohibits the SBA from practicing sex discrimination against any person or small business concern. And the Equal Credit Opportunity Act of 1974 requires financial institutions to make credit available without discrimination based on sex or marital status.

Furthermore, the Supreme Court has ruled that the Fifth

and Fourteenth Amendments prohibit state and federal actions that discriminate against women. Distinctions based on sex, the Court said, are permitted only when they are reasonable, narrowly drawn and "substantially related to an important governmental objective," such as not compelling women to register for a military draft.

The President is determined that these laws be obeyed. At his direction, the Justice Department is vigorously enforcing legal protections against discrimination based on sex, race, or national origin. To cite only one example, the Administration won a court order instructing Fairfax County, Virginia, to make backpay awards to 685 victims of sex and race discrimination totaling \$2.75 million -- the largest recovery ever in an anti-discrimination case involving a public employer.

The Administration has also supported women's rights in numerous federal court cases. For example, the Justice Department filed a "friend of the court" brief in the Supreme Court arguing against the practice of paying women lower monthly pension benefits than men, a position vindicated by the Court in a subsequent case. The Administration also filed a "friend of the court" brief on behalf of a female lawyer denied partnership in a law firm because of her sex. In a lower court, the Justice Department argued that the physical agility tests in the City of Buffalo Fire Department were not job-related and had unfairly prevented the city from hiring female firefighters. The Administration also filed suit against the Buffalo Board of Education charging sex discrimination under the Pregnancy Disability Act.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) has also vigorously enforced equal employment laws. In FY 1982, the EEOC recovered \$100 million in back pay for victims of sex and race discrimination -- 73% more than the EEOC recovered in FY 1980.

President Reagan has also launched two major initiatives to promote equal rights within the federal and state governments. First, on December 21, 1981, the President created the Task Force on Legal Equity for Women to identify federal laws and regulations that discriminate against women. The First Quarterly Report resulted in the introduction by Senator Robert Dole of legislation (S. 501) to correct 51 gender distinctions in federal law. The President endorsed this bill in September 1982.

When the Task Force's Third Quarterly Report was presented in July 1983, the White House scheduled a meeting of the Cabinet Council on Legal Policy for its earliest possible consideration. At a meeting on September 8, 1983, the President endorsed 122 of 140 possible changes. He

deferred action on 11 provisions that would enhance women's opportunities, such as affirmative action in U.S. foreign aid programs. And he decided to oppose 7 changes that would hurt women, including the elimination of laws that prevent women from serving in combat.

The most important result of the President's actions in this regard is that all the remaining sex discriminations in the federal code have been identified and, once Congress acts, will be eliminated.

The President's second major initiative is the 50 States Project, an ongoing effort through which the President works directly with the governors and legislators of the 50 states to assist them in identifying and correcting discriminatory state laws and regulations. All the governors have appointed representatives to start the process in their states. Many of these discriminatory laws have already been changed at the state level. The Administration will continue to work closely with the states to help them develop strategies to end discrimination in their state codes.

The President is confident that eliminating discriminatory laws on a statute by statute basis will work because, when he was Governor of California, he followed that same approach and managed to enact some of the strongest equal rights laws in the nation. Just a few of the laws enacted by then-Governor Reagan included a prohibition against discrimination on account of sex in employment, real property transfers, and the writing of insurance policies; protections allowing a married woman to establish credit in her own name; revisions in the community property law to give married women equal rights with regard to the management and control of community property; and changes in the probate law that equalized married women's rights with regard to the administration of the estate of a deceased spouse.

The President believes that women should be protected against discrimination in all forms, but that these protections should take the form of specific laws. He opposes the proposed Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) because its vague wording could result in the federal courts -- instead of the people's representatives in the state legislatures and Congress -- arbitrarily deciding important gender-related social policy. Even the amendment's sponsors admit that they cannot predict how the Supreme Court would rule on specific issues, so no one knows what effect the ERA would have on a wide array of policy questions. In fact, rather than correcting discrimination, the ERA might force drastic and unanticipated social change. For example, the chief Senate sponsor of the ERA has testified that he does not know if the ERA would result in the removal of tax

exempt status from churches that do not ordain women as priests -- such as the Catholic Church -- or from colleges and universities that admit only a single sex.

The President strongly believes that legal equity should be guaranteed, but that in so doing, the people and their elected representatives should retain their power to make the laws that establish national policy. This power would be seriously undermined by the open-ended wording of the ERA.

### Economic Recovery

Nothing over the past decade has caused more pain and put a heavier burden on women -- homemakers, workers employed outside the home, and the elderly -- than soaring inflation and economic stagnation. Although inflation has hurt all women trying to stretch their family budgets, rising prices were especially hard on retired women with fixed incomes and single mothers trying to get by on one paycheck. In 1979 and 1980, as inflation hit double digits for two consecutive years, many women were just barely able to pay for such basics as food, fuel, and medicine.

Rising unemployment and economic slowdowns accompanied the inflation of the 1970s. More women joined the workforce -- many because they wanted careers of their own and some because their families needed the extra income -- but the stalled economy prevented most from making real progress. Often as the "last hired," they were the "first fired" when a company had to lay off workers. This meant tragedy for many single-parent families headed by women; joblessness often forced them into poverty and welfare dependency. Only a dynamic, expanding economy could have created the number of jobs necessary to allow women to move more speedily into better, higher-paying jobs, and that economy did not exist in the 1970s.

The President's most important solution to this problem is his four-part Economic Recovery Program of tax rate cuts, government spending control, regulatory reform, and support for a sound monetary policy. This program is putting vigor back into the economy and creating jobs for all Americans.

The recovery program has already achieved important results. Inflation on the whole, which averaged 12.9% in 1979 and 1980, has been reduced to 2.4% over the past twelve months -- the lowest level in 17 years. By contrast, if prices had continued rising in 1981 and 1982 at the same rate they had during the last two years of the Carter Administration, a pound of hamburger would have cost 60 cents more, a gallon of gasoline 97 cents more, and the median-priced new home \$11,800 more.

In particular, these lower inflation rates mean that a working single mother with two children earning \$15,000 per year has about \$1,250 more in purchasing power than she would have had if inflation had remained at the 1980 rate.

This decline in inflation has also led to lower interest rates, which had reached a peace-time high of 21.5% during the last month of the previous Administration. Since then, the prime rate has been cut nearly in half, and it is easier for all Americans to buy homes, cars, and household appliances; the monthly payment on a \$50,000 mortgage, for example, is now \$140 less than it was at the higher interest rates.

Most important, Americans are going back to work as a result of the strong economic recovery. Since December 1982, 2.5 million new jobs have been created, and the country is well on its way to the Administration's goal of 5 million new jobs by the end of 1984 and 15 million new jobs by the end of 1988. Women are doing particularly well in the economic recovery: the unemployment rate among adult women has declined from 9.2% to 8.0%. In fact, women are expected to fare even better than men throughout the rest of the recovery primarily because service industries that employ large numbers of women -- banking, retailing, and data processing -- are growing faster than manufacturing industries, where male employees predominate.

### Tax Reform

Before President Reagan's tax reforms were enacted in 1981, the federal tax code contained many provisions that indirectly discriminated against women. Most of these inequities have been eliminated, and those that remain have been targeted for change by the Administration.

The so-called "marriage tax" was a prime example of federal policy that unfairly penalized wage-earning women. Under the old law, a husband and wife who were both employed paid more in taxes than a single man and a single woman with the same total income, which was unfair to a second spouse -- most often the wife -- working outside the home. As a private citizen, Ronald Reagan had spoken against this condition. As a candidate for President, he called for reform of the marriage tax penalty and in his first economic address to the Congress after taking office, he pledged early action on this issue.

The President's Economic Recovery Tax Act (ERTA) of 1981 substantially reduced the "marriage tax." For example, two-earner families in which each spouse earns about \$15,000 will save about \$300 a year because of this change.



This reduction in the "marriage tax" also allows married women business owners, who constitute two-thirds of the three million female entrepreneurs, to keep more of their business earnings. Most female-owned firms are sole proprietorships, partnerships, or closely held corporations that pay personal, rather than corporate, income tax. As a result, they were penalized by the marriage tax. Much of that unfair tax burden has been eliminated by the President's reforms.

Women business owners also benefited from ERTA's 25% reduction in personal income tax rates and from the lowering of the maximum rate in the personal income tax to 50%. These reductions have left most businesswomen with more income to reinvest in their enterprises.

The 1981 tax act also virtually eliminated the estate tax, a reform that especially helps women, who, on the average, outlive men by eight years. The new law provides for unlimited property transfers between spouses and raises the tax exemption on inherited property from \$175,625 in 1981 to \$600,000 by 1987, thus preserving intact some 99.7% of all estates. This reform, too, was first proposed by Ronald Reagan, both as a Presidential candidate and during his first economic address to Congress.

ERTA also expanded participation in Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs), allowing larger contributions -- up to \$2,000 a year -- for those who work outside the home. Also, homemakers with no earned income may contribute to their own IRAs as long as the total for both spouses does not exceed \$2250 and neither spouse contributes more than \$2,000.

The new tax law also increased the maximum tax credit for child care expenses from \$400 to \$720 per child, making it easier for working parents to afford day care. The credit is scaled back for each additional \$2,000 of income above \$10,000, and for parents with incomes of \$28,000 or more, the allowable credit remains at \$480 per child -- thereby ensuring that the largest tax break goes to those who need it most. ERTA also made employer-provided day care a non-taxable fringe benefit to employees, thus increasing incentives for both employers and employees to arrange for child care. And next year, for the first time, the IRS's 1040A short form will contain an additional line for deducting child care costs, making it easier for low- and middle-income parents to claim these deductions.

### Employment Initiatives

Women are joining the labor force in growing numbers. Sixty-eight percent of all women aged 18 to 64 worked at least part-time in 1981. In that year, 52% of all women over the age of 16 were in the labor force, up from 43% in 1970 and 34% in 1950.

Women who work outside the home have varied objectives. Some want to pursue a challenging career, some need to support themselves, and others want to supplement the family income with another paycheck. The Administration's first goal, of course, is to enforce anti-discrimination statutes in the workplace. But President Reagan has gone beyond that; he has proposed innovative government programs that address many further concerns of working women.

The Administration's Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), which replaced the Comprehensive Employment Training Act (CETA), will provide low-income and low-skilled women with the training they need to obtain permanent, productive jobs. At least 90% of the one million JTPA trainees will be economically disadvantaged persons, many of whom are women. In fact, the program specifically targets adult recipients of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), the vast majority of whom are single mothers. Displaced homemakers will also benefit from JTPA since up to 10% of the participants may be persons not economically disadvantaged. The Act cites displaced homemakers among the non-economically disadvantaged eligible to receive job training.

To help working parents obtain child care, the President's 1981 tax reform, as previously noted, provides increased tax credits for day care, and stipulates that employer contributions for child care are not taxable to employees. Furthermore, the White House office of Private Sector Initiatives is meeting with the chief executive officers of major corporations in an attempt to encourage them to provide day care services. Similar efforts are being made by the Women's Bureau regional offices and the Appalachian Regional Commission. In addition, the Women's Bureau and the Rockefeller Foundation are jointly sponsoring four projects to demonstrate innovative ways of providing care for the children of single parents. Furthermore, states have traditionally used a very large share of their Social Service Block Grant funds to support day care for lower-income families.

To assist parents working for the federal government, the President signed the Flexible and Compressed Work Schedules Act of 1982, which permanently allows federal agencies to adopt "flexitime" schedules for their

employees. The Administration also supports a proposal by Senator William Armstrong (R. Colorado) that would allow federal contractors and subcontractors to provide flexible and compressed work schedules. These initiatives would permit working parents to organize their workdays around the individual needs of their families.

The President has also created several federal programs that enhance employment for those women who choose to work outside the home. The Small Business Administration's Women's Business Initiatives, for example, conducts conferences across the country that advise and assist women who own small businesses.

Continuing its long-standing mandate, the Labor Department's Women's Bureau is developing programs that address the employment and training needs of women and providing technical assistance to employers and others at the local level.

Because of the President's initiatives and the improved economy, more women than ever who choose to work or economically need to work now hold jobs. The percentage of women working outside the home has increased from 48.3 percent in January 1981 to 48.9 percent in July 1983. This means that 2.1 million more women are working now than when President Reagan assumed office two-and-one-half years ago.

### Social Equity

Although sex discrimination in the workplace has been greatly reduced, many women still do not have the same degree of financial independence as do most men. This is primarily because many women choose to become homemakers, and a large number of women who work outside the home do not have the training and experience to obtain jobs paying enough to support an entire family. As a result, many women need protection against the financial consequences of abandonment, divorce, or their husband's death.

Divorce and abandonment of families by fathers is becoming an increasingly serious problem for millions of women. Indeed, approximately half the marriages of the 1970s have ended, or will end, in divorce. Single-parent families, 90% of whom are headed by women, now constitute 22% of all families and children. There are now 15 million children in these families today, a 65% increase during the past decade.

But according to a 1978 Census Bureau study, only 59% of women potentially eligible to receive child support awards have been granted them. And less than half of all women so awarded receive the full amount due them; 28% receive nothing at all. In sum, children in the United States are owed \$4 billion by delinquent parents. More and more of these abandoned families have fallen into poverty. In fact, 36% of families headed by a woman in 1982 had incomes below the poverty level.

In order to focus the nation's attention on the serious problem of parents who fail to provide child support, President Reagan declared August 1983 as National Child Support Enforcement Month. More important, the President has proposed effective new measures to ensure that absent fathers pay child support. This legislation, if enacted into law, would benefit both families who are on welfare and those who are not. Under the President's proposal, states that receive federal support would be required to implement laws and procedures to increase collections, including mandatory wage assignments for delinquent parents, state income tax refund offsets and use of quasi-judicial or administrative procedures for establishing and enforcing child support orders. States would also be mandated to require absent fathers who have private employer-based insurance coverage to include their children as covered individuals in these plans.

Because of the Administration's strong support of the Federal Child Support Enforcement program, absent fathers paid some \$1.8 billion to welfare families through the federal child support program in 1982, including an additional \$170 million in child support payments that have resulted from computer matchups of federal income tax refunds.

Spouses of military personnel were another group of women, who, due to their unique situation, were unfairly penalized in the event of divorce. Since they must move frequently because of their husbands' service commitments, many military wives find it difficult or impossible to establish independent careers that would qualify them for a pension. In 1982, President Reagan signed into law the Uniformed Services Spouses' Protection Act, which allows the Defense Department to make military retirement payments to an ex-spouse in accordance with awards made by a state court. This law was necessary because of a U.S. Supreme Court ruling that left many women unable to collect any of the retirement pay earned by their former husbands if they remarried. The law also provides that after 20 years of marriage to an active duty serviceman, a divorced spouse will continue to receive medical benefits and commissary privileges.

The President has also supported legislation to make womens' private pension systems more fair. This legislation, endorsed by Administration testimony in August 1983, would increase pension rights for women in their peak working years. For example, it would require pension plans to accept workers as participants at age 21 instead of the current minimum age of 25, thus providing women, who leave the labor force more often than men during their middle years, with four additional years of participation. The legislation would also ensure that mothers would be able to return to work after at least 12 months of maternity leave without being penalized with a break in pension participation. The legislation would also make clear that pension benefits in specified cases could be assigned by state courts for child support and alimony payments. Finally, pension laws would be changed to enhance the income protection that women, as potential surviving spouses, have in their husbands' pensions.

The President also helped enact changes in the Social Security law that equalized Social Security benefits for widows and widowers, enabled surviving spouses, whatever their sex, to continue receiving their deceased spouses' benefits upon remarriage, and assured fair treatment of divorced spouses by making them eligible to receive their former spouses' retirement benefits even if that spouse has not yet chosen to claim them.

#### Assistance to Needy Children

Among the good news concerning American children is that the infant mortality rate, which has been declining for decades, continues to fall. The rate, 20 infant deaths per thousand live births in 1970, dropped to 12.5 deaths per births in 1980, and fell further to 11.2 in 1982.

But unfortunately, because of rising divorce and illegitimacy rates, more children than ever are being raised in single-parent homes. And many of these childrens' mothers, unable to find jobs that allow them to support their families, are turning to the government for help, without which their childrens' health and nurturing could be jeopardized.

President Reagan recognizes the gravity of this problem. Because he believes that no needy child in the United States should go hungry or be denied medical assistance, he has proposed to target federal aid to those most in need. And, indeed, his budgets have called for more -- not less -- spending on these programs than in previous years.

For example, under President Reagan, AFDC serves one in eight American children, while Medicaid provides health care to 10.5 million children -- about one American child in six -- and 500,000 more beneficiaries than in 1980. The food stamp program will feed 2.4 million more people than in 1980. And ten million low-income students now get free school lunches -- about half a million more than the previous administration's budget provided for.

Children's immunization rates are also up under President Reagan. In 1980, 91% of children entering school were immunized. By 1984, the range will be 95-97 percent.

President Reagan has also increased spending on income assistance programs -- such as subsidized housing and food stamps -- that help needy mothers support their children. Under President Reagan's 1984 budget, spending on social programs that benefit low-income, unemployed and other needy groups would be about \$11 billion more than in 1981, a 10% increase. The food stamp program's budget, for example, is \$3.7 billion higher in FY 1983 than it was in FY 1980.

### Presidential Appointments

President Reagan appointed more women to full-time top policy making positions during his first two years in office than any of his predecessors during a similar period. By the end of January 1983, he had selected 94 women, compared to only 76 appointed by the previous Administration in its first two years. There are also three Cabinet-level rank women in the Reagan Administration, more than at any one time in U.S. history.

In all, President Reagan has appointed women to nearly 1100 important positions in the White House and throughout the executive branch, including 181 for Senior Executive Service, 584 in GS-13 or above schedule C positions, and 324 for part-time advisory boards.

The President's most significant women appointments include U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, the first woman ever selected to serve on the Supreme Court, United Nations Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick, Secretary of Transportation Elizabeth Dole and Secretary of Health and Human Services Margaret Heckler. Women also head the Peace Corps (Loret Ruppe), the Consumer Product Safety Commission (Nancy Steorts), the U.S. Postal Rate Commission (Janet Steiger), and the Federal Labor Relations Authority (Barbara Mahone). The President has also nominated Katherine Ortega to be Treasurer of the United States.

### Conclusion

President Reagan is a staunch defender of women's rights -- the right to legal equity and the right to economic opportunity. He is defending those rights in a variety of genuinely effective ways -- by vigorously enforcing anti-discrimination statutes so that women can be free to pursue their aspirations without being held back by bias or prejudice. He is working to strengthen laws that guarantee women fairness in child support cases. And he is retargeting federal assistance to the neediest families.

Most important, however, the President is pursuing economic policies that are already improving women's financial independence. Inflation, the most significant threat to most women's economic condition well-being, has been cut dramatically and is now less than 3%. Unemployment is declining and should continue to do so. As the economy expands, women's job opportunities will increase, leading to greater financial security. As President Reagan said on August 26, 1983, when he addressed a women's leadership forum:

A growing economy ... will help all women: those who are looking for work, those who seek to advance up the career ladder, and yes, those who have families to feed. At this point, in the pursuit of equality, economic opportunity provides the greatest, most immediate advance for women. It's economic recovery that will produce more options for women than anything else.

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THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 26, 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR FRED F. FIELDING

FROM: JOHN G. ROBERTS *JGR*

SUBJECT: New Constitutional Amendment Proposed by  
the "Los Angeles Professional Republican  
Women, Federated"

Donna Little, founder and President of the fledgling Los Angeles Professional Republican Women, Federated, has written Mr. Deaver to suggest that the President offer a new version of a Constitutional amendment to guarantee equal rights for women. Little thinks this strategy would help bridge the purported "gender gap." She does not suggest any specific wording for the new version, but would be happy to work on it. Deaver sent Little a brief nonsubstantive reply, and has asked for our views.

Little's idea is neither theoretically nor practically sound. Many of the President's objections to the ERA are based not on the particular language of the proposal but rather the vehicle of a Constitutional amendment. Any amendment would ipso facto override the prerogatives of the States and vest the federal judiciary with broader powers in this area, two of the central objections to the ERA. The President's position that a Constitutional amendment is not necessary to secure equal rights is also not based on objection to the particular language of the ERA.

As a practical matter, any shift in position on this issue - and support of a modified ERA would be a dramatic shift - would likely cause more harm than good. The President would be perceived as crassly opportunistic, and would risk losing the devotion of some of his most loyal supporters. I have listed these concerns in the attached draft memorandum to Deaver. I do not know if we should reply directly to Little, rejecting her suggestion, so I have also raised that question in the Deaver memorandum.

Attachments



112206

**LOS ANGELES PROFESSIONAL  
REPUBLICAN WOMEN, FEDERATED**

September 14, 1983

The Honorable Michael Deaver  
Assistant to the President  
Deputy Chief of Staff  
The White House  
Washington, D.C. 20500

*Through  
her idea  
to FF.*

Dear Mr. Deaver:

I have been informed that you are presently exploring ways to negate the recent criticisms levied against the President by certain predominantly Democratic women's groups. I am an attorney and have recently formed a group of Republican business women called the "Los Angeles Professional Republican Women's Club." This group presently has twenty-five members (most of whom are between twenty-five and forty-five years old) and is expanding rapidly. I am the president of the club.

I am writing because I have a specific suggestion. The Democratic women's groups which are presently criticizing the President are, I believe, engaged in a campaign to undermine the President's support among women by depicting him as "anti-women." This campaign is predicated largely upon the President's opposition to the Equal Rights Amendment, whose passage they worked so diligently for. That "ERA," of course, failed to gain the necessary support among the states, notwithstanding their efforts. Consequently, I believe the opportunity has now presented itself for the President to convert this issue to his own political advantage by proposing a new version of a Constitutional amendment—one which would be consistent with Republican principles and yet would address the more legitimate concerns of the women's groups. By proposing his own "ERA"—one which would be acceptable to the vast majority of Americans, the President could, simultaneously, unite the nation on this divisive issue, replace the "anti-women" image created by the women's groups with that of a champion of women's rights, and capture for his own use the women's groups' favorite weapon in their efforts to undermine his support.

If you feel a Presidentially sponsored Constitutional amendment would be feasible, I would be happy to assist in any way I could in the drafting of same. In any event, I would appreciate your thoughts about the suggestion and would like to offer whatever assistance you feel I or my group could give in your endeavors with regard to women's issues.

Very truly yours,

*Donna A. Little*

Donna A. Little  
11930 Montana Avenue #203  
Los Angeles, California 90049  
(213) 826-0996

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 27, 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR MICHAEL K. DEEVER  
ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT  
DEPUTY CHIEF OF STAFF

FROM: FRED F. FIELDING *Orig. signed by FF*  
COUNSEL TO THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: New Constitutional Amendment Proposed by  
the "Los Angeles Professional Republican  
Women, Federated"

---

You have asked for our views on a proposal submitted by Donna A. Little, founder and President of the fledgling Los Angeles Professional Republican Women, Federated. In her letter to you of September 14, Little suggested that the President could capture significant female support by proposing a new version of a Constitutional amendment to guarantee equal rights for women.

In our view such a strategy would be ill-advised, both on theoretical and practical grounds. The President's and the Administration's opposition to the Equal Rights Amendment is based in large measure not on the particular language of the proposal but on the vehicle of a Constitutional amendment. Any Constitutional amendment would override the prerogatives of the states and inject the federal judiciary into social disputes in this area. Our oft-stated position that an amendment is not necessary to secure equal rights for women is also not dependent on the particular language of the Equal Rights Amendment.

As a practical matter, any shift in the President's position of the sort suggested by Ms. Little would likely be perceived as crassly opportunistic and hurt the President more than help him. We would be happy to explain these concerns to Ms. Little if you think that would be appropriate.

I recommend no further response at this time.

FFF:JGR:aea 9/26/83

cc: FFFielding  
JGRoberts  
Subj.  
Chron

*Ann*

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 26, 1983

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FROM: JOHN G. ROBERTS

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*add to MKD memo -  
HP "I recommend no further response"  
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September 26, 1983

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---

You have asked for our views on a proposal submitted by Donna A. Little, founder and President of the fledgling Los Angeles Professional Republican Women, Federated. In her letter to you of September 14, Little suggested that the President could capture significant female support by proposing a new version of a Constitutional amendment to guarantee equal rights for women.

In our view such a strategy would be ill-advised, both on theoretical and practical grounds. The President's and the Administration's opposition to the Equal Rights Amendment is based in large measure not on the particular language of the proposal but on the vehicle of a Constitutional amendment. Any Constitutional amendment would override the prerogatives of the states and inject the federal judiciary into social disputes in this area. Our oft-stated position that an amendment is not necessary to secure equal rights for women is also not dependent on the particular language of the Equal Rights Amendment.

As a practical matter, any shift in the President's position of the sort suggested by Ms. Little would likely be perceived as crassly opportunistic and hurt the President more than help him. We would be happy to explain these concerns to Ms. Little if you think that would be appropriate.

FFF:JGR:aea 9/26/83

cc: FFFielding  
JGRoberts  
Subj.  
Chron

# WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING WORKSHEET

☐ O - OUTGOING☐ H - INTERNAL☐ I - INCOMINGDate Correspondence  
Received (YY/MM/DD) 1/1Name of Correspondent: Donna A. Little☐ MI Mail Report

User Codes: (A) \_\_\_\_\_ (B) \_\_\_\_\_ (C) \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: New Constitutional Amendment proposed by  
the "Los Angeles Professional Republican Women,  
Federated"

## ROUTE TO:

## ACTION

## DISPOSITION

Office/Agency (Staff Name)	Action Code	Tracking Date YY/MM/DD	Type of Response	Code	Completion Date YY/MM/DD
<u>CULTOR</u>	ORIGINATOR	<u>83.09.22</u>			<u>1/1</u>
<u>CWAT 18</u>	Referral Note: <u>D</u>	<u>83.09.22</u>		<u>S</u>	<u>83.09.23</u>
	Referral Note:	<u>1/1</u>			<u>1/1</u>
	Referral Note:	<u>1/1</u>			<u>1/1</u>
	Referral Note:	<u>1/1</u>			<u>1/1</u>
	Referral Note:	<u>1/1</u>			<u>1/1</u>

## ACTION CODES:

A - Appropriate Action  
C - Comment/Recommendation  
D - Draft Response  
F - Furnish Fact Sheet  
to be used as Enclosure

I - Info Copy Only/No Action Necessary  
R - Direct Reply w/Copy  
S - For Signature  
X - Interim Reply

## DISPOSITION CODES:

A - Answered C - Completed  
B - Non-Special Referral S - Suspended

## FOR OUTGOING CORRESPONDENCE:

Type of Response = Initials of Signer  
Code = "A"  
Completion Date = Date of Outgoing

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

Keep this worksheet attached to the original incoming letter.

Send all routing updates to Central Reference (Room 75, OEOB).

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ID # 172556

# WHITE HOUSE CORRESPONDENCE TRACKING WORKSHEET

☐ O - OUTGOING☐ H - INTERNAL☒ INCOMINGDate Correspondence received (YY/MM/DD) 88/09/20NAME OF CORRESPONDENT: Dana F. Little☒ DC Mail Report

User Codes: (A) \_\_\_\_\_ (B) \_\_\_\_\_ (C) \_\_\_\_\_

SUBJECT: Los Angeles Proposition  
Republica Women, Federated  
new members of Institutional  
movement

ROUTE TO:

ACTION

DISPOSITION

Office/Agency (Staff Name)

Action  
CodeTracking  
Date  
YY/MM/DDType  
of  
Response

Code

Completion  
Date  
YY/MM/DD

ORIGINATOR

Referral Note:

Referral Note:

Referral Note:

Referral Note:

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Type of Response = Initials of Signer  
Code = "A"  
Completion Date = Date of Outgoing

COMMENTS:

112500

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

September 20, 1983

Dear Ms. Little:

Thank you for your letter of September 14 offering suggestions as to ways the President might counter recent criticism from various women's groups.

I want you to know that your proposal for a Presidentially sponsored constitutional amendment will be looked at very closely. In the meantime, let me thank you, too, for your offer of assistance. You can be certain that we will be in touch with you if the occasion arises.

With best wishes,

Sincerely,

MICHAEL K. DEEVER  
Assistant to the President  
Deputy Chief of Staff

Ms. Donna A. Little  
Los Angeles Professional  
Republican Women, Federated  
11930 Montana Avenue #203  
Los Angeles, CA 90049



# **Talking Points on Issues of Interest to Women**

**October 1983**

JOHN ROBERTS

112/OEOB



## KEY POINTS: THE REAGAN RECORD ON ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE TO WOMEN

Often ignored or overlooked amid talk of a "gender gap" is the fact that President Reagan, in less than three years, has compiled a solid record of achievement on issues that affect women. That record -- not lip service to the Equal Rights Amendment -- is the true measure of whether the President has earned women's support.

### The President's Policies are Building a Strong Economy

- o When Ronald Reagan took office, he inherited a stagnant economy where growth had stopped, poverty had begun to rise, inflation hit 13% and interest rates soared.
- o Women in the workforce faced layoffs. Young career women couldn't get their starts. Women at home saw inflation and taxes eating away their family budgets. Elderly and poor women saw their fixed incomes shrinking.
- o Today, the President's economic reforms have cut inflation down to 2.6% and interest rates in half. The economy has revived and homes are more affordable. Thanks to our progress against inflation, a middle income family of four on a fixed income of \$29,000 would have \$2,832 more purchasing power today than if the 1980 rate of inflation had continued. Add to that the \$700 they've realized in tax savings and it's clear they're more than \$3,500 better off.

### The President is Ensuring Women's Legal Rights and Protections

- o President Reagan's Task Force on Legal Equity for Women was set up to eliminate sex bias in federal regulations and procedures. The Justice Department has found 140 federal statutes with bias; legislation to correct most of them has been introduced.
- o The President's "Fifty States Project" is working with governors to reform biased state laws. Meanwhile, the Justice Department won a record \$2.7 million discrimination case, and has filed 19 new employment bias cases -- ahead of the Carter Administration's pace.

### President Reagan Has Appointed Record Numbers of Women

- o The President made history by appointing the first woman to the Supreme Court ... and more now serve in the Cabinet (three) than ever before. Twice as many top White House posts are held by women now as during the Carter Administration.
- o More than 1200 women have been named to top government positions. 105 of these were named by President Reagan to senior management positions -- compared to 101 during the first two Carter years.

### The President Has Supported a Host of Reforms Benefitting Women

- o The "marriage tax penalty," has been virtually eliminated and the "widow's tax" on surviving spouses' family property has been eliminated. New rules for individual retirement accounts now let women contribute more to their retirement funds.
- o Maximum child care tax credits have almost doubled and employer contributions to day care are now non-taxable to employees. The President authorized flexible hours for federal workers ... and has proposed major legislation to reward states that crack down on absent fathers who don't pay their child support.
- o Opportunities for new job training for women receiving welfare have been provided, and bills to ensure more equitable pension benefits for women have White House support.

As the President said recently, "Women are not a monolithic group. Women in the 1980s are a diverse majority with varied interests and varied futures." No one can narrowly define "women's issues." It is in overall terms -- building a secure, economically strong America -- that President Reagan has best served the interests of women and men alike.

# # #

TALKING POINTS: WHAT THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION IS DOING FOR  
WOMEN

What follows is a series of one-page summaries with further detail on the Reagan record on issues of interest to women.

The record is a good one, even an outstanding one. But no record really ever speaks for itself. We have to speak for it, to get the facts out more widely and make them better known.

Some of the President's critics suggest opposition to the Equal Rights Amendment defines his record. That's not true and it's not fair.

The following pages cover the wide range of issues from legal equity to child care and tax reform. It is on that longer list of important concerns that the record should be judged.

## WE'RE BUILDING A STRONG ECONOMY

Then -- By 1979, economic growth had stopped in America, and poverty had started to rise. Inflation hit 13%, interest rates soared with the prime over 21%. Taxes were going through the roof. How did that hurt women?

- Young women starting careers faced shrinking job opportunities in a stagnant economy.
- Recently-hired women were often first in line for layoffs based on lack of seniority.
- Wives and mothers at home saw inflation eating away at their family budgets. From the start of 1979 to the end of 1980, a family on a fixed income of \$20,000 lost over \$4000 in buying power.
- Elderly and poor women on fixed incomes suffered. The purchasing power of a poor family's fixed \$10,000 a year income at the start of 1979 had shrunk to less than \$8000 by the end of 1980.

Now -- Today, less than two years after President Reagan's reforms took effect, the American economy has turned around and is recovering strongly.

- Inflation has been cut to just 2.6%. The prime interest rate has been cut in half -- down to 11%. Unemployment for women and men is easing. Industrial production, growth, sales, productivity and consumer confidence are all up from a year ago. And all that adds up to an expanding economy with better career opportunities.
- The Reagan tax cuts are letting all taxpayers -- men and women -- keep more of what they earn. Without the Reagan tax cuts, the 1982 bill for a \$20,000 family would have been \$228 higher. And indexing tax rates will save the average taxpayer \$1,267 through 1988.
- For women in the workforce, and for women in the home, lower taxes and inflation mean more purchasing power ... \$2,832 more than if the 1980 rate of inflation had continued for a middle income family of four earning \$29,000.
- For about 10 million families who couldn't afford to own homes three years ago, home mortgages are affordable again.

WE'RE MAKING SURE WOMEN RECEIVE THE LEGAL RIGHTS AND PROTECTIONS DUE THEM UNDER LAW

- o President Reagan believes existing Constitutional and legal guarantees can assure equal rights and correct discrimination against women. Existing laws must be rigorously enforced and, in some cases, strengthened.
- o The President, in December, 1981, created a Task Force on Legal Equity for Women to work with the Justice Department in finding and changing any federal laws or regulations that unfairly discriminate against women. Justice has identified 140 federal statutes with sex-based distinctions. Proposed legislation will correct all but 18 of them. Six are under study; the remainder, which favor women, will remain intact.
- o President Reagan -- based on his own successful experience as California Governor -- set up the "Fifty States Project," to encourage and help governors find and change state laws that show bias against women. Already, 42 states have begun searches; 26 states are fixing their existing laws.
- o The Justice Department in the Reagan Administration has filed 19 new cases charging sex discrimination in employment. That's better than the Carter Administration's track record during a comparable time.
- o Last year, the Justice Department won a record-breaking Title VII recovery against Fairfax County, Virginia -- obtaining \$2.75 million on behalf of 685 women and blacks who had been victims of discrimination.

WE'RE APPOINTING RECORD NUMBERS OF WOMEN TO TOP POSITIONS IN GOVERNMENT

- o Never before in American history had a woman sat on the U.S. Supreme Court. President Reagan changed that by appointing Sandra Day O'Connor to the highest court in the land.
- o Never before in American history had as many as three women served in a President's Cabinet at the same time. President Reagan made history by naming Jeane Kirkpatrick as Ambassador to the United Nations, Elizabeth Dole as Secretary of Transportation and Margaret Heckler as Secretary of Health and Human Services (the largest government department in the world).
- o Women also head the Peace Corps, the Consumer Product Safety Commission, the U.S. Postal Rate Commission, the Federal Labor Relations Authority, the Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission, and the Commodity Futures Trading Commission.
- o The Reagan Administration has appointed more than 1200 women to important government positions as of mid-August -- 891 of them to full-time top level policy positions (GS-13 and above). To the highest positions (named personally by the President) 105 women were named in the first 2 Reagan Administration years. Only 101 were named in the first 2 Carter years. Since last January, the total has grown to 126.
- o 57% of all Reagan political appointments (Schedule C) have gone to women. Twice as many top White House staff jobs are filled by women as under President Carter (24 to 12).

WE'RE MAKING TAX AND OTHER REFORMS TO HELP WOMEN AT WORK AND  
IN THE FAMILY

- o A Reagan Administration-backed reduction in the "marriage tax penalty" is saving a couple earning \$15,000 each about \$345 in taxes this year alone.
- o Reform of the rules governing Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) now permits women who work outside the home to make larger contributions and allows for an additional yearly contribution of \$500 to a joint IRA by women who do not work outside the home.
- o The so-called "widow's tax" -- the estate tax levied on a surviving spouse -- has been eliminated. In addition, special estate tax relief has been provided for family farm spouses and small business owners' spouses.
- o Tax credits for child care have almost doubled -- from \$400 for one child to a maximum of \$720. Employer contributions to day care are now non-taxable to employees. President Reagan signed into law an extension of flexible schedules for parents who work in federal agencies ... and he is encouraging better private sector child care.
- o President Reagan is pressing for tough new enforcement of child support payments to women who aren't getting them. Under the Reagan Administration, support collections are up by two thirds nationally (from \$1.5 to \$2.4 billion FY 80-84 projected). The President was a leader in this fight as Governor of California, and has proposed new legislation to end the disgrace of non-support by absent fathers by rewarding states that crack down.
- o To ensure fair and more equitable pension benefits for women, Administration-supported legislation has been introduced to enhance pension benefits for women both as earners and as spouses.
- o For low-income women receiving Aid to Families With Dependent Children, the Reagan Administration has increased training opportunities to help them get permanent jobs, through the new Job Training Partnership Act.

## CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT

### Giving Mothers and Children Their Just Due

- o More than four million women were due child support payments in 1981, but over half of them received partial payments or none at all ... cheating children out of \$4 billion a year and forcing many families onto the welfare rolls. The President is taking administrative and legislative steps to solve this serious problem.
- o Last year, the Reagan Administration began to use IRS procedures to collect child support from delinquent parents' income tax refunds. This yielded more than \$168 million in FY 1982. Also, the Department of HHS improved its Parent Locator Service and is helping state and local enforcement through technical assistance. Absent parents' ability to use bankruptcy as a loophole to avoid child support payments was repealed.
- o Total collections are now up almost two thirds (from \$1.5 to \$2.4 billion projected from Fiscal Year 1980 to 1984). As a result, some 77,000 families were able to get off welfare in fiscal '81 and '82.
- o Legislatively, the President has proposed major improvements in the Child Support Enforcement Program (which was created by Congress in 1975, and pays states' administrative costs of collecting money from delinquent parents). The President's proposals would improve state collection of child support for both welfare and non-welfare families. Until now, the major thrust had only been directed at absent parents of welfare families and states had little incentive to increase collections. In fact, nineteen states actually spend more than they collect.
- o The Reagan proposal would pay bonuses to states with superior records in collecting support for welfare and non-welfare families.
- o The proposal requires states to adopt proven effective enforcement techniques -- mandatory wage deductions from delinquent parents' paychecks, interception of state income tax refunds, and creation of administrative or quasi-judicial processes to expedite issuing and enforcing child support orders in court. In addition, there would be more and better audits of state compliance, and special grants for states to set up automated systems and clearinghouses for tracking down delinquencies.



## ENFORCEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

### In Schools, On the Job, In Finances

#### In Education

- o Title IX of the Education Amendments Act prohibits sex discrimination in any educational program receiving federal financial assistance. Under President Reagan, the Justice Department has vigorously enforced this protection. For example, in Pavey and U.S. v. University of Alaska, we argued that Title IX prevents the university from discriminating in athletic programs on the basis of sex. In the consent decree, the university agreed to maintain equal facilities and provide equal financial aid, recruitment and publicity of its male and female athletic programs.
- o In an ongoing suit, U.S. v. Massachusetts Maritime Academy, we challenged the academy's male-only admissions policy; the academy has opened its doors to women, and litigation is proceeding concerning admissions criteria and recruitment practices. The Justice Department intervened in a case against the Kentucky prison system, in which the court ruled that prison authorities had discriminated against women in education and training programs.
- o Last term in North Haven Board of Education v. Bell, Justice argued successfully that Title IX reaches and prohibits discriminatory employment practices. The language, legislative history and Supreme Court opinion in North Haven indicates that Title IX was intended to be "program specific" rather than encompassing an entire educational institution.
- o Accordingly, in Grove City College v. Bell, Justice argued that federal assistance to students through the college's financial aid program makes that program subject to Title IX protection for women.

#### In Employment and Credit Rights

- o The Justice Department has filed 19 new cases alleging sex discrimination in employment -- exceeding the previous Administration's record during a comparable time period ... and has brought to conclusion six other cases filed during the last Administration.

- o Last year, the Justice Department achieved a record-breaking Title VII recovery against Fairfax County, Virginia, obtaining \$2.75 million on behalf of 685 women and blacks who were victims of discrimination.
- o In the wake of Newport News v. EEOC, Justice has authorized the filing of 7 new cases alleging discrimination under the Pregnancy Disability Act. In Newport News, Justice successfully argued that an employer could not deny pregnancy disability benefits to a spouse of a male worker when other types of spousal disability benefits are available.
- o In Hishon v. King and Spaulding, which will be heard during the Supreme Court's next term, the Justice Department is arguing that Title VII prohibits law firms from refusing to consider women associates for partnership on an equal basis with their male counterparts.
- o The Justice Department has moved decisively to enforce the Equal Credit Opportunity Act which prohibits discrimination in the extension of credit based on sex or marital status. Two cases have been filed and two are under investigation.
- o In fiscal year 1982, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission obtained more than \$100 million in back pay for victims of employment discrimination -- a 74% increase over the final year of the previous administration.

## TASK FORCE ON LEGAL EQUITY FOR WOMEN

### Finding Discrimination in Federal Laws and Rules

#### Background:

- o December 21, 1981: President Reagan directed the Attorney General to complete the nearly ten-year old review of sex-biased federal statutes. He created the Task Force on Legal Equity for Women to work with Justice in finding and cataloging sex-biased laws and rules so that they can be changed. (Task Force is composed of representatives from 21 Departments and Agencies.)
- o June 1981: The first Justice report identified more than 100 such statutes.
- o October 1982: Senator Dole introduced Administration-supported legislation to change most of the statutes (reintroduced in this session as S. 501).
- o Fall 1982: Justice authorized an updated computer search to identify missing statutes.
- o December 1982: Justice transmitted a second status report which described and updated the search.
- o July 1983: Justice submitted the third report which identified 140 sex-biased statutes ...the most comprehensive and thorough review of its kind in history. Of these, Administration-backed legislation and proposed amendments will correct all but 18. Six are under study; the remainder, which favor women, will remain intact.
- o More progress has been made to eliminate sex-biased federal statutes than in any previous Administration. (The original effort began under President Ford and continued under President Carter.)
- o All 42 federal departments and agencies are conducting a review of their own regulations and policies to find any bias. The results will come out in the Attorney General's Fourth Quarterly Report.

## PENSION REFORM

### Toward Fairness in Retirement

- o President Reagan, on September 29, proposed major new legislation aimed at ensuring fairness for women in pension benefits. Titled the "Pension Equity Act of 1983," the President's proposals would eliminate many of the inequities that have proven unfair to women who earn and receive pension benefits. The bill reforms the Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA) and the Internal Revenue Code.
- o His legislation fulfills a promise President Reagan made in his 1983 State of the Union Message, to seek greater pension fairness for women.
- o The Reagan proposal helps women before they retire by:
  - protecting women on maternity leave from incurring a break in service, which now makes them lose past credit for pension participation, vesting and benefit accrual;
  - lowering ERISA age requirements for pension participation from 25 to 21. This means private pension plans can no longer exclude women on account of age from earning pension credits during those very years when their participation in the labor force is highest. This will bring a million and a half more women workers into pension coverage. The bill also lowers from 22 to 21 the minimum age for vesting.
- o The Reagan proposal helps survivors and divorced spouses by:
  - making survivor annuity payments available to more women by making a joint and survivor annuity the presumed form of benefit payout for any pension plan that offers an annuity as an optional form of payment;
  - giving employees automatic survivor annuity coverage when they reach early retirement age. This protects a surviving spouse from ending up with no pension benefits if the employee should die without having elected survivor coverage;

- letting more surviving spouses receive survivor annuities by permitting participants to chose survivor coverage without waiting the presently-required two years before the choice can become effective;
- letting a spouse who is divorced after her annuity payments start, continue receiving them after her former husband's death, rather than letting the survivor annuity revert back to the pension fund;
- letting a spouse obtain, under terms of a court order, a fair portion of her husband's pension for child support, alimony and her share of the marital property;

[The employee's ability to get favorable tax treatment is not harmed by the payment of part of the benefits to a former spouse, and at the same time the spouse can roll over her lump-sum payment into an Individual Retirement Account of her own];

- giving spouses, for the first time, the right to have a veto over whether the employee can opt out of joint and survivor coverage; and,
  - requiring that more frequent information be given to employees and spouses concerning how much money the spouse would lose if the employee died before a certain date ... thereby letting the spouse know where she stands financially.
- o The proposed changes will complement recent landmark Supreme Court decisions -- strongly endorsed by the Reagan Administration -- holding that pension benefits must not discriminate on the basis of sex.

## 50 STATES PROJECT

### Correcting Bias at the State Level

- o The 50 States Project was established by President Reagan in 1981 to help governors find and correct state laws and regulations that discriminate against women. (The President followed that same approach as Governor of California, and achieved one of the best equal rights records in the nation.)
- o Progress is being made. To date, 42 states have undertaken searches. (Of the eight that have not participated, two have state-passed ERAs). Twenty-six states have revised their codes or are doing so now.
- o The Project also identifies unnecessary state and local restrictions that inhibit private child care and encourages local governments to change those restrictions.

## CHILD CARE

### Incentives and New Ideas

- o The maximum child care tax credits to working parents were nearly doubled by the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981 -- from \$400 for one child to \$720.
- o Because of the Tax Act, employers have new incentives to include prepaid day care in their benefit packages by making them non-taxable to employees.
- o The Department of Labor Women's Bureau with the Rockefeller Foundation, is funding four demonstration projects to demonstrate innovative ways of providing care for the children of working mothers.
- o The President's Office of Private Sector Initiatives is meeting with chief executive officers of major corporations in attempts to encourage them to provide day care services for their employees as a non-taxable fringe benefit.
- o States and localities are being encouraged through the White House-based 50 States Project to identify and relax any restrictions that inhibit private day care. We're also encouraging states to use workfare and work-study programs to provide child care.
- o The President proposed on October 24, 1983 changing the tax code to provide new incentives for taxpayers to support non-profit dependent care organizations. The change would permit non-profit dependent care organizations to be treated as tax-exempt organizations whether or not they were organized for charitable or educational purposes.
- o The President supports restructuring the dependent care tax credit so that more benefits would be available for low and middle income taxpayers. This proposal, made October 24, 1983 would provide a credit equal to 40 percent of qualifying dependent care expenses for taxpayers with incomes of \$10,000 or less, reduced on a sliding scale to 10 percent for taxpayers with incomes of \$50,000 and phased out entirely for taxpayers with incomes above \$60,000.

## PRESIDENTIAL APPOINTMENTS

### A History-Making Record for Women

- o There are 3 women in the Reagan Cabinet, more at one time than ever before in history. Justice Sandra Day O'Connor is the first woman on the Supreme Court; Jeane Kirkpatrick is the first woman to serve as U.N. Ambassador with Cabinet rank.
- o In his first two years in office:
  - The President chose more women for full-time top policy making positions than any of his predecessors -- 105 women, compared to only 101 by the previous Administration during a comparable period.
  - President Reagan appointed more than twice the number of women to top White House staff positions commissioned) than his predecessor (24 to 12).
  - The President also was ahead in part-time PA/PAS appointments (276 to Carter's 260) if the previous Administration's appointments to two now defunct panels (National Commission on Observance of International Women's Year and the National Advisory Committee for Women) are excluded.
- o Overall (as of mid-August), President Reagan has selected women for more than 1200 important Administration positions (126 for PA/PAS full-time positions, 181 for Senior Executive Service, 584 for GS-13 or above Schedule C positions, and 324 for part-time Presidential advisory boards). Fifty-seven percent of all Schedule C appointments have gone to women.
- o Women head the Departments of Transportation (Elizabeth Dole), and HHS (Margaret Heckler), the Peace Corps (Loret Ruppe), the Consumer Product Safety Commission (Nancy Harvey Steorts), the U.S. Postal Rate Commission (Janet Steiger), the Federal Labor Relations Authority (Barbara Mahone), and the Federal Mine Safety and Health Administration (Rosemary Collyer).



## TAX AND OTHER ECONOMIC REFORMS

### For Women at Home and in the Workforce

- o The "marriage tax penalty" has been greatly reduced -- saving two-earner couples about \$345 a year (each making about \$15,000).
- o Individual retirement account (IRA) rules have been liberalized to let women who work outside the home and homemakers with no earner income contribute more.
- o In order to recognize the value of a non-working spouse and to provide greater retirement savings, the President proposed on October 24, 1983 raising the spousal IRA limit from \$2,250 to \$4,000. This means that the amount which a family could invest in an IRA would not be affected by whether both spouses work. The main beneficiaries of this new provision would be women not employed outside the home and those with part-time earnings of less than \$2,000.
- o The President also supported on October 24, 1983 changing the law to permit a divorced individual to contribute taxable alimony income to an IRA without regard to whether spousal IRA contributions were made for the individual before the divorce.
- o The so-called "widow's tax" -- the estate taxes levied on a surviving spouse -- has been eliminated. In addition, special estate tax relief has been provided for family farm spouses and small business owners' spouses.
- o The maximum child-care tax credit has been raised from \$400 for one child of a working family to \$720.
- o Other reforms include: A sex-neutral definition of poverty to ensure that the needs of women are evaluated by the same criteria as those of men; a law permitting state courts to divide military retirement benefits in divorce settlements; a law authorizing federal agencies to adopt permanent "flexitime" schedules for their employees.
- o The 25% tax rate reduction is of direct benefit to the growing number of women who own their own businesses and file returns as individuals rather than corporations.

## VICTIMS OF CRIME

### Restoring Balance to the Criminal Justice System

- o Serious crime dropped 4% in 1982, compared to 1981 -- the first annual decrease in the crime rate in five years.
- o To address the needs of victims, President Reagan created the Task Force on Victims of Crime in 1982. The following October, he signed into law the Victim and Witness Protection Act which offers protection and restitution to victims as well as freedom from intimidation for witnesses.
- o The Justice Department has launched a major victims initiative to implement the recommendations of the President's Task Force. Among the priority activities will be: establishment of a national victims resource center; development of model legislation for use by state and local governments to improve treatment of victims; and training guidelines and programs for criminal justice personnel and others who deal with crime victims.
- o The Justice Department has created a Family Violence Task Force to study family violence, particularly violence against children, spouse abuse, and mistreatment of the elderly. It will recommend how government can better prevent family violence and improve the treatment of its innocent victims -- many of whom are women and young girls.
- o Justice and the FBI are holding joint conferences to improve investigations and prosecutions of sexual assault crimes ... and to assist victims.
- o The Department established formal Guidelines for Victim and Witness Assistance to ensure better treatment of victims and witnesses of crime in the federal criminal justice system, by federal investigators and prosecutors.
- o Anti-crime initiatives include: a new national strategy to cripple organized crime and drug trafficking; a new National Center for State and Local Law Enforcement Training; and twelve interagency crime task forces in key regions of the country. (These are patterned after the highly-successful South Florida effort, which sharply reduced violent crime and drug trafficking there.)
- o To make sure criminals are put and kept behind bars, the President proposed a major reform of the federal criminal laws -- the "Comprehensive Crime Control Act of 1983." This legislation would toughen bail, standardize sentencing, change the insanity defense, and tighten narcotics enforcement provisions.

## SOCIAL SECURITY

### A Compromise That Saved The System

- o Women have a huge stake in the health of the Social Security system. Of the 36 million adult Social Security beneficiaries, 54% are women.
- o By November 1982, despite President Reagan's repeated warnings, Social Security faced bankruptcy. The retirement trust fund ran out of money and had to borrow \$17 billion to put its checks in the mail. Many people predicted that Social Security had become such a political football, any rescue plan was doomed to failure.
- o But President Reagan refused to give up trying to save Social Security, and his persistence paid off. In 1983, working with Congress on Social Security Reform, the President achieved a compromise solution skeptics had thought impossible. Congress passed a fair, balanced \$169 billion rescue plan to bring the trust fund shortfall down by 1989, restoring fund reserves to a safe level. For the long term, the rescue plan eliminates the 75 year shortfall which had threatened the system.
- o Indexing of survivor benefits was adjusted to better reflect changes in the economy, since the death of the worker.
- o The level of survivors benefits for disabled widows of ages 50-59 was increased to 71.5 percent of the deceased worker's benefits; previously the benefit was only 50 percent at age 50, phasing up to 71.5 percent at age 60.

## BUDGET FAIRNESS

### Unfairness Charges Are Unfair

#### Historical Perspective on Social Spending

- o The President's January 1983 budget request for FY 1984 contained one-half trillion dollars for non-defense spending exclusive of interest. In constant 1983 dollars that was down four percent from 1981, but it was 95 percent higher than in 1970. A budget which spends nearly twice as much as in 1970 after adjusting for inflation cannot be neglecting domestic welfare entirely.
- o From that one-half trillion in the President's January request -- \$424 billion was for transfer payments and social programs. Everything else from the FBI to farm subsidies to national parks amounted to only \$75 billion.
- o If no more reforms are adopted, the federal government will spend over \$2.2 trillion on entitlement programs in the next five years.
- o Even if additional reforms in the President's 1984 budget request are adopted, the federal government will spend over \$2.1 trillion on these programs in the next five years. That is over half a trillion more than is planned for defense.
- o The Reagan budget request for 1984 would have the federal government spending over two and one-half times what it spent in 1970 -- in real terms -- on assistance to the poor (means-tested entitlements).
- o The 1984 request for spending on the poor (for means-tested entitlements) would reduce the previous Administration's request by less than five percent in real terms.
- o There have been cuts, but they have hardly been draconian as critics charge.

#### Program Goals

- o The problem President Reagan set out to solve was not that government was doing too much for the needy, but that it was doing too much for the non-needy.

- o Also, some of the programs to help the poor had the effect of keeping them poor, and dependent on government.
- o During the recession (which started before the Reagan budget took effect) budget cuts and program reforms were an easy target for partisan critics. It was recession that was hurting -- but they blamed the program.

## THE SAFETY NET

### Keeping it Intact

- o Safety net spending in next year's budget is up \$67.6 billion since 1981 -- almost 28 percent higher.
- o Actual cash and medical assistance to the needy is also up and the number of people served by programs such as Medicaid, AFDC, and SSI has increased by a half million.
- o The poor are hurt most by high inflation -- and helped most when it is under control.
- o The average AFDC family's benefit in the 1970s increased by one-third but high inflation in that decade eroded its purchasing power so they could buy a third less at the end of the decade than they could at the start even though the family had more money.
- o In contrast now, a poor family totally dependent on AFDC, food stamps and Medicaid has \$400 more purchasing power than if inflation were still at 1980 rates.
- o Overall, even if reforms proposed for 1984 are enacted, spending on low-income assistance programs for the poor will be over two and one-half times greater in real terms than in 1970.
- o The charge is made that the Reagan reforms have cut massive numbers from the rolls of safety-net programs. The fact is:
  - There will be 500,000 more Medicaid beneficiaries in 1984 than in 1980;
  - Food Stamps are benefitting 2.4 million more people this year than in 1980.

## WELFARE

### Reagan Reforms Are Working

- o Welfare reforms passed in 1981 were designed to lower costs, maintain the safety net and reduce dependency on government assistance for welfare families.
- o A recently published independent study shows these objectives have been met and that critics of the reforms -- who said they would drive the working poor to quit their jobs and go on welfare -- were wrong.
- o The reforms lowered the income level at which working families could qualify for AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children).
- o Prior to reform, in at least 18 states, families with incomes as high or higher than half the workers in the country could qualify for welfare. (1981 median income for all workers was about \$15,000).
- o The welfare reforms saved about \$1 billion in federal outlays and nearly as much for the states. (Since reform, 22 states have increased benefits for needy recipients, putting the money saved to good use.)
- o Contrary to critics' predictions, people who lost welfare benefits did not quit their jobs to go back on welfare in any greater proportion than before the reforms -- because most would prefer to work than live off government. The reforms strengthened incentives for them to do so.
- o About 15 percent left their jobs after the reforms -- the same percentage as did before the reforms.
- o The benefits for the truly needy remain in place, with AFDC benefits actually up in many states.
- o The President has acted to remove sex-biased discrimination in welfare benefits. AFDC rules now refer to the principal earner rather than to the father, as previously done.

## FOOD STAMPS AND OTHER NUTRITION PROGRAMS

### Reforms for Marked Improvement

- o Spending for the Food Stamp program this year (FY83) is \$3.7 billion higher than in 1980.
- o Over 2.5 million more people are getting benefits than in 1980 which was a recession year. (19.3 million then versus 21.7 million now -- the highest number of recipients ever.)
- o Many "cuts" have come from program reforms designed to make sure benefits go to those who are needy -- and not to those who aren't.
- o Average benefits have risen faster than inflation since 1980, and reforms have made it possible to remove some 875,000 non-needy from the rolls.
- o Though program spending has grown almost 45 percent since 1980, spending growth has been cut. Without the reforms, it would have grown about 65 percent -- another \$1.7 billion.
- o Proposed cuts for FY84 will total close to \$800 million from:
  - substantial caseload reductions as recovery puts people back to work;
  - efforts to reduce waste and fraud, estimated to cost up to \$1 billion a year.
  - a work experience program to help recipients become more self-sufficient.

### School Lunches

- o Over 10 million low-income children are getting free lunches -- about a half-million more than projected in the prior Administration's budget.
- o Before the Reagan reforms, large portions of the school lunch budget were going to subsidize lunches for middle and upper-income students.
- o The reforms have drastically cut back these subsidies. (They've been cut back for families making roughly twice the poverty level or more.)
- o As a result, more needy kids are getting free lunches and fewer affluent children are getting cut-rate lunches at taxpayer expense.



### WIC

- o Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) participants receive food assistance averaging \$30 per month to supplement their dietary needs.
- o One out of five babies born this year will benefit from the WIC program. Overall, 2.7 million women, infants and children are being served by the program.
- o Spending for WIC has increased from \$774 million in 1980 to over \$1.1 billion in 1983.

## JOBS AND UNEMPLOYMENT

### A Brightening Outlook for Men and Women

- o The civilian unemployment rate fell 1.5 percentage points since last December.
- o A recovering economy created over 2.8 million jobs this year.
- o The unemployment rate rose more or less steadily (with monthly fluctuations) from late 1979 on. That trend is reversed and (also with monthly fluctuations) it should decline even more.
- o Three times in the last 15 years, inflationary surges have been followed by increasing unemployment.
- o The record unemployment levels of 1982 fit this pattern. They came in the wake of the record inflation rates of 1979-80.
- o Past patterns suggest that if inflation stays down, unemployment will keep coming down. But a turn-around in policy -- back to tax and spend -- will turn the inflation rate around and rising unemployment would be sure to follow.
- o The Administration expects growth to create some 4 million new jobs by the end of next year. A rise of over 2.8 million in total employment since last December is a good start toward that goal.
- o The Job Training Partnership Act -- the Administration's replacement for the ineffective CETA program -- specifies that AFDC beneficiaries must be served on an equitable basis in its job training programs. This is the first time the government's major job training program has targeted such women.

## WOMEN IN THE REAGAN ADMINISTRATION

Three women serve in the Reagan Cabinet, more at any one time than in any other Administration in history -- Jeane Kirkpatrick as the first woman UN Ambassador, Elizabeth Dole as the first woman to serve as Secretary of Transportation, and Margaret Heckler to head Health and Human Services, the largest federal agency.

Women are well represented in all areas of the Administration, serving in high-level positions throughout the government. In many cases, they serve in non-traditional positions in areas generally represented by men. While this is not intended to be a complete list of top women, their numbers include:

### In The White House

- o Women have held twice as many top White House staff posts as under President Carter (24 to 12) during a comparable time period.
- o Faith Whittlesey, Assistant to the President for Public Liaison, holds the highest rank, followed by three Deputy Assistants to the President: Becky Norton Dunlop (Presidential Personnel), Karna Small (Media Relations and Planning) and Pamela Turner (Legislative Affairs).
- o Among the Special Assistants to the President are: Judith Buckalew, Mary Jo Jacobi, Dee Jepsen, and Catalina Villalpando (Public Liaison); Nancy Kennedy and Nancy Risque (Legislative Affairs); Pamela Bailey (Public Affairs); Margaret Tutwiler (Office of the Chief of Staff); Anne Higgins (Presidential Correspondence); and, Dodie Livingston (Presidential Messages).
- o Also at the Special Assistant level, Sherrie Cooksey serves as Associate Counsel to the President.
- o Helene von Damm -- formerly Assistant to the President, now the first female Ambassador to Austria -- was the first woman in history to direct Presidential Personnel, overseeing all the President's hiring and recruitments.

### In International Affairs and Defense

- o Loret Ruppe is Director of the Peace Corps.
- o Two women serve in high ranking posts at the State Department: Joan Clark as Director General of the Foreign Service and Selwa Roosevelt as Chief of Protocol.
- o Five women serve as Ambassadors. For example, Helene von Damm, Ambassador to Austria; Jean Gerard, Ambassador, U.S. Permanent Representative to UNESCO; Jane Coon, Ambassador to Bangladesh; Rozanne Ridgway, Ambassador to the German Democratic Republic; and Virginia Schaefer, Ambassador to the Solomon Islands.
- o The State Department has seen a 10.8% increase in the proportion of women in officer-level entrants (34.4% were women in 1983 compared to 23.6% in 1979).
- o Just since 1980, the Defense Department has grown from 31% to 34% women in civilian positions and from 8.4% to 9.1% women in the uniformed services.
- o Three women serve as Assistant Administrators of the Agency for International Development -- more than in any past Administration: Toni Ford, Julia Chang Bloch, and Elise duPont.
- o Other women who have served in high-level defense and international positions include: Susan Crawford, General Counsel of the Army; Rita Rodriguez, Member of the Board of Directors of the Export-Import Bank; Veronica Haggart, Member of the U.S. International Trade Commission; Anne Armstrong, Chairman of PFIAB and Harriet Scott, Member of U.S. Arms Control Advisory Committee.

### In Business and Finance

- o Katherine Ortega is the second Hispanic American to serve as U.S. Treasurer.
- o Susan Liebeler has been nominated to the International Trade Commission.
- o Ann McLaughlin is Assistant Secretary of Treasury. Arlene Triplett, as Assistant Secretary of Commerce, oversees 35,000 employees and a \$2 billion budget. Mary Jarratt, as Assistant Secretary of Agriculture for Food and Consumer Services, has responsibility for programs totaling \$19 billion. Judith Tardy is Assistant Secretary for Administration at the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

- o Mary Ann Cohen serves on the U.S. Tax Court.
- o Elizabeth Burkhart is a Board Member of the National Credit Union Administration.
- o Within the Office of Management and Budget, Constance Horner is Associate Director for Economics and Government. Dorothy Tella is the first woman to serve as Chief Statistician.
- o Three women serve in the top positions within the U.S. Mint -- Donna Pope, Director; Nora Hussey, Superintendent; Elizabeth Jones, Engraver (the first woman to hold this post).
- o In the Commerce Department alone, 40% of the non-career high level SES positions are filled by women.
- o Susan M. Phillips is Chairman of the Commodity Futures Trading Commission -- the first woman to Chair this Commission.
- o Over half of the Senior Staff in the Federal Trade Commission is made up of women.

#### In Transportation

- o Diane Steed is Administrator of the National Highway Safety Administration and Pat Goldman serves on the National Transportation Safety Board, designated Vice Chairman by President Reagan.
- o Barbara McConnell, Diane Morales, and Georgia Schaffer are Members of the Civil Aeronautics Board.
- o Heather Gradison is a member of the Interstate Commerce Commission and Jane Holt has been nominated for the ICC.

#### In Justice, Personnel Management and Regulatory Areas

- o Lois Herrington serves as Assistant Attorney General in the Department of Justice.
- o Janet Steiger is Commissioner of the Postal Rate Commission.
- o Mimi Dawson is Commissioner of the Federal Communications Commission.

- o Faith Evans is U.S. Marshall in Hawaii.
- o Mary Wieseman is Inspector General of the Small Business Administration. June Brown is Inspector General at NASA.
- o Barbara Mahone heads the Federal Labor Relations Authority and Patricia Diaz Dennis is a Member of the National Labor Relations Board.
- o Linda Chavez is Staff Director of the Commission on Civil Rights and Cathie Shattuck is Vice Chairman of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.
- o Carole Pavilack serves on the U.S. Parole Commission.
- o Nancy Harvey Steorts is Chairman of the Consumer Product Safety Commission, which has responsibility of ensuring the safety of 15,000 kinds of consumer products. Sandra Brown Armstrong is a nominee for the Commission.
- o Loretta Cornelius is Deputy Director of the Office of Personnel Management and Maria Johnson is a Vice Chairman of the Merit Systems Protection Board.
- o Christine Nettesheim is Judge of the U.S. Claims Court.

#### In Energy and Environmental Areas

- o Within the Department of Energy, the President appointed three women to key positions. Georgiana Sheldon was reappointed as Commissioner of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission; Martha Hesse became one of eight Assistant Secretaries of Energy; and Rosslee Douglas was selected Director of Minority Economic Impact.
- o Rosemary Collyer is Chairman of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission.
- o Josephine Cooper is Assistant Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency and Nancy Maloley is a Member of the Council on Environmental Quality.
- o In 1982, women constituted 51% of total employees at the Energy Department.

#### In Housing, Health and Human Services

- o Two women serve at the Assistant Secretary level at the Department of Education: Anne Graham and Madeline Will.

- o Judith Tardy serves as Assistant Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.
- o Within the giant Department of Health and Human Services (which is the largest government department in the world), women serving as Assistant Secretaries include Dorcas Hardy, and Stephanie Lee-Miller (designate). The \$76 billion Medicare and Medicaid programs are headed by a woman, Dr. Carolyn Davis, and for the first time in history, a woman, Martha A. McSteen, is heading the Social Security Administration (acting). Betty Brake is Deputy Director of ACTION; Betty Lou Dotson is Director of the HHS Office for Civil Rights.
- o In the Department of HHS, 55% of all non-career Schedule C appointees (GS 13 to 15) have been women.
- o Winifred Pizzano is Federal Co-Chairman and Jacqueline Phillips, Alternate Federal Co-Chairman of the Appalachian Regional Commission.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

### Why Doesn't President Reagan Support The Equal Rights Amendment?

First, had the ERA been ratified, it would have sharply expanded the courts' "legislative" powers, placing questions about legitimate distinctions between men and women (such as whether women should be protected from having to serve in combat) before the courts instead of before elected legislatures.

The 14th Amendment to the Constitution already guarantees each citizen the right to equal protection of the laws. The Supreme Court has ruled that the 5th and 14th Amendments prohibit state and federal actions that discriminate against women.

Courts have struck down sex-based distinctions that are unfair to women and have upheld distinctions only in very limited cases, or when the distinctions legitimately benefit women.

In addition, Congress has passed over 30 laws since the 1960s to ensure equal rights, in areas such as equal pay, hiring, promotion, education, credit availability and tax deductions. And, since ERA was introduced, the Supreme Court has ruled in 37 cases affecting women's rights.

The point is that women have at their disposal powerful existing legal weapons to safeguard and enforce equal rights without ERA.

Finally, in fairness it should be remembered that ERA has already been debated and passed by Congress. It was sent to the states for ratification and the required two thirds of the state legislatures failed to ratify it ... even though the Carter Administration backed the ERA during the ratification process. So why should President Reagan be criticized for not backing the ERA when the ERA itself failed to obtain the support necessary to become law?



### Why Is President Reagan Against Abortion?

President Reagan believes abortion is the taking of a human life. He believes the unborn child deserves the Constitutional right to life, which is a fundamental part of our heritage.

For those who argue that it is impossible to judge "when life begins," the President has made the point that, even if such a doubt existed, we should still opt on the side of life.

Roe v. Wade, which legalized abortion, was of course neither voted upon by the citizens of our nation nor enacted by legislators. The Constitution never contemplated or intended to establish the right to abortion.

The President is sympathetic to the concerns of women faced with an unwanted pregnancy, but believes that alternatives such as adoption are far preferable to abortion.

The President supports a Constitutional amendment banning abortion as well as legislation which would put the issue before the people.

What is the President Doing to Address the Problem of Discrimination Against Women in the Workforce, Such as Unequal Pay?

The President deplores any unfair distinctions based on bias against women in the workforce -- be they related to equal pay or anything else.

The Equal Pay Act of 1963 prohibits sex discrimination in the payment of wages for equal work in jobs that require equal skill, effort and responsibility under similar working conditions.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, which enforces the Equal Pay Act, has vigorously enforced equal employment laws under President Reagan. In Fiscal Year 1982, the EEOC recovered \$100 million in back pay for victims of sex and race discrimination -- 74% more than the EEOC recovered in FY 1980.

The Justice Department has also made strong efforts through litigation, to eliminate bias against women in the workforce. Under this Administration, 21 employment cases have been filed, 19 of which contained allegations of sex discrimination. During a comparable period in the Carter Administration, 17 cases were filed, 16 of which alleged sex discrimination. Among the lawsuits filed have been actions against police departments, fire departments and banks to eliminate hiring and work practices that discriminate against women. Such actions have been filed in Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Maine, New York, Maryland, Georgia, Virginia, Pennsylvania and Arkansas.

For example, Justice is litigating suits against a bank that has a "men only" lunchroom, against a school board for violations of the Pregnancy Disability Act, and against law enforcement authorities for sex-discriminatory hiring practices.

In addition, the Justice Department has settled or litigated to a conclusion six sex discrimination cases filed during the last administration. Last year, the Department achieved the largest Title VII recovery against a public employer in its history, winning \$2.7 million in back pay on behalf of 685 women and blacks who were victims of discrimination.

In other actions, the Justice Department has filed a "friend of the court" brief in the Supreme Court on behalf of a female lawyer denied partnership in a law firm because of her sex. In a lower court, it argued that physical agility tests in the Buffalo, New York Fire Department were not job-related, and had unfairly blocked the hiring of women firefighters.

### Is There A "Gender Gap?" If So, Why?

Public opinion surveys do show a "gap", but it should close as awareness' of the Reagan record increases.

The President's record on issues that affect women has been a solid one. He has turned around an ailing economy, giving women better career opportunities and more buying power for their families. He has stood up for legal equity for women, and has backed a host of tax and other reforms that benefit women in areas like child care, retirement savings, child support enforcement and job training. He has made history by appointing the first woman to the Supreme Court, three women to his Cabinet, and over 1200 other women to top government posts. His record stands up well against that of his predecessor.

Many of the President's political opponents are trying to use the Equal Rights Amendment as a measure of the President's "support for women." Such critics have a vested interest in keeping the "gender gap" idea alive -- to further their own political fortunes.

The real problem is that the President's actual record is too often ignored amid the rhetoric. When more women become aware of that record, talk of a "gender gap" will disappear.

Don't Many Of The Reagan Administration's Policies Impact  
Unfairly On Poor Families -- Many Of Which Are Headed By  
Women?

In 1979, as the American economy stagnated amid soaring inflation, interest rates and declining output, poverty rates started to rise for the first time in many years. It has been the poor, who live on limited and fixed incomes and usually without job skills, who suffered most from the sick economy inherited by President Reagan.

The best thing any administration can do to help the poor is to create a strong, growing economy. President Reagan has begun to do that through his economic recovery program. A growing economy means jobs and an end to the cycle of welfare dependency for millions of poor Americans.

At the same time, the President has put into place reforms in the way low-income programs are run -- not to cripple them, but to better target our resources on the most needy.

Too many poor households headed by women are not receiving the child support payments to which they are entitled. President Reagan has proposed major new legislation to improve child support enforcement by rewarding states that crack down on delinquent fathers.

In addition, the Administration has assured in law that there will be training opportunities for low-income women receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children, to help them get permanent jobs, through the new Job Training Partnership Act.

Assistant Attorney General For Civil Rights Bradford Reynolds Was Quoted As Saying Most Of The Changes In The Third Quarterly Report Of The Justice Department Are "Cosmetic." Are They?

The Justice Department is identifying all federal laws and regulations it can find that show sex bias. Some of these are relatively minor, and can be corrected by small changes in wording of statutes or regulations. Mr. Reynolds simply agreed, when asked by a reporter, that many of the changes could be described in that way.

Of the 115 statutes named in the quarterly report, at least 76 contain distinctions that favor women, such as special benefits to wives, widows and mothers.

The Attorney General's Third Quarterly Report on Women's Equity was submitted to the Office of Cabinet Affairs in July, 1983, and referred to the Cabinet Council on Legal Policy and OMB for review. Their findings were that the Federal code had already been substantially cleansed of any significant sex bias. The Social Security Amendments of 1983 and the 1981 Economic Recovery Tax Act addressed the last of substantive sex discriminatory language in the Federal code.

If The President Wants The Justice Department To Enforce  
Legal Equity For Women, How Do You Explain Its Narrow  
Interpretation Of Sex Discrimination In The Grove City  
College case?

Title IX of the Education Amendment Acts of 1972 prohibits discrimination in "any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance." The language, legislative history and the Supreme Court legal precedent indicate that Title IX was intended to be "program specific" -- that is, targeted on a particular program in which discrimination occurs, rather than encompassing the entire school. Accordingly, the Justice Department argues that it is the federally financed financial aid program at Grove City which is involved, not the entire college.

The issue in this case is not whether the federal government believes in equal educational opportunities for women -- President Reagan firmly supports equality in education. Nor is the issue whether or not Grove City College discriminates on the basis of sex -- that, in fact, has never been alleged. The issue is whether a grant given directly to a student by the federal government gives that government the right to tell a university how to run every aspect of its existence as a school ... in other words, to what extent should the university be regulated by the federal government simply because its students receive Pell Grants?

The Justice Department has adopted the language of the statute itself, and the holding of the Supreme Court in North Haven Board of Education v. Bell last term, arguing that the university is only regulated as regards the specific program into which the federal money is being funneled.

President Reagan Continues To Be Criticized For His  
Appointment Record On Women. What Are The Facts About His  
Appointments?

The fact is that President Reagan's record is at least as good as -- and in certain key areas better than -- his predecessor.

Perhaps some of the confusion over comparing appointments happened because observers often compare different types of jobs and use differing time frames. Comparing numbers is sometimes like comparing apples and oranges.

The facts are these, based on the most up-to-date figures:

- o The Reagan Administration has appointed more than 1200 women to important government positions as of mid-August -- 891 of them full-time top level policy positions (GS-13 and above). The highest of these are 126 direct Presidential appointments. Compared to President Carter during his first two years, President Reagan has a better record of women appointments (Reagan 105, Carter 101).
- o Fifty-seven percent of all Reagan political appointments (Schedule C) have gone to women. Twice as many top White House staff jobs are filled by women as under President Carter (24 to 12).
- o Never before in history have three women served in a President's Cabinet at the same time -- yet President Reagan appointed three women to his Cabinet. And President Reagan named the first woman ever to serve on the U.S. Supreme Court.

