

R E P O R T F R O M A C O N F E R E N C E



**Women in
Legislative Leadership**

November 14–17, 1985

THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY
RUTGERS

Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP)
Eagleton Institute of Politics

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Foreword

In 1985, the Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP) convened the Conference for Women in Legislative Leadership, the first national meeting of women holding leadership positions in their state legislatures. The conference marked yet another milestone in CAWP's thirteen year history of work with women lawmakers; it also reflected the changing needs of a growing group of women who are moving into positions of power and influence in the states.

CAWP's first major project was the 1972 Conference for Women State Legislators, which brought 50 of the 344 women legislators serving at that time to the Poconos for three days. In those days, CAWP began asking the simplest, most basic questions about political women and their experiences in the public world -- How many were there? How old were they? What level of education had they attained? What was their marital, parental, and professional status? Had they experienced discrimination in seeking political office? The proposal for the 1972 meeting stated:

Such a conference would be the first of its kind. It would give the participants an opportunity to draw on the experiences of colleagues around the country as legislators, politicians, and women. Insofar as the state legislator is midway in the hierarchy of elective office in this country, the conference would provide insights into the routes by which women have been elected to public office, the opportunities available to them to function as effective legislators and politicians, their interest in higher elective office, and their prospects for attaining it.

The Pocono conference marked the beginning of a decade of seeking answers to such questions. By 1982, significantly more women (a total of 908) had reached the state legislatures, and CAWP knew much more about them. When we planned a ten-year anniversary conference for women legislators (this time on Cape Cod), our focus -- and theirs -- had shifted. Sessions moved away from demographics and problem-identification and concentrated on the power and potential of women's increased numbers in office,

particularly as they came together in women's legislative caucuses. We also began to discuss the relationship between political women and public policy, focusing initially on how to interest people in examining whether public policies promulgated by lawmakers have a differential impact on female and male citizens.

The success of the 1982 conference helped to secure CAWP's reputation as a vital resource for and about women in state legislatures. At the same time, we learned of disappointment among women who could not attend that small invitational event but recognized the value of such meetings. One result was a demand for an encore gathering which women from every state could attend. To respond to that widespread interest, CAWP organized the December 1983 Forum for Women State Legislators in San Diego. Three themes dominated that Forum, which attracted more than 350 of the 991 women legislators holding office in 1983:

- increasing the numbers and influence of women in public office, especially in state legislatures
- moving women up into key legislative leadership roles
- examining possible differences between women's and men's responses to public policy issues.

At the conclusion of the Forum, the legislators pledged to aim at doubling their ranks in the next four years. They also urged CAWP to continue its work with elected women, especially to disseminate information and to organize more meetings addressing topics of particular interest and relevance to women legislators.

By 1985, those topics of interest had come to include how to attain and cope with leadership positions in the legislatures. Although the progress had not been dizzyingly rapid, the number of women in state legislatures had grown to 1100, almost twice the number of a decade before. In 1975, no women served in the senates of eight states; by 1985, that number had been reduced to three states. Increasing numbers of women were gaining the seniority and influence to occupy either committee chairs or slots in the majority or minority leadership. We decided it was time to

ask these women about the special opportunities and challenges that leadership roles entail.

Among the questions we considered important were: Are women in leadership faced with different kinds of pressures than their male counterparts? Are women adding new items to the legislative agenda or offering different approaches to the old issues? What skills, attitudes, and strategies are required for women to reach legislative leadership positions? Do women in leadership believe that they exercise power or conduct themselves differently from male leaders? We wondered whether women entering leadership feel any special responsibilities to their female colleagues or constituents, whether they allocate their time and energies differently than do men. We wanted to begin asking whether the women will, in the short term or over a longer period, effect substantial changes in the legislative process or in the institution of the legislature.

To take a first look at these kinds of questions, we invited women holding legislative leadership positions in 1985 to join us at the Scanticon Conference Center near Princeton, New Jersey. Sixty-nine of them, representing twenty-nine states, came together from November 14-17, 1985. They heard addresses in plenary sessions from women who had served in state legislatures before moving on to higher offices. They gained new perspectives on public sector leadership by listening to a woman who has conducted research about women leaders in the private sector. They engaged in lively dialogue with a faculty member from Harvard's Kennedy School of Government who used confrontational techniques to provoke them into examining their own leadership styles and looking for the patterns and practices that they have consciously or unconsciously adopted. They watched journalists and policymakers debating some of the complex concerns that arise where their responsibilities intersect. Above all, they talked to one another, comparing notes and swapping stories, looking for new ideas, resources, and renewal.

This brief report contains selected materials from the conference -- an agenda and list of participants, transcripts of plenary session speeches, discussion group questions, selected press clippings, and a piece by Peg Simpson, a journalist with Hearst Newspapers and Working Woman magazine, on women in public leadership. The report presents a general introductory overview to the issues, questions, and themes touched on by speakers and participants at this first conference for women exercising influence in positions of legislative leadership. We would like it to provoke thought and comment, as well as new interest in how women lawmakers can move ahead. Meanwhile, the Program for Women State Legislators is moving ahead too, and we look forward to the continuing challenge of identifying and serving the interests of political women. We hope and expect to find many more opportunities to encourage an ongoing dialogue among members of this new generation of political leaders.

Ruth B. Mandel
Director

Conference Agenda

Thursday, November 14

- 5:30 - 7:00 p.m. Reception
- 7:00 - 9:30 p.m. Dinner
Speaker: The Honorable Madeleine Kunin
Governor of Vermont

Friday, November 15

- 7:00 - 8:15 a.m. Breakfast
- 8:30 - 10:00 a.m. **Plenary: Women in Leadership: Managers of Change and Continuity**

Discussion Leader: Katharine Esty,
Goodmeasure, Inc.
- 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. **Discussion Groups: Legislative Leadership Strategies**
- 12:30 - 2:30 p.m. Lunch
Speaker: The Honorable Jan Meyers
U.S. Representative, Kansas
- 2:30 - 4:30 p.m. **Discussion Groups: Legislative Leadership and Issue Advocacy**
- 6:00 - 7:30 p.m. Reception
- 8:00 p.m. Dinner

Saturday, November 16

- 7:00 - 8:15 a.m. Breakfast
- 8:30 - 11:30 a.m. **Open Forum: Women and Leadership**
Facilitator: Ronald L. Heifetz
Kennedy School of Government
Harvard University
- 11:45 - 1:00 p.m. Lunch

3:00 - 5:00 p.m.

**Roundtable: Lawmakers and the Press:
Who's in Control?**

Moderator: Talbot D'Alemberte,
Dean, Florida State University
College of Law

Participants

Representative Julie
Belaga
Connecticut State House
of Representatives

Peg Breen
Co-host, "Inside Albany"

Judge Miette Burnstein
Chief Judge,
17th Florida Judicial
Circuit

Lawrence Collins
Reporter,
The Boston Globe

The Honorable Joan Growe
Secretary of State,
Minnesota

Assemblywoman Gwen Moore
California State
Assembly

Representative Sue Mullins
Iowa State House of
Representatives

John Pittenger
Dean, Rutgers-Camden Law
School

Mitchell Rogovin
Attorney; Rogovin, Hugel and
Lenzner

Sharon Sherman
Account Executive
The Communicators

Representative Irving Stolberg
Connecticut State House of
Representatives

Representative Penny Williams
Oklahoma State House of
Representatives

Joan M. Wright
Director, New Jersey Division on Women

5:30 - 7:00 p.m. Reception

7:45 p.m. Dinner

Sunday, November 17

7:00 - 8:45 a.m. Breakfast

9:00 - 11:00 a.m. **Speaker:** The Honorable Shirley
Chisholm, Former U.S.
Representative New York

11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Brunch
Closing Session

KEYNOTE ADDRESS

The Honorable Madeleine Kunin

It's a pleasure to return here -- as Governor.

I first visited the Eagleton Institute of Politics some eleven years ago as a new state legislator.

That was the first time that I had an opportunity to gain an academic perspective of the political process. Institutions such as Eagleton continue to permit a synthesis between the hurly burly of politics and the relative calm of academia.

Politicians need to step back from the process to place their own words and deeds into a larger historical and futuristic perspective. And of course, those who study us have to continuously find out what politics is actually all about.

The phenomenon of women in politics -- if you discount the British empire -- (difficult to do this week) is a relatively recent phenomenon.

Women, in fact, have only recently in this country entered public life in any significant numbers.

We are, in a sense, immigrants in the political system.

John Kenneth Galbraith observed that each immigrant group integrated itself in the power structure through politics -- and women, in that sense, are no different. Our turn has come.

I would like to explore this evening some of the achievements, as well as some of the barriers which women face in the political sphere.

In addition, I would like to explore some of the differences between the legislative and the executive side of the equation, having experienced both.

Let's look at where we are today.

While the numbers of women entering public life has not increased as dramatically or as swiftly as had been hoped for by either the suffrage movement or the more recent women's movement, the trend has definitely been towards greater participation.

The most noticeable shift has taken place in state legislatures.

In 1969, women comprised four percent of legislators in this country. In 1973, the year I first served, they were only 5.6 percent, and today, that figure has almost tripled to 14.8 percent. 1,103 women serve in state legislatures.

Interestingly enough, the two neighboring states of New Hampshire and Vermont take the lead in the percentage of women in state legislatures -- 33 percent for New Hampshire, which ranks first, and 26.7 percent for Vermont, which is second.

There is, I might add, a sobering note. There appears to be a relationship between the size of the legislature, the pay of legislators, and the number of women.

Nevertheless, the increase is encouraging.

In other areas, progress has been much more slow. I am one of two women governors in office today, and one of four ever elected in her own right. Martha Layne Collins of Kentucky shares that distinction with me, and Ella Grasso of Connecticut and Dixie Lee Ray of Washington preceded us.

As you undoubtedly know, there are two women in the U.S. Senate, and 23 in Congress, not a comforting statistic.

More women are running for public office than ever before, but often in difficult races. Only one new congresswoman was elected last year.

On the optimistic side, it is my hope that the women elected to legislative seats, and to town and school offices, are providing the future pool of candidates for higher office.

As the traditional roles of women change from being observer to participant in such fields as finance, law and medicine, the roles of women in politics will also continue to change, but at a much slower pace.

In the cabinet today, since the ignominious departure of Margaret Heckler, only one woman has survived -- Elizabeth Dole. No women are involved in national security decisions. There is some cynicism which concludes that now that the women's vote is no longer needed, women need not be on display in the Reagan administration.

While one can take some comfort in the fact that political opportunities are expanding at the local and state level, it is disconcerting to realize that nationally there appears to be an inverse relationship between the number of women in public life and the degree of power they exercise. The higher you go, the harder it gets.

The candidacy of Gerry Ferraro illustrates some of the ambivalence the American public feels towards women in high office.

There was tremendous affection bestowed upon her on a personal level. She aroused a great outpouring of sentiment and gained admiration for her courage. But she was also scrutinized more harshly and she was expected, unrealistically in my view, to miraculously sustain a floundering ticket.

In the end, I believe she was limited, not by the political mistakes which were made, but by the fact that she was such a "phenomenon" on the national scene. It did not translate into votes, and possibly, considering the realities, one should not have expected that to happen. Nevertheless, the contrast between the roar of the crowd and the silence of the voters was enormous.

In order for women to be elected to high office, more precedents, such as Geraldine Ferraro's and the state of Virginia's have to be established. A certain political barrier broken. But in addition, we must ask what is necessary -- regardless of the obstacles -- to inspire women to step over that dividing line between private and public life. To take that leap, so to speak, over the wall, into the battleground of politics. However, her candidacy dramatically altered the political landscape. Next time, it will not be so brutal. The public will have become used to the idea that a woman can, and in fact should, run for the highest offices of the land.

A recent National Women's Political Caucus study substantiates this view.

The myth that the relative poor showing of women candidates in 1984 proves that its harder for women to win is simply wrong. Their study concludes that: "There has been a deep shift in

attitudes of voters toward women running for public office as a result of the intense exposure of Geraldine Ferraro on the campaign trail." "Although the voters were clearly polarized in their feelings toward Ferraro personally, more than one out of four voters said they would be more likely in the future to support a woman for public office as a result of the 1984 election, indicating the net result was positive for women as candidates in the future."

Good news. People are simply getting more used to the idea, and simplistic as that sounds, that is important.

The recent race in Virginia is another case in point. The winning ticket included a white male governor, a black lieutenant governor, and a woman attorney general. All won handily and paved the way for others.

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That action is less dependent on outward circumstances and more motivated by personal conviction, although both are necessary.

When I ask myself, what is it that inspires me to deal with the uncertainties and vicissitudes of public life, I conclude that it boils down to one essential -- the ability to help shape the course of events.

There are those who do not seek that power, in fact shun it, and prefer a more private and inner existence.

In the past, women naturally delegated the worldly chore of influencing and shaping events to the men who often "provided" economic security. Economic self-determination and political self-determination will run a parallel course.

Women's influence was exercised in more subtle ways, in the home it was assumed.

Increasingly, however, even if one accepted that premise (which was always debatable) it has become apparent that there is no clear line of demarcation between protecting hearth and home and protecting oneself from the dangers in the world.

My political development, to some degree, parallels my expansion, in concentric circles, to a series of perimeters beyond the home. I was always, to some extent, "out there," of course, but not in terms of political action.

I considered myself a good, public spirited citizen for many years, but I did not dream of holding public office. That jump, from the private sphere to the public sphere, is a major one.

If someone had told me, years ago, that I would one day be governor of the State of Vermont, I would have responded with total disbelief.

But, as Gloria Steinem once wrote, "We have become the men we once thought we would marry."

I confess, I once speculated that it would be interesting to be married to a politician. Today, I know better.

When I first contemplated running for the legislature, I sought out the advice of an established local democrat. After we had weighed the pros and cons, I asked, "What happens if I get elected and I find I'm no good at it?"

He mused for a while, and concluded, "Well, you won't stand out." With that encouragement, I proceeded.

I, like many of you, believe my political courage expanded at the same pace as my concern for the welfare of my family moved from hearth and home into the community.

As a mother, I tried to protect my children from harm when they were toddlers, watching their every step. When they went off to school, I worried about whether they would get there safely. My concern for safety led to my first political act -- getting a flashing light at the railroad crossing.

I was not consciously politicized because I believed more women should be in politics (although that was also part of my inspiration), but I was politicized subconsciously because I

wanted to have influence over decisions which were beyond my own control.

That action -- the flashing light which I did obtain -- led to a seat in the legislature.

That kind of politicization occurs daily, as women and men are concerned about local health and safety issues, as well as global peace and war issues.

We recognize that in order to have some say over our destiny, political participation is a requirement.

It is the urgency of the issues, in the end, which propels people into public life -- not an abstract ideal. However, to move from activist for a cause, to a position of political influence demands a complex transition.

We have to acknowledge that despite the number of women involved in political causes over the years, a phenomenon which should have led to women holding public office (How many men were politicized by Vietnam and are in Congress today? Where are the women leaders of the peace movement a movement started by mothers not wanting to send their sons to war?) We have not seen a corresponding participation of women in politics.

One reason, you recall, that the women's movement emerged in the 1970's was that women were basically excluded from the peace movement of the 60's. Dedicated and motivated as they were, they were relegated to making coffee.

One focus of the women's movement has been to empower women on all levels -- economic as well as political. Certainly, on the economic level, a revolution has occurred. The movement, by an measure, must be termed a success. So much so, that this generation of college women does not have to acknowledge that there was, and is, a women's movement.

But on the political level, the women's movement has not been as successful in propelling women into political power on a significant scale.

There are exceptions. The legislators in this room qualify as such, and I consider myself an exception to the rule, but, a preview of future trends.

My own political evolution, partially developed because of the exquisite timing of both the women's movement and the environmental movement, each coinciding with my personal inner readiness.

The environmental movement propelled me into the political arena. I wanted to be capable of affecting the decisions being made in the Vermont legislature, rather than being on the outside, as an observer. The women's movement gave me the courage and the support system to move into the political arena. I was fortunate in that regard.

I believe those two ingredients are still necessary -- A sense of purpose, a desire to change and shape the world around you, is essential to participation in public life, no matter in what position or at what level. In fact, it has, at times, to rise to a sense of passion. Without that, the obstacles cannot be overcome. One cannot, in fact, dream of overcoming them.

But in addition, particularly for women, because there is so little precedent for our participation, there has to be a supportive environment which sanctions and sustains such political and public behavior. Otherwise, the political environment is simply too hostile, and we feel ourselves alienated from the system.

In order to do anything in life, one has to envision oneself doing it with a measure of success.

On a personal note, I believe my courage to enter this political world emanated from an earlier recognition that the lack of political action -- or silence -- can also be threatening. It is a quality which I cannot fully define, even as I try to describe it today. But I believe my politicization goes back to my childhood experience of leaving Europe because of World War II. It was not a conscious decision on my part, but en route I learned that political empowerment was a form of self-protection.

Once that knowledge is with you, it cannot be ignored. Women, traditionally, have not been taught to protect themselves via such action. They have done so indirectly, through the men they married or through their fathers.

As the knowledge that we are each responsible for our destiny -- quite fundamental -- grows upon us, women will take further

responsibility for all other aspects of their lives, including participation in public life.

The major barrier to full political equality, in my view, is not some mischievous prejudice on the part of the male establishment. The barrier is a lack of historical precedent.

That is why raising the gender issue, grappling with it, attempting to define it, and to compensate for it, is a task given only to women.

In my campaign for governor, my opponent's theme was, "The Difference is Leadership."

We always believed that leadership was code language for "Can a woman lead like a man?"

The issue does not go away. Women in public life continue to be measured against traditional male standards.

The reason is simple.

Leadership qualities have been associated with masculine qualities because almost all of our leaders -- with few and notable exceptions -- have been men.

It is only what we have become accustomed to over the centuries of historic experience -- our fathers, our kinds, our presidents, and our governors.

This was vividly portrayed to me the day after my election when I stepped into the formal executive office of the State House. The walls were lined with somber dark portraits of the bearded men who preceded me.

The revolution which had occurred with my election was clear. I was a new face.

A woman who visited the office, looked at the gentlemen who lined the walls, looked at me, smiled and said, "I'm glad you're here. You're good for them."

They've begun to perk up a bit since that first day.

That certain notoriety which comes with being the first woman to enter the rooms of power -- be they economic, political, or social -- is a distinction associated with gender. Men enter these rooms assuming their rightful place, as if they had been expected. A continuation of the line.

We are not expected. For the time being, we are the strangers, political immigrants.

One of the barriers which women face, is the challenge to establish our own identity and style in a traditional male world. As more women enter the room, the spotlight will dim and not focus exclusively on the newest member of the club.

What is difficult for women, in my view, is that although the political philosophies and styles of women differ from one another as much as they do amongst men, there is a very narrow range of acceptable political behavior.

Assume that there are two poles at either end of the spectrum labeled male behavior and female behavior.

If a woman approaches the male behavior pole, she is ricocheted off it. But neither can she abandon it, because the qualities of toughness -- the leadership style we know -- must be displayed. At the same time, she must be true to her gender. Too much femininity, however, is weak.

A newspaper story, shortly after I was elected, commented on my speaking style. What struck me was that they -- speech critics -- sent both messages. I should be both more masculine and guarded against masculinity.

I was advised to "square up my shoulders, and put on some of that 'I'm in charge' body language." Another speech adviser noted that what I should not do is "acquire mannish mannerisms."

The ideal woman to assume political power, according to a national women's political caucus study last year, was described as piloting a plane in an ice storm bringing it to a safe landing on a slippery runway while simultaneously giving mouth to mouth resuscitation to the co-pilot who had just suffered a heart attack.

Courageous, competent, and caring.

Masculine and feminine.

For women to enter the political power structure, in either elected or appointive office, in larger numbers, they have to be able to envision themselves functioning in that environment on an equal footing with their peers.

Then, not only will women fit into the political power structure, but others will expect to see them there.

A "critical mass" of women has to accumulate so that the woman governor, senator, congresswoman is not a unique or bizarre phenomenon. To achieve that we must continue to build a support system for women in public life which is similar to the one which already exists for men.

The male system has been there for centuries, built up from prehistoric times when the stronger male was the protector in many, if not all, societies. Whatever its roots, it is there, unquestionably.

The female equivalent is new and tenuous. A support system operates on several levels -- practical as well as psychological and moral support.

Public life for anyone, regardless of gender, has its moments of tremendous stress, controversy, and doubt. To withstand those difficult periods and move back into the fray, everyone in public life needs a support system. I obtained mine early through the Women's Political Caucus which formed when I first ran for office, and I have managed to sustain an informal system throughout my career.

We have to continue to foster these networks which encourage other women and men to help women enter the political world.

And, after defeat, we have to help them re-enter the political world.

Having experienced defeat, I can only tell you that it is painful.

Regardless of gender, the rejection is powerful. But, many men appear to have an advantage in finding a niche for themselves as they determine whether or not to re-enter the fray.

They hang out their shingles, join a law or consulting firm. There are few such niches for women. I am personally very grateful to Harvard and the Kennedy School of Government for having provided me with a fellowship -- to think, to have an identity, and to regain my courage to run again. I suspect I could not have done so without that reinvigoration. I would

encourage this institution to think likewise -- to establish a recovery room from politics, if you will.

Support must be available on a practical level. It takes an increasingly outrageous sum of money to get elected to any office in this country. Without realistic fundraising capability, it is impossible to conceive of being elected, no matter how ideal or strong the candidate.

Men have traditionally had easier access, through their existing business and financial networks, to raise campaign funds. Women have to build their own networks.

In this capacity, I have high praise for the women's organizations which have raised funds for women, such as Women's Political Caucus, Women's Campaign Fund, NOW -- they were essential to me, and I am grateful to their generosity and support, and I am equally grateful to the many women and men who never wrote out a check for a campaign contribution before.

We may not have the traditional networks, but we can build new ones which are equally good, if not better, because they are generally smaller contributors, participating in greater numbers.

The power of the role model cannot be underestimated. I am keenly aware of this myself, and it is sometimes a moving experience. Again, the role model harmonizes and personalizes an otherwise hostile political environment.

It starts early. My secretary of civil and military affairs, Elizabeth Bankowski, mother of two children aged seven and four, told about the reaction of her four year old son, Joshua, when they visited the Shelburne Museum and toured the governor's railroad car. There was a figure of a man propped up in a seat. Joshua asked, "Who's that?"

Liz replied, "That's the governor."

Joshua laughed, "Isn't that silly Mommy, men can't be governors."

Well, someday they might.

In regard to the question of whether there is a distinction between legislative and executive office, the answer is simply -- yes.

In regard to the question of whether there is a distinction between legislative and executive office, the answer is simply -- yes.

The heat is more intense.

The spotlight at a higher voltage.

There is no one else to blame.

And, clearly, the male history of executive roles is very strong.

The comparison with previous male leadership styles is persistent and has to be overcome. It can be, but it takes time, strength, and constant attention.

And the process is often excruciatingly subtle. Both friends and foe alike think, at times, that as a woman you are simply less strong.

Opponents think they can bully you by badgering -- that you are more easy game. And supporters will think that you will cave in under the bullying.

But, with time, the public will get used to us. And there are advantages -- credibility, compassion. We do not carry as many stereotypes as we think.

In the same Women's Political Caucus poll on ten measures of stereotype, women rated more positively on seven characteristics, equal on two, and lower than men on only one.

The characteristic where women are stereotyped negatively is the ability to handle a crisis -- a key executive ability.

Women rated equally to men on having leadership qualities and on building a feeling of confidence. Women rate better than men on caring, being effective, having strong opinions, having new ideas, fighting for their beliefs, understanding the needs of the voters, and speaking directly to the voters.

Not a bad score card overall.

Despite the slowness of the progress, I believe we are today on a threshold where there will be a surge of new women running and winning high political office. We have formed the foundation, have built the support system. Now we must strengthen it.

In addition, there is growing recognition of the importance of political participation to shape the course of events. That has been a powerful incentive for me.

Given the choice, and the choice is ours to a much larger degree that most of us comprehend, I would much rather live my life knowing that I had tried to effect change, than to look back at some later date and mourn the outcome of my passivity.

In our times, we have the opportunity to translate our sense of justice and injustice into full political participation and to bring that to the highest levels of public life.

In reality, there are no barriers out there if we sustain a support system and exercise the political will to move forward.

That is the challenge for each one of us.

Madeleine Kunin (D) is Vermont's 74th governor and only the seventh woman in the United States to serve as governor of any state.

Born in Switzerland, she came to this country with her mother and brother in 1940. She earned a B.A. in History from the University of Massachusetts and holds a master's degree in journalism from Columbia University and another in English literature from the University of Vermont. She has taught at Middlebury and St. Michaels Colleges and at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government.

Kunin served three terms in the Vermont House of Representatives, beginning in 1972. She chaired the Appropriations Committee in 1977-78. She was elected lieutenant governor in 1978 and re-elected in 1980. After an unsuccessful bid in 1982, she was elected governor in 1984.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
DEPARTMENT OF CHEMISTRY

RESEARCH REPORT
NO. 1234

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MARATHON RACE

The Honorable Jan Meyers

I look around the room and see familiar faces, and I feel like I am really home. I just want you to know that not everybody thinks highly of Members of Congress. To illustrate that, I'll tell a story about a Rabbi, a Hindu Priest and a Congressman. They were traveling through Western Kansas and their car broke down. They went to the nearest farmhouse and asked the farmer if they could sleep there that night and he said, "Well, sure, you can stay out in the barn. It's warm, and there's lots of hay." So everyone settled down for the night. Pretty soon there is a knock at the door and the farmer goes to the door, and there stands the Hindu Priest, and he says, "There's a cow out in that barn and I am not going to stay all night in that barn with that cow." The farmer replied, "Sleep in your car, but don't bother me again tonight." So everybody settles down and soon there is another knock on the door and there stands the Rabbi, and the Rabbi says, "There's a pig in that barn and I am not staying all night in that barn with that pig." So the farmer said, "Okay, if you don't want to sleep in the barn with the pig that's okay; you can stay all night in your car, just don't bother me again." So everybody settles down again for the night and the farmer hears a knock at the door. By this time he's really angry and he heads for the door and he is saying to himself, "Now what does that darn Congresswoman want?" He pulls open the door, and there stands...- the cow and the pig! Not everybody loves us, not everybody thinks us wonderful!

I'd like to divide this "speech" into three parts. The first part is: How well are women running? Are we moving ahead into leadership positions? The second part is in response to a question women frequently ask me and that is: What is it really like to be a member of Congress? How are the duties and the lifestyle similar to or different from those in the Legislature? And third, I'd like to devote some time to the most important issue before us in Congress, that of reducing the deficit -- and commenting on how that process may affect you.

I named my speech the marathon. It's a title that is particularly appropriate for one who is a member of the U.S. House of Representatives. I remember the night I was elected in November of 1984. One of my friends said, "Enjoy tonight, tomorrow is the first day of the '86 campaign!"

For many of us who started 17 years ago...achieving the goal of being elected and achieving leadership does seem a little like a marathon run. We were the first women running and we were making a path for others. And because we were the first, and we were fewer in number, it took more effort to gain credibility with the voters and with our colleagues. And I know that you have all had to put forth that extra effort. I do believe that women now have that credibility with the voters; and even though we are still outnumbered, our numbers are improving.

There are 7,500 legislators and only about a thousand of them are women. And it is a long, difficult way from the back of that pack to the front and it takes some real staying power and that extra effort. I will tell you a joke that Olympia Snowe told one morning when she was speaking to a group of women who are all heads of their companies. A rancher, a doctor, and a business-woman died and went to heaven and St. Peter is at the gate and the doctor approaches him and says, "I worked very hard and saved a lot of lives and I should go right into heaven." St. Peter said, "Well, we have a little test that we give to everybody. You have to spell a word before you get in." The man said, "Okay, what's the word?" and St. Peter said, "Spell God." And he said, "Okay, G-O-D." And St. Peter said, "That is wonderful; go right in." Then the rancher approaches and says, "I raised a lot of beef and fed a lot of people and I am a good family man and I ought to go right into heaven." St. Peter said, "Don't be offended, everybody has to spell a word." The rancher says, "All right, what's the word?" St. Peter says, "Well, you have to spell God." The rancher says, "Okay, G-O-D." St. Peter said, "That's just marvelous, you go right on in." And then the businesswoman came forward and said, "I worked hard and was very active in the

community and served in the legislature, and I ought to get right into heaven." St. Peter says, "Well, you have to spell a word." She said, "What's the word?" St. Peter says, "Spell...Czechoslovakia."

It does take staying power, and in some cases many of us feel it takes a little extra effort. Having said that, let's stop for a moment and congratulate ourselves a little, since I'm talking today to a group of "front runners." In State Houses, women have been elected to 14.8% of the seats and they have 14.1% of the leadership and 12.3% of the Chairmanship positions. That is really pretty good. I think occasionally when we are concerned that we're not moving ahead as fast as we would like, we need to look back and see how far we have come and that we are really doing quite well. In State Senates, the percentage of leadership is not quite that close to the percentage of membership; I think it is about 10% of the membership in the State Senate, and about 6 to 7% in leadership slots, but women in State Senates are a more recent phenomenon. In 1978, I believe there were 16 women in the Kansas House, more than 10% of the membership, and I was still the only woman in the Kansas Senate and had been for six years. However, later, in 1978, by appointment, I got some company in the Kansas Senate. Then she ran and was elected on her own, and two more women were elected, so that when I left in 1984, there were four women in the Kansas Senate! And there are now five, I am happy to report; five out of 40 in the Kansas Senate, and 25 out of 125 in the Kansas House, so we are making good progress.

In the U.S. House it's not quite that good. There are 23 members, which is really a very small percentage (about 5%). We should be moving faster than that in the U.S. House. But there are 13 chairs and ranking members subcommittee positions held by women. Lynn Martin is Vice Chairman of the Republican Conference and Mary Rose Oakar is Secretary of the Democratic Caucus. Those are the two major party organizations which function within the House, which means within the House we have 5.3% of the membership, and 3.8% of the subcommittee chairs and ranking membership and leadership slots, so it's not a great record. But we are

working hard, and (dismal as it is) -- it's better than it was a few years ago. We are not losing ground; we are not gaining in leadership as fast as we would like, but we are not losing. For women, Number One is still the elusive spot -- that top position-- but, there also, the barriers are crumbling. We still do not have many Speakers of Houses or Presidents of Senates, but many women have served as Mayor in the largest cities of this country. There are two women governors, and we had a Vice Presidential candidate. Who would have thought that was possible ten years ago?

Seventeen years ago, when I ran for the City Council in a city of about 80,000 one of my friends said to me, "Jan, I hope you win, and I think it would be wonderful; but what do you want to do that for? They will just put you on the Flower Committee and forget all about you." Attitudes change! And I'm glad it didn't quite work out that way.

Several women legislators from Kansas have asked me, "How is Congress different, and how is it the same?" It is the same kind of crazy lifestyle as in the legislature, except it goes on ten months a year instead of three. I work Monday through Friday from about 8:30 a.m. until about 8:30 p.m. There are usually a number of receptions at night, and I always go to those when there are people from my district who will be present. I believe if they come half-way across country and invite me to a reception, I can certainly attend it, and I do enjoy seeing people from home and hearing from them. So that is what my week is like. On Friday afternoon, at about 3:30 p.m. or 4:00 p.m., I leave the office and get on my 5:30 p.m. non-stop flight home. I get back to the Kansas City area about 7:30 p.m., and I usually try to keep Friday evening and Saturday evening so that my husband and I can have some time together, but Saturday I am scheduled all day, and Sunday morning I frequently speak at a church. This last Saturday

for example, I spoke at a workshop on hunger from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. I thought it was a lunch meeting, but it wasn't, and by the time I was through speaking about hunger, I was really feeling

what I was talking about! I went directly from there (stopping to pick up a bag of Fritos on the way) to a meeting with a group concerned about nuclear arms limitation. I ran a few errands; I went home and met my husband who accompanied me to a very cold, outdoor candlelight vigil for POW/MIA servicemen between 5 and 7 p.m. where I spoke. That night, at 7:00 p.m., my working weekend was almost over. Sunday, I spoke at a church; packed my bag about 4:30 p.m.; caught my plane at 6:00 p.m., got back to Washington at 10:00 p.m., and started over again, Monday morning. It's no harder than the work that you do in the legislature, but the traveling and the weekly commitments make it very difficult. It is a very demanding life, but I like it very much. My home in D.C. is an apartment just across the 14th Street Bridge in Virginia. My husband said two things to me at the start, "Live close in so I don't have to worry about your driving too many miles at night, because I know you're not going to be going home until 8:30 or 9 at night. And live some place with secure underground parking, so that I don't have to worry about your parking on the street and walking three blocks to your apartment." I accommodated both his requests, and I do have a nice apartment. The first six months after the election are particularly difficult. I promised myself in November 1984 that I would not panic, and would allow myself six months (until the first of May) and that I would move methodically to get my office, hire a staff, set up a computer system, find an apartment, get it furnished, and get my car from home to D.C. I almost made it. I am still renting furniture -- I can't find time to go shopping. This has been a very tough year to be a freshman. There just haven't been any soft spots. We have gone from MX to chemical weapons; from pay equity to the farm bill; from budget cutting to tax reform; from Nicaragua to South Africa. It has been a very difficult year to be a freshman and yet it has been a tremendous learning experience too. It's a little like learning to swim by being thrown in the middle of a river, but you learn how to swim pretty well.

My two top priorities personally are (1) knowing enough so that I can go to the floor and cast a well-informed vote. This is

my top priority, and the most meaningful to me and my constituents. My second priority is to handle the mail really well. I am doing well with the "well-informed vote," and with the mail, I am moving from a 5 to a 6 on a 1-to-10 scale. Doing a good job with mail is difficult...especially the first year, because your staff doesn't know you well enough yet to do the first draft on a letter. We get between 50 to 100 letters a day and put them in groups that are similar. For example, Social Security letters (not just all Social Security letters) but those that speak to a specific concern are in one group. The staff will bring me one group -- all of them, or a sample number. I read the letters, draft a reply, they take it and fill in or adjust any of the specifics that I may have left out and then we put it on the computer. It comes back to my desk with the incoming letter clipped to the outgoing letter and I read them again and personalize them. It takes an enormous amount of time. I don't know if I will always be able to give the personal kind of attention to the mail, but the first year while I can do it I want to do it, and I think it is very important.

Your work in the State Legislatures has been made much more difficult this year by our budget reduction efforts in Washington, and I believe that this is just the beginning. Your work in terms of setting priorities and defining ways to finance programs at the state and local level is going to make what is already a very difficult, challenging, and demanding job much more so because we will be able to absorb less and less financial responsibility in Washington. The recent budget cutting initiative, Gramm-Rudman, will continue what was started this year with deficit-reduction efforts. I don't know what your state is like; in Kansas we have a very similar procedure. We have what we call a Consensus Estimating Group (which is a group of economists from the budget division, from legislative research fiscal division, and from the universities). They go into a room and shut the door and look at every economic indicator in the country and they come out and tell us how much money we are going to have in income and sales tax; they have been so accurate that it is uncanny. Obviously, they

try not to underestimate, because you can imagine how popular they would be if we took their findings and raised taxes unnecessarily. They have only overestimated one year and that was in 1983 when the recession hit us particularly hard and we were hit also with a sharp cutback in federal money. We were going to run short of money; and we can't do that because of the balanced budget provision in the Kansas Constitution, and the procedure to avoid this in Kansas is called "invoking allotment." The Governor has total discretion and he allots an amount that every department, division, and agency cut their budget. He can cut one agency 10%, other agencies not at all. Instead, in 1983, rather than invoking allotment, the Governor made it voluntary, and he requested all agencies, across the board, to cut their budgets by 4% and they all did it. And I think they did it without too much pain. This is essentially what Gramm-Rudman will do at the federal level. There will be an estimate of the income. Congress will try to set their expenditures within that income aiming for a certain deficit reduction target. If we miss it, the funds will be "sequestered" according to a certain formula. The formula is being worked out right now and you can imagine the number of questions that arise. When do we start? Do we start in '86 or in '87? What is exempt? Right now the consensus is to exempt Social Security, interest, and certain contracts. And so, out of about a trillion dollar budget, almost half of it is exempt. How do you sequester from the rest? Do you do it across the board? What we are thinking about doing at the federal level is setting programs into two categories, "mandatory" and "discretionary." The mandatory category has all of the programs with COLAS, Medicaid, and those programs where the COLA may be cut, but you won't cut into the bone of the program. The other is discretionary spending. This discretionary spending includes defense and every other program in the federal budget. Right now, the committee is trying to decide how much of a cut defense will take and how much will fall on the rest. They are considering a 50-50 division between mandatory/-discretionary, and in discretionary 50-50 between defense and the other programs.

I do believe we must act to resolve the deficit problem at the federal level. Nothing lasts forever, but for the next four or five years, federal-state relations are going to change a great deal. This is going to be difficult for us at the federal level and maybe even more difficult for you at the state level. I look forward to working with you. I want to hear from all of you.

Finally, I am enjoying Congress very much, although I miss the state legislature. I encourage you, if you are interested, and the time is right, to run for Congress because the state legislature is wonderful background experience. Many of the procedures are the same. The principal difference is: It is so much bigger at the federal level. They talk in billions instead of millions! Ten minutes after I walked into the Kansas Senate, I knew everybody in the room, because I knew most of them when I got there and it did not take much longer to get to know the rest when there are only 40. When I walked into the House in Congress I felt like I was walking into a football stadium - Four hundred thirty-five people! The very first order of the day is to get to know them, so when you see them walking down the hall you can say, "Hi, Doug" and know that he is a Republican from Nebraska and his particular interest is agriculture. You have to know the players just as you do in the State Legislature.

I have enjoyed serving in Congress. I think it is a challenge and I thank all of you who, by your activities and your good work, have created a climate that helped with my election. I have appreciated very much being asked to speak today.

Thank you.

Jan Meyers (R) represents the third district of Kansas in the U.S. House of Representatives. She serves on the Science and Technology Committee, the Small Business Committee, and the Select Committee on Aging. In addition, she is a member of the House Republican Policy Committee. She serves on several task forces and caucuses, including the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues. She was chosen vice president of the 1984 Republican freshman class in Congress.

From 1972 to 1984, Meyers served in the Kansas State Senate, where she chaired the Public Health and Welfare Committee and the Local Government Committee. Before that, she was a member of the Overland Park City Council for five years, chairing that body for two years. She has served as president of the League of Kansas Municipalities, and she has received numerous awards for her public service efforts.

Meyers graduated from William Woods College and the University of Nebraska.

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of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration for her
public service awards.

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Nebraska.

WOMEN: WORK, LEADERSHIP AND POLITICS

The Honorable Shirley Chisholm

I am very pleased to have this opportunity to address you today on the subject of "Women: Work, Leadership and Politics."

There can be no doubt that the presence of women in the labor force has dramatically changed in the last three decades. In 1984, there were 49.7 million women in the civilian labor force -- more than two and one-half times the number in 1950 which was 18.4 million. Over half of all women aged 16 or older in 1984 were either at work or looking for work. In contrast, just one-third of the women in the same age group were in the labor force in 1950. In addition, the Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that the number of women in the workforce should continue to rise, although at a lower pace than in the '70s.

While women across economic and racial lines have increased their participation in the job market, most surprising perhaps is the fact that married women demonstrated the greatest increase in workforce participation. The number of women in the workforce who were married and living with their husbands, tripled between 1950 from 8.6 million to 26.2 million in 1983. Three out of every five women who joined the labor force since 1950 have been married. Today, over half of all wives are in the labor force compared to under one-quarter in 1950.

The number of single women and widowed, divorced, or separated women in the labor force doubled between 1950 and 1983. For both groups, most of the increase occurred in the 1970s. During that period, the young women workers of the baby-boom generation were more prone than their mothers had been to delay marriage, postpone childbearing, and continue working after having children. At the same time, both the number of unwed mothers and divorces rose as well.

With increased numbers of married women in the workforce, the issue of childcare has become an almost universal concern. In March 1984, 19.5 million women with children under age 18 were in the labor force. Working mothers thus accounted for nearly 40% of

all working women. Most, some 14.5 million, were in married-couple families, reflecting the declining proportion of "traditional" families comprised of a husband-breadwinner/wife-home-maker.

The majority of working mothers, around 11.5 million, had school-age children at home, that is children between the ages of 6 and 17. However, two out of every five mothers at work, some 8.0 million, were also raising preschoolers. More than one-fifth of working mothers, 4.4 million, had children under age three at home.

I must say that I find the "universal need" for childcare rather amusing in terms of its effect on the politics of this issue. During my early years in Congress, I advocated the need for childcare services to enable welfare mothers to seek job training and employment opportunities. At that time, there was very little interest in providing a national program of childcare for poor women. In the late '70s, when senators Walter Mondale of Minnesota and later Alan Cranston of California proposed legislation for federally-supported daycare services, they were roundly attacked by Phyllis Schlafly and other conservative predecessors to the "moral majority." They saw childcare outside the home as a "threat to the family." Of course, this so-called threat was never defined but a successful campaign was mounted to prevent this legislation from being enacted because of the archaic views of a self-selected few.

With middle-class women, as well as the poor, in need of daycare for their young children, the moral majority has had a tough time gathering support for their position in recent years. As Representative George Miller of California, Chairman of the Select Committee on Children, Youth and Families said, "The debate is no longer over the need for childcare. The debate is how to expand the availability of childcare and get financial support." Working women, regardless of their political views, are unanimous in their demand for safe, affordable childcare services. Certainly, the recent horror stories about child abuse, at many

facilities across the country, has only heightened parents' anxiety about the quality of services available to them.

Recent decisions by insurance companies, due to the abuse scandals, has made it almost impossible for many small childcare providers to continue in business. This crisis is particularly acute in states like California where childcare providers are dependent on one insurance company. The one company in California willing to carry insurance for these facilities recently made a decision to dramatically increase the cost of its policies to the point where most providers can no longer afford the insurance. Without insurance, they cannot continue in business.

One solution appears to be linking childcare with the schools. Education and government officials are now debating who will shoulder the costs and responsibilities. Local, state and national government agencies often subsidize part of the costs of such programs but in many cases their contributions have decreased and parents have had to pay an increased share. The debate on financing the school-age care programs has come to focus on the role played by local school districts.

As more schools begin to study the issue, local school officials have become increasingly uncomfortable with expanding the customary role schools play in educating children and have begun to protest that the financial burden of the care programs is onerous and interferes with the schools' primary mission. Depending on the program, annual costs can range from a few hundred dollars per child to several thousand dollars. As one school official said, "These are not mandated costs. Our mandate is kindergarten through 12th grade."

School districts, looking to governments or businesses for financial assistance, often find strong interest. They are able to obtain money for start-up costs but not long-term support. The federal government, in typical Reagan-style, believes that this problem should be handled locally without "direct federal involvement" -- meaning no federal money.

Last October, Congress did offer some relief to localities struggling with this problem. It passed and President Reagan

signed into law a bill that authorized the expenditure of \$20 million for latchkey programs. However, the administration did not seek funds for the programs, the dependent care block grant, in its supplemental 1985 or 1986 appropriation requests. Many proponents of the legislation say the block grant will never receive financing.

Some school systems have made efforts to fill this need despite the broad lack of outside support. On September 2nd, the New York Board of Education announced a plan to keep the city's school buildings open to community groups without charge for after-school and summer programs. The plan, which involved a new contract with the custodians' union, will cost the board about \$5.6 million.

Other school systems have been unwilling to assume that kind of burden. In Minneapolis, when the board of education lost its subsidies in 1982 for its 19 school-age care programs, ten of its programs closed because parents could not afford to bear the costs. Those costs come to about \$130 a month per child for before- and after-school care five days a week. The Minneapolis programs, which had served 1,900 children, now work with 750 children. The poor children, of course, are the ones who have had to drop out of the programs.

In Montclair, New Jersey the Board of Education in 1977 started two before- and after-school programs at the elementary school level at no charge to parents. But in 1981, the board lost the federal financing it had been using for the programs. The district continued the free programs at a cost of about \$30,000 to \$50,000 a year to taxpayers for two years. They now charge a fee of \$.50 an hour per child. The superintendent of schools, Dr. Mary Lee Fitzgerald, suggests that while someone has to take on this responsibility, "The local taxpayer has every right to ask, 'Why are you requiring me to support this?'" if they have no children in need of these services.

On the other hand, some non-profit organizations have been able to develop unique funding arrangements with local school districts. In Dade County, which includes Miami, the local

chapter of the United Way and the school district have worked together to start programs that, by 1989, will provide after-school care for 25,000 students. The programs financed by the United Way and other not-for-profit agencies now care for about 500 students.

Nowhere is the need greater for childcare than for women who are single heads of households. Of the 10.9 million dependent children in female-headed families, 6.9 million children have working mothers. About 17% of white dependent children with working mothers lived in families maintained by women. This was true for 45% of black dependent children and 22% of dependent children of Hispanic origin.

Despite their commitment to the labor force, two-thirds were in the workforce in March 1984, they have not fared very well in the job market. In part, this is reflected by their relatively high unemployment rates. In March 1984, 16.1% of women who maintain families with dependent children, due in part to age, educational and occupational differences between these women and separated, widowed, or divorced women who maintain families with dependent children.

Due, in part, to their relatively high unemployment rates, concentration in low-paying and low-skilled occupations, and relatively low educational attainment, women who maintain families earn less than male breadwinners. Median earnings in 1983 were \$255 a week for full-time female householders. In contrast, husbands' median earnings were \$407 a week and male heads of households' median earnings were \$377 a week.

Along with lower earnings, families maintained by women also have lower incomes and a higher incidence of poverty than other families. Almost 3% of all families headed by women are considered to be living in poverty. These statistics increase for black and Hispanic families, where 56.1% and 55.5% respectively, live in poverty when headed by a woman.

Displaced homemakers, women who were long-term homemakers "displaced" from their accustomed role and source of income due to divorce, widowhood or abandonment, are heavily represented among

women-headed households. These women, if they are unable to find adequate paid employment, may find that they do not fit the requirements of federal and state income maintenance programs. For example, A.F.D.C. benefits are available only until the youngest child reaches age 18 or in some cases 19; Social Security dependents' benefits do not begin until age 62 unless the surviving spouse is disabled and the supplementary security income, S.S.I., is for needy persons who are age 65 and over, blind or disabled.

Given the economic picture that I have just described, women whether, single-heads of households, displaced homemakers or young women entering the world of work for the first time, have a need to earn an adequate wage. The women's rights movement, which concentrated on civil rights issues, like E.R.A. and abortion, is now beginning to examine economic questions as the new area for women's rights activists. As my good friend, Representative Mary Rose Oakar of Ohio has said, "Economic security is the truly liberating issue."

Economic security for women raises the inevitable questions about pay equity and comparable worth. In 1963, the Equal Pay Act mandated that women receive the same pay as men for similar work. In the 20 years since the passage of this act, the gap between men's and women's wages has not decreased. This mainly due to the large concentration of women, particularly in low-paying jobs. Because of this discrepancy, women have argued that their jobs are underpaid relative to jobs of comparable worth, i.e., jobs requiring the levels of skill, effort and responsibility, and working conditions similar to those held by men.

Comparable work and pay equity are broad terms with imprecise meanings and are often used interchangeably. Pay equity, however, is a broader term denoting fairness in setting wages. Although the term comparable worth has many definitions, it has generally come to entail the theory that jobs dominated by women may be valued less not because of skills required or job content, but because they are "women's jobs," and that this inequity, in the form of lower wages, amounts to sex discrimination. Basically,

the issue raised is that of pay equity in a labor market that is highly segregated by sex. Pay equity, whether in the form of equal pay for equal work or equal pay for work of equal value, concerns the pay relationships among jobs in the same firm.

But the mere suggestion that the federal government should conduct a study of gender-based discrimination in the federal civil service system has caused a tremendous backlash amongst conservatives. When Rep. Oakar's bill was passed by the House last Congress, Representative William Dannemeyer of California argued that such a study would invite a "multibillion dollar lawsuit." This year, when the bill was re-introduced since the Senate refused to act on it, Representative Dick Armey, a former economics professor and first term Republican from Texas, called the Oakar proposal "A dangerous step in the wrong direction -- away from a free-market economy." He contends that discrepancies between wages paid to men and women are due to "market circumstances," not discrimination. In his view, "Nobody is holding a gun to the heads of American women. They are making free choices," by entering the work force later than men, working fewer years and shorter hours and interrupting their careers more frequently.

Conservatives have been bolstered in their views by the September decision of the Court of Appeals in the AFSCME v. State of Washington case. Women had relied on the employment discrimination protections of Title VII of the Civil Rights as a basis for their call for "comparable worth" wages. According to the court, "Reliance on a free market system" which results in male jobs paying more than female jobs, "Is not in and of itself a violation of Title VII." In addition, the court stated that unless there was discriminatory intent, by law it is not permissible for the courts "to interfere in the market based system" for establishing employees' compensation.

While AFSCME plans to appeal this decision, the political momentum for comparable worth did receive a setback. This can be seen in a comparison between the vote of 413 to 6 for Oakar's bill last Congress and the vote of 259 to 162 just last week in the House. In addition, the cost argument is still being used by

conservatives as a way of undermining the issue of comparable worth. Evidence exists, however, which suggests that costs can be managed.

Five states, Iowa, Minnesota, New Mexico, South Dakota, and Washington, have implemented pay equity adjustments. Some states appropriated funds to close wage gaps; others used the state payroll to fund the adjustments. For example, Minnesota adopted a four-year plan to eliminate wage discrimination based on gender. When costs are spread over a period of years, they become much more manageable. Certainly, we would not want to see cost as a defense to eliminating discrimination. When it comes to women's issues, the cost factor seems to be the ultimate defense. For example, some black colleges tried to use this issue in 1979 in opposing title IX in their athletic programs because they said they couldn't afford it. As I said to them then, "Cost factors are an excuse not a defense." The same is true of pay equity cases. As Senator Cranston has said, "The unpaid worker is bearing the 'cost' of pay inequities," as evidenced by the increase in the "feminization of poverty."

Oakar's preliminary studies indicate that women federal employees do face wage discrimination. They average \$9,000 a year less than male workers, according to her findings. There are 15 pay grades in the federal system but four out of five women are clustered in the seven lowest grades. These statistics, says Oakar, illustrate why older women are so often poor and why feminist groups should concentrate their efforts on issues of economic security.

The question, of course, is whether feminist groups are prepared to focus more on economic issues to the detriment of the more obvious civil rights concepts of the E.R.A. and abortion. This "division" of women activists has caused politicians like Mary Rose Oakar to be denied campaign support by women's organizations because of her opposition to federal funding for abortion as a Roman Catholic. "The litmus test" on the abortion issue, has shaped women's political focus for the last decade. It's what caused several Democratic congresswomen to campaign for Barney

Frank against their own women's caucus colleague Margaret Heckler. Geraldine Ferraro's position on abortion was used against her by New York's cardinal because he felt she had a double standard on the issue as a Roman Catholic. Whether this will continue to be the watershed issue for women politicians is undetermined at this time. Certainly, with continued attacks by the administration and conservatives on the Roe v. Wade decision, women's rights activists will be forced to continually defend against these attacks and politicians will be put to the test as to whose side they are on the question.

More than any other issue, in terms of women's future leadership roles and presence in politics, is how the public reads the outcome of the '84 presidential elections. The candidate whose presidency gave birth to the term "gender gap" was able to carry the women's vote by a thumping 57%. Even 54% of Italian-American women voted for Reagan. What do these statistics mean? As a politician, I read them saying that with all of N.O.W. demands and threats to Walter Mondale that he had to choose a woman, in the final analysis they could not deliver on the women's vote. Again, blacks, as a voting block, delivered the highest percentage of votes to the Democrats. Unfortunately, I believe that the Democrats will also be more leery of backing women candidates for statewide offices like the U.S. Senate. While the two women senators are Republicans, it is unclear how strongly the D.N.P. will support the candidacies of Harriet Woods in Missouri or Liz Holtzman or Ferraro in New York. For some strange reason, the Republican party, perhaps because it is wealthier, is willing to spend more of its resources on women candidates. As a matter of fact, the House now has 12 Democratic women representatives and 11 Republican women representatives. If you can include the two Republican senators Hawkins and Kassebaum, Republican women outnumber their Democratic colleagues in Congress!

Women must still fight the battle of being recognized as legitimate political leaders. Mary Rose Oakar, although she is part of the House leadership, was excluded from the first meeting this Congress with the president. It was only after loud protests

that the speaker now ensures that she's invited to every leadership meeting. While Gerry Ferraro's presence on a national party ticket was a milestone, it is no guarantee that we will continue to have a woman as part of the presidential ticket. Also, the presence of a woman does not guarantee that feminist concerns, whether those are defined as economic security and/or abortion, will be addressed. Make no mistake, women will have to fight harder than ever to prove, particularly to the Democrats, that Geraldine Ferraro was not a tactical political error. The exit polls produced strong evidence that "feminist issues" carried far less weight than many Democrats had assumed. Only 6 percent of all voters and 11 percent of women voters, for example, described themselves as "strong feminists" who favored the Equal Rights Amendment. These women gave Mondale 77% of their votes. But the vast majority of women, 89% divided their votes 60 to 40 in favor of Reagan. I can say from my own experience, in the Mondale campaign, that many women, particularly southern women, did not identify with Geraldine Ferraro at all, as a viable vice-presidential candidate.

On the other hand, women activists should recognize that the Democrats will probably return to the old southern strategy of having a southerner on the national ticket. Women rights advocates had better be prepared to support women from this region who may be more conservative than the traditional north east liberal Democrat, if they expect to maintain political influence and power.

Whatever path women choose in fighting for their interests as workers, as leaders and as politicians, their struggle will not be an easy one. As one of America's greatest feminists, Frederick Douglass said, "Power concedes nothing without a struggle. It never has and it never will." Let us be prepared to struggle for the improvement of women's lives regardless of their place in this society. For it is with that struggle that we all become workers, leaders and politicians for a just cause: the liberation of ourselves and our sisters.

The women's movement is not over! We cannot be like Rip Van Winkle sleeping in a restful manner because of our attitude that we can now rest on our laurels. Sisters, we are semi-paralyzed by virtue of our inaction to the whittling away of the gains which we acquired in the 60s and 70s when our creative energies and vital spirits rose to the occasion and our lives were changed because we projected our voices for all to hear; we empowered ourselves...our surrogate lives receded into the darkness!

Today, a paralysis has overtaken us! The backlash on the current scene, primarily fueled by the fundamentalists, have managed to dominate American politics; their strength has caused an impotency in women today to the extent that as the developments on the national scene indicate a diminution of women's concerns, there is no collective outcry from us! There is no one to once again gather the flock to retread the paths that brought us to where we are -- instead there is confusion and bewilderment around us as the current administration slashes away at our benefits!

The older women (including myself) look on with a certain sense of anxiety as the younger generation of women adopt an attitude of "We don't need a woman's movement; we are doing fairly well." With their Calvin Klein jeans and their Yuppie outlook, they don't seem to realize that "What is here today, may be gone tomorrow" unless there is an eternal vigilance and an involvement in the situation.

Just take a look at what has happened and is happening to women. Where are the great coalitions of the 60s and 70s?

1. The dismantling of the laws and instrumentalities to enforce discriminatory laws.
2. The tampering with Title IX.
3. The tampering with Affirmative Action.
4. The administration's relentless pursuit to undo victories regarding equal pay for work of comparable value.
5. The battle against women's choice in the abortion issue.
6. The attempt being waged to reverse the historic Supreme Court decision Roe v. Wade twelve years ago (woman's basic right to decide on the bearing of children).

7. The decimation of funding or elimination of programs like the abused women's shelters, the rape crisis shelters -- in other words, those specific programs geared to the needs of abused females in our society.

Meanwhile, so much energy being wasted on internal power clashes within the movement while the objectives acquired are diminishing before our eyes as our voices remain muted. No wonder the administration continues to move relentlessly and ruthlessly because silence gives tacit approval!

We are being steam-rollered to oblivion and nothing happens.

If Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Harriet Tubman, Susan B. Anthony, Sojourner Truth were alive today, they would rightly query, "This is the women's movement in the eighties in the United States?"

As the women's movement escalates in other sections of the world, are we witnessing a moribund movement in the United States?

The women's revolution in the United States must not be afraid to rejuvenate itself, to restructure its thinking, to re-energize its followers -- for if we fail now it would take years before we can come back to where we were!

The decade of the '80s promises to be somewhat retrogressive in America in terms of economic and social gains! Justice Louis Brandeis used to say that, "It is not good for us that we should ever lose the fighting quality, the stamina and the courage to battle for what we want when we are entitled to it." The greatest asset of any nation is the spirit of its people and the greatest danger that can menace any nation is the breakdown of that spirit...the will to win and the courage to work.

Women shall be no longer the passive recipients of whatever morals, religion, trade and politics the nation may decree, but that they shall assume their God-given responsibilities and make themselves what they clearly are designated to be, the educators of the race. Forget conventionalisms, forget what the world will say whether you are in your place or out of your place; think your best thoughts, speak your best words, do your best works looking only to your conscience and God for approval." Remember ladies, this was uttered in the 19th century.

"One hundred years hence, what a change will be made,
in politics, morals, religion and trade,
in statesmen who wrangle or ride on the fence,
these things will be altered a hundred years hence."
"Then, woman, man's partner, man's equal shall stand
while beauty and harmony govern the land,
to think for oneself will be no offense
the world will be thinking a hundred years hence."
"Instead of speech-making to satisfy wrong,
all will join the glad chorus to sing freedom's song
and if the millennium is not a pretense
we'll all be good brothers a hundred years hence."

Shirley Chisholm (D) was the first black woman in the U.S. House of Representatives; she was elected in 1968 and served until 1982, representing New York's Twelfth Congressional District, which includes major portions of Brooklyn. While in the House, Chisholm served on the Rules Committee, the only woman and the only black person to do so. She was also a leading member of the Congressional Black Caucus. Before entering Congress, Chisholm served two terms in the New York State Assembly.

In 1972, Chisholm campaigned for the Democratic party nomination for President; she was the first black woman to seek the nation's highest office. She won almost 200 votes on the convention floor.

A graduate of Brooklyn College, Chisholm holds a masters degree in education and a diploma in administration from Columbia University. Before beginning her political career, she taught school and directed a day care nursery.

Since leaving Congress, Chisholm has been writing, teaching and lecturing. She currently holds the Purington Chair at Mount Holyoke College.



WOMEN IN PUBLIC LEADERSHIP

an essay by Peg Simpson

Soon after Madeleine Kunin was elected governor of Vermont, speech experts gave her conflicting critiques on her speaking style.

Some told her she should be more masculine. Others warned her to guard against signs of masculinity.

"I was advised to 'square up my shoulders and put on some of that "I'm in charge" body language,'" she recalled. But "another speech advisor noted that what I should NOT do is 'acquire mannish mannerisms.'"

Contradictory messages from society and the "experts" are nothing new for today's female pioneers in politics.

Sorting out what's valid from what's counterproductive, let alone finding a style that fits each woman's individual comfort factor, is still difficult, especially in the post-Ferraro era of politics where there are both exhaustion and euphoria, confusion and certainty about the future.

Identifying the barriers confronting women in politics was essential to knocking them down when women began their concerted -- and successful -- efforts to increase their numbers in state legislatures. In 15 years the number of seats women hold in state legislatures has tripled to 14.8 percent.

Isolating the often more subtle barriers to women in executive and party leadership positions is now a front-line concern.

At the Women in Legislative Leadership Conference in November 1985, five dozen women shared insights and strategies about ways to build on the successes of the past two decades -- and to understand and then combat the obstacles to future progress.

Even the question of "mannish mannerisms" set before Kunin addresses a basic dilemma: how to look the part of the authority figure in order to best exercise that authority. Skeptics should recall the flap about the ostentatiously casual sweater chosen for

President Carter's fireside chat, one of many incidents that helped erode rather than enhance his political capital.

Women still are a rarity in leadership jobs, more so in politics than in other parts of life. That breeds skepticism, if not fear, about their ability and their intentions. Women legislators may not be much threat any more to their male colleagues -- but being the boss is something else again.

"In the legislative branch, there is still a feeling that there is safety in numbers. And that all you do is talk. But as chief executive you obviously exert a very clear kind of power that has traditionally been associated with male role models," Kunin told members of a fast-growing group, Women Executives in State Government (WESG).

She said the WESG members themselves might be the new role models, shattering old stereotypes and shaping new ones about women in power. By early 1986, an estimated 250 women were holding top cabinet-level and statewide elected jobs. Two-thirds of them has joined WESG.

"Sometimes I think the only thing that's really making the progress more slow than we sometimes thought it might be is simply the lack of precedents, simply the lack of history," Kunin said. "And each one of us is making history."

It's not clear yet if breakthroughs are easier in the post-Ferraro era. The public gave mixed messages: extraordinarily huge crowds for Geraldine Ferraro in her path-breaking vice presidential campaign but few votes for her and presidential nominee Walter Mondale on election day.

In the final weeks of the campaign, Vice President George Bush homed in on the central, subtle issue: raising doubts about Ferraro's ability to take over if, as he put it, God forbid something should happen to the president.

There it was, starkly: a woman might be o.k. in Congress, perhaps all right in the Senate. But a woman's race for vice president suddenly reminded voters -- with the help of a skillful opponent to stoke the fears -- that this time they were choosing

someone who might actually inherit the ultimate power. She might have to lead the country -- and them.

In many ways, Ferraro epitomized many of the conflicting pulls facing women in politics today.

During her three terms in Congress, she aligned herself far more closely with the "good ole boy" network in the House (with Speaker Thomas P. O'Neill as her mentor) than with the feminists. This, ironically, was one reason why feminist groups such as the National Women's Political Caucus and the National Organization for Women saw her as the most "packageable" political woman for a vice presidential slot.

And yet, after Walter Mondale took the gamble on her, there were immediate fireworks between Ferraro and the Mondale men when she refused to sign onto their prearranged game plan automatically to be an unquestioning "team player." She insisted on shaping her own staff and strategy in recognition of the potential new political energy she said her "first woman" nomination might release.

Ferraro's campaign rarely played to those strengths. It was decided she would be a vice presidential nominee -- not a woman vice presidential nominee, despite her original adamant insistence (and the strong feelings of her behind-the-scenes kitchen cabinet of feminist activists) that her very candidacy could be a catalyst for action for millions of women voters. The campaign downplayed Women's Equality Day in late August. She made her first speech on women's issues only days before the election.

Women legislators face many of the same dilemmas every day: does emphasizing women's issues help you or hurt you, as you go up the ladder? Can you "afford" to keep pushing what some critics call "special-interest" issues? Will your original supporters forgive you if you don't? Or will you be able to deliver for them -- in an even more important way -- if you make the grade at the top?

After the landslide reelection of President Reagan and Bush, the impact of Ferraro's candidacy varied by party affiliation and was contrary to expectations. Democratic women still get

considerable grief from Democratic men. On repeated occasions, most recently at a breakfast briefing held by U.S. Representative Mary Rose Oakar, D-Ohio, for feminist activists, male legislators blamed women for pushing special-interest issues ("women's issues"), hinted that they felt Ferraro had hurt the ticket in 1984 and said in effect that the gender gap had been exaggerated in its potential ballot box power.

Republican women, in contrast, have been far less equivocal then and now about the positive effect the Ferraro Candidacy had on their own political options. They got far more attention on issues they felt were important but which the party had ignored until the gender gap and Ferraro appeared as potential threats.

The post-Ferraro years have been ones of ferment for the women's movement. It is harder to ward off hostile encroachments on issues key to the women's rights and civil rights movements such as affirmative action. Longtime coalitions are frayed from exhaustion -- and from disagreement about tactics on such issues as abortion amendments to attempts to shore up civil rights laws weakened by the Reagan administration and the Supreme Court.

New coalitions are emerging, but the baby boomers have to be educated about what women's rights laws are on the books before they can be organized to defend them against today's wide-ranging attacks. They don't know what Title IX is, let alone what the Office of Federal Contract Compliance does -- whether either relates to their own assumption of wide-open opportunities without regard to gender in their own future.

Ferraro herself suffered political and personal setbacks. She was unable to build upon 1984 where, in retrospect, she was a spectacular "natural" stump candidate. She grew quickly on the job, mastered issues, slowed her speaking style and developed a television and mass-audience presence that most politicians only envy.

In 1985, however, her book did only reasonably well. She got neither political support nor the prospect of adequate financing for a New York Senate race, as the Justice Department stretched

out its investigation into her husband's finances and her own congressional financial disclosure forms.

Nor did she have any political and economic safety net while she decided her next step -- a problem far more serious for "first women" than for men who often have law firms, corporations, university jobs or nonprofit think tanks to return to or temporarily find a niche in.

Ferraro seemed vulnerable to the pitfalls of being a political lone ranger. Her decision to do a Pepsi commercial took her former colleagues by surprise, leaving some flabbergasted, others feeling betrayed. A year later, she got a back-of-the-hand rebuff from the Queens Democratic Party after offering to step in temporarily as leader when the boss was sidelined by scandal. Her former colleagues said the lack of a support network showed; she should have made discrete inquiries through an emissary -- and denied any such step if the inquiries became public.

But if Ferraro didn't benefit personally from her pioneering race, she nevertheless opened doors -- and opened eyes -- for many other women in politics. By mid-1986, all signs pointed to heightened levels of interest and enthusiasm in nuts-and-bolts organizing strategies for women in politics.

Twenty women were running for governor, with at least half considered credible major-party contenders. Women running for the U.S. Senate, including repeat candidate Harriett Woods (running from a base as lieutenant governor of Missouri) have hard races as usual. Many more dozens of women undertook U.S. House challenges. Far more women sought statewide offices such as attorney general and lieutenant governor. And more women than ever before ran for state legislative seats.

At the 1985 CAWP conference, veteran legislative and party leaders focused on the new questions facing women as they consolidate their past achievements and move to the next steps of power. Their agenda included scrutiny of:

- the varying ways to exercise power, from a top-down mode of leadership to a more inclusive and consultative path

- tactics for holding people accountable, from friendly persuasion to threats that can be carried out if followers don't follow
- the urgent need to learn to call in chits for political favors done, a vital component of the use-it-or-lose-it school of politics
- the difficulty in making the transition from being a suspect outsider to a trusted insider
- the tradeoffs between being an advocate for issues crucial to a grass roots constituency and the arms-length posture from all issues that may be required of a legislative or party leader
- the search for ways to deal with the paranoia that often grips "first women" who are trying to distinguish genuine threats to their power from reversals that could confront any newcomer and are not necessarily gender-related.

By far the most absorbing question is one that has been posed since the beginning of the women's political movement in the early 1970s: As women move into power circles, does their impact or style differ intrinsically from those of their male peers?

That was the argument of feminist pioneers such as former Congresswoman Bella Abzug -- that women would be more peaceful than men, conserving the national energy for more humane endeavors than war.

Today's women leaders around the world don't bear out that generalization. It couldn't be said of all congresswomen, either. They differ dramatically within their own small ranks -- some very conservative on social-welfare spending as well as on war-peace issues, some with equally strong views on the opposite side.

The expectation that women leaders will be different from men still lingers, however. It permeated the CAWP conference, with one speaker arguing that women should not pattern themselves after the top-down "male" model of authoritative rule but should shape a style that will bring along on the issues their colleagues as well as the grass roots voters.

That got a mixed response. Some women said they already were "inclusive" in their style. Others women said too much search for

consensus often translates into indecisiveness and inability ever to cut a deal or lead the way toward a solution.

Still others said they'd spent a lot of time learning how to exercise a strong-hand brand of power, claimed it worked for them -- and insisted they weren't about to stop now just because a male "expert" at the conference argued that they'd learned the wrong model.

This is only one of the fundamental schisms about exercising power. For many participants, the conference demonstrated that exercising power requires a change in thinking as well as behavior.

They have to learn to call in the chits after doing political favors for colleagues or constituents. After years of mastering every subtlety and every detail of legislative issues, they have to master the broad strokes -- and the politics -- of how to get overall legislative priorities enacted. They have to learn how to make deals -- and to make them stick. And they can't take criticism about their leadership performance personally; they have to absorb the blows as part of the job -- and move on.

"We have to learn how to collect. That's when you become a leader," said Michigan State Representative Juanita Watkins.

Women often are so issue-oriented that they "forget to call in past obligations," said California Assemblywoman Gwen Moore. "We have to let people know we've gone beyond the call of duty (in meeting their requests)."

Legislative leadership means going beyond friendly persuasion. It means playing tough if a recalcitrant colleague doesn't toe the line.

Michigan State Senator Lana Pollack said men must know "there is an end to your patience, an end to your niceness, an end to your womanliness." This might include threatening stubborn legislators with going public about their part in a leadership dispute -- and then preparing to follow through on that threat in appropriate selected cases.

Some women moving up the political ladder anguish about conflicting loyalties between their grass roots constituencies who

expect accountability on specific issues and their wary new colleagues in the leadership. The more effective she has been as a grass roots constituent force, in fact, the more difficulty she may have even in climbing that leadership ladder.

If a woman packages herself as a squeaky-clean outsider who won't be "one of the boys," can she be trusted to be a team player, on board for all of the compromises that connotes? How much individuality and constituency-loyalty does she have to suppress to gain that foothold on the upper rungs of the political ladder?

"There's a perception that women are honest and responsive to their constituencies and, therefore, the men wonder whether they can trust us," said State Representative Cathey Steinberg of Georgia. "If they propose a deal, will we go to the newspapers? Your constituencies expect you NOT to play the game. They ask, 'How could you? Where's your integrity?'"

Many legislators -- female and male -- suffer no such qualms about dual loyalties. They relish the new leverage that comes with a party or legislative leadership job which enhances their overall clout. They note that those who move up, by definition, have broadened their base beyond specific issues.

This generation of women pioneers whom Kunin dubs the latest wave of "political immigrants" also is testing the strains between party-line loyalty and bottom-line constituent issues.

That differs from state to state, from the credibility of one legislator with her own party leaders to that of another.

One midwestern legislator who balked at supporting her speaker on a balanced budget constitutional amendment told him she resented the heavy-handed pressure. She reminded him she had backed him for speaker and would support all his major issues in the future -- but this one was a matter of personal choice.

She credits her success in staying in good graces with the speaker to her own straight-shooter stance with him: "I never buttered that man up. I got where I am because I felt like I worked hard. It wasn't because I was constantly complimenting him in some way...I do think he feels like when he talks to me that

I'm going to give him a straight story and that I'm not working behind his back."

It also helps to have outside constituencies.

State Representative Jennifer M. Belcher of Washington says the party loyalty issue makes the job of a leader more troublesome, especially in a state such as hers where a bloc of conservatives often holds the balance of power.

Nevertheless, she makes no bones about her own loyalties in a crunch between her own constituencies and the leadership.

"A lot of where your loyalties lie depends on how you got in the legislature. And I will tell anybody and everybody, including my speaker, that I'm a feminist first and a Democrat second and I'll die that way because the Democrats had very little to do with my getting in and the feminists had everything to do with it. I got no party money and I got no assistance from the party until I was clearly a winner. My feminist friends were out there encouraging me early on and they're the ones who do all the work whenever I need it done now."

Another issue up for grabs is whether women's legislative caucuses still are needed. Most legislators say they're more valuable than ever before as a conduit for information and as a support and strategizing mechanism for women in leadership roles.

That's not a universal view. At the CAWP meeting, for instance, Vermont State Representative Elizabeth "Wibs" Edwards opposed caucuses, saying that "gender orientation is self-defeating when we're asking for equality."

The Congresswomen's Caucus of the 1970s, beset by House rules changes and by party-line and ideological schisms (with Reagan White House reported to have pressured many newly elected GOP members to drop out or not join), changed its structure. It added male members, kept congresswomen as the advisory board -- and changed the name to the Congressional Caucus on Women's Issues in 1981.

The CAWP conference participants had definite feelings about making a caucus work.

It must be bipartisan, they felt. It must target priorities. Its members must be organized in their strategies to accomplish those goals. They must keep a sense of humor to buffer the banter from male colleagues. And they must find ways to trust each other, across party and ideological lines, as they forge common ground on which to move ahead.

California Assemblywoman Gwen Moore said it was worth the time to find that common ground. When she was elected in 1979, there was discomfort at the idea of forming a women's caucus. Instead, the women began to meet for dinner every second Tuesday of the month, with two legislators cooking for the others.

They talked about everything -- everything, that is, except substantive issues "because we were so divided on them," Moore said.

By July of 1985, however, they were ready for the next step a women's caucus that was bipartisan and in which all 15 women legislators participated. Its very creation caused consternation among the men.

As one of their first issues, they launched a bipartisan battle with the insurance industry, when most companies refused to write liability insurance for child care centers.

"It was a wonderful experience, a fulfilling victory -- and we're going to come back with something again in California," she said.

State Representative Mary Landrieu of Louisiana, at 29 already a three-term veteran of turbulent state legislative politics, was explicit about the need for women to form their own support networks. She's doing just that within the National Conference of State Legislatures, building on anger by women after a conservative GOP woman who had shunned the feminists was bumped off the leadership ladder -- because she was a woman. The man who led the assault later bragged about it in a bar. That was enough for the feminists, who protested on the floor of the 1985 convention, despite peer pressure from men to let matters lie.

Landrieu said she wasn't a feminist when she entered politics. She became one because of a multitude of eye-opening

experiences and she was far from a novice, since she had learned politics from an expert, her father, former New Orleans Mayor Moon Landrieu.

She faults the view that women's issues "are not legitimate enough and we can't risk our reputations on them...I think it's time to start doing some coalition building. I think there's a lot to handle."

Many of the workshops and the general meetings at the three-day CAWP meeting dealt with just these nuts-and-bolts issues of political power.

But, in the corridors, and in Kunin's opening address, there also was candid talk about something that is rarely addressed: how to avoid unwarranted paranoia about opposition that may not be gender-related at all.

It's at the heart of the question most political pioneers face: the relation of gender to political effectiveness.

Kunin was asked repeatedly whether she was treated differently as a woman and whether her colleagues or reporters unfairly judged her in a way they would not have done of a male governor.

She made several useful points.

First, there always will be critics. She's learned to live with them, realize that they are in the minority -- and to move on with her agenda.

Second, she tries to keep a perspective about the criticism: is it because she's Vermont's first woman governor, she asks herself, or is it because she is new as governor and the critics can't remember far enough back to recall how equally awkward her predecessor was at the start of his lengthy tenure?

"One of the great dangers in this thing is to keep a handle on paranoia," Kunin said. "Sometimes they are out to get you and it's healthy to know that." But sometimes you do exaggerate it and imagine it -- and everyone in public life is subject to a lot of this, regardless of gender."

Every day, she said, she will analyze "certain experiences and wonder to some degree how I have handled this as a woman.

It's a constant. But at the same time, I go on doing the job. I don't have time to dwell on it -- because the next issue comes up or the next crisis comes up."

She agrees that "you are tested differently. You are perceived differently," but she adds that another woman "may be perceived differently from me, so it's not a gender issue alone. It's a gender issue combined with my personality and style and everything else."

How being a woman affects her performance as governor is one of the nebulous, nagging questions: "It's there -- but it's not there. And if you wave a flag about it, it boomerangs," she said.

"There are times when you find those cold words that would only be used for women and they do appear. I haven't been called 'hysterical' lately, so I'm grateful for that," she said.

Her own assessment, after a year in office: things get better. But she said this may have "nothing to do with gender. It's probably [the legislature and public] getting used to me."

"Again, it's that fine line between paranoia and reality. Sometimes you need to get mad and sometimes maybe you even need to indulge in paranoia, as long as you do it quietly," she said.

With diplomatic role models such as Kunin setting the pace, advisors may not even be tempted to insist on "mannish mannerisms" for women politicians of the future. They may not need such crutches to be credible in a world they are moving swiftly to make their own.

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A graduate of North Texas State University in journalism and political science, Simpson was a Neiman Fellow at Harvard University in 1978-79.

State Legislature: Center Stage for Women

By NADINE BROZAN

At a time when women feel disheartened about their failure to gain more seats in the Congress, more governorships, more Cabinet appointments and when affirmative action has lost ground, there appear to be solid gains in state legislatures. The number of women serving in those bodies is growing and so, too, is the influence they wield, as they ascend to the chairmanships of committees and leadership roles in party structures.

The status of women in state legislatures, and how they function there were the focus of a conference conducted over the weekend by the Center for the American Woman and Politics, a division of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University. For a three-and-a-half-day gathering that concluded Sunday, at the Scanticon-Princeton conference center in Plainsboro, N.J., more than 75 women, who hold committee chairmanships and leadership positions, met in seminars and informal get-togethers for a serious, often philosophical look at the nature of political power and what it means for women.

The statistics were repeated often: though women gained just one additional gubernatorial seat and one additional Congressional seat in the last election, they gained close to 100 seats in state legislatures. The total has tripled since 1969. There are currently 1,103 women serving in state legislatures, or 14.8 percent of the total of 7,461 state lawmakers. They hold 9.7 percent, of all committee chairmanships and 10.7 percent of leadership assignments, including such appointments as majority and minority leader and Senate president.

The Next Wave

"We have been watching this generation move into public life in mid-level offices and they are articulate, energetic, idealistic and effective," said Ruth B. Mandel, director of the Center for the American Woman and Politics and a professor at the Eagleton Institute. In her view and in those of other observers, it is from this group and their peers in the legislatures that the next wave of female national figures is likely to emerge.

Several women attending the conference are already talking about seeking higher office. Representative Julie Belaga, deputy majority leader in the Connecticut House, said she would seek the Republican gubernatorial nomination next year. Senator Polly Baca, Democrat and minority caucus chairman in the Colorado Senate, said she would run for Congress if a seat that is expected to open up does so, and she said her state experience will be critical to her success.

Other women lawmakers said they did not aspire to go beyond state legislative office at a time when the Federal Government is seeking to return fiscal responsibility and lawmaking prerogatives to the states.

"There are not that many jobs that have as much power as chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee," said Senator Mary Just Skinner of Vermont of her position in the State Legislature. "And besides," she added, "what is one to do when it costs \$400,000 for a Congressional race? My last race cost \$6,000."

A diverse group, the women legislators were from both parties and ranged in political orientation from liberal to conservative. Many were in their 30's, 40's and 50's. Representative Helena E. McDermott, 74 years old, Democrat of Rhode Island, and Representative Mary L. Landrieu, Democrat of Louisiana, 29, represented opposite ends of the generational spectrum. Representative McDermott is a great-grandmother of three, who ran for the House after having retired from her job of 40 years doing inventory control for a machinery manufacturer. Representative Landrieu, the daughter of Moon Landrieu, former Mayor of New Orleans and Secretary of Housing in the Carter Administration, was elected at the age of 23.

Role of State Lawmaker

However, party affiliation was generally ignored in favor of examining the role of state lawmaker, how these women fit or didn't fit into the existing system, and how they might change it. They dealt with both the philosophical — for example, how does leadership differ from power, and the pragmatic — how and when they should make political trade-offs with other legislators.

Generally, participants agreed that there are basic differences between male and female legislators.

As Assemblywoman Gwen Moore, Democrat of California, chairman of the Utilities and Commerce Committee, said: "Women chairmen deal on the merits of legislation and men on the politics. Women often know the content of bills better than the experts appearing before them in hearings."

Representative Juanita Watkins, chairman of the Labor Committee in the Michigan House and Democratic majority floor whip, aroused debate with her down-to-earth views. "Gender goes out the door once you're elected," she said, "and when you become chairman, you can move and bring in your own agenda. You must understand if you help someone, they owe you, and you must learn to collect. At that point you become a leader."

One of the more troubling subjects threaded through both public and private discussion was the extent to which women legislators should fight for "women's issues," such as child care, education, domestic violence, equitable divorce laws and economic equity, when these might not be their central concerns.

Women's Issues

Some participants object to the assumption that women's issues are necessarily their domain. As Representative Louise Miller, assistant Republican whip in the Washington House said: "I was never involved with NOW or the women's political caucus. I was a utilities commissioner, but the press calls me a feminist, and everyone expects me to carry those issues."

Representative Olene S. Walker, a Republican and assistant majority whip in the Utah House, was among several participants urging that women legislators convince male colleagues to take up their causes, both to gain enough votes and to transform them into "human issues." "If we try to do it without the support of men, we simply can't win," she said. "In Utah, we only have seven women in the legislature."

By contrast, Representative Jenni-



Representatives Juanita Watkins, left, and Dorothy K. Osler during the reception.

fer Belcher, Democrat of Washington, said: "I feel that I must stand up as a credible person and say that I am a feminist, and while I am active on other issues, I don't want to see women lose our issues. Men take over our bills and don't even understand our problems."

Another topic was the support women in political office give one another or to qualified aspirants. Conferees tackled the ambivalence felt by women about encouraging other women to follow in their footsteps and the discomfort created when two women compete.

Representative Jeanne Kennedy a Democrat of Vermont, who was defeated by five votes after serving one term and was re-elected two years later, remarked: "Supposedly we are

nurturers, but I don't know if we really are. Women haven't learned to trust the fact that they can bring more women up and not lose themselves. In my first campaign, lots of women called, but once I was in the legislature they weren't there to help anymore. Now I have freshmen tell me, 'I cannot believe you are helping me.' I think there is real fear, fear we don't even know we have that is keeping us constricted and paralyzed."

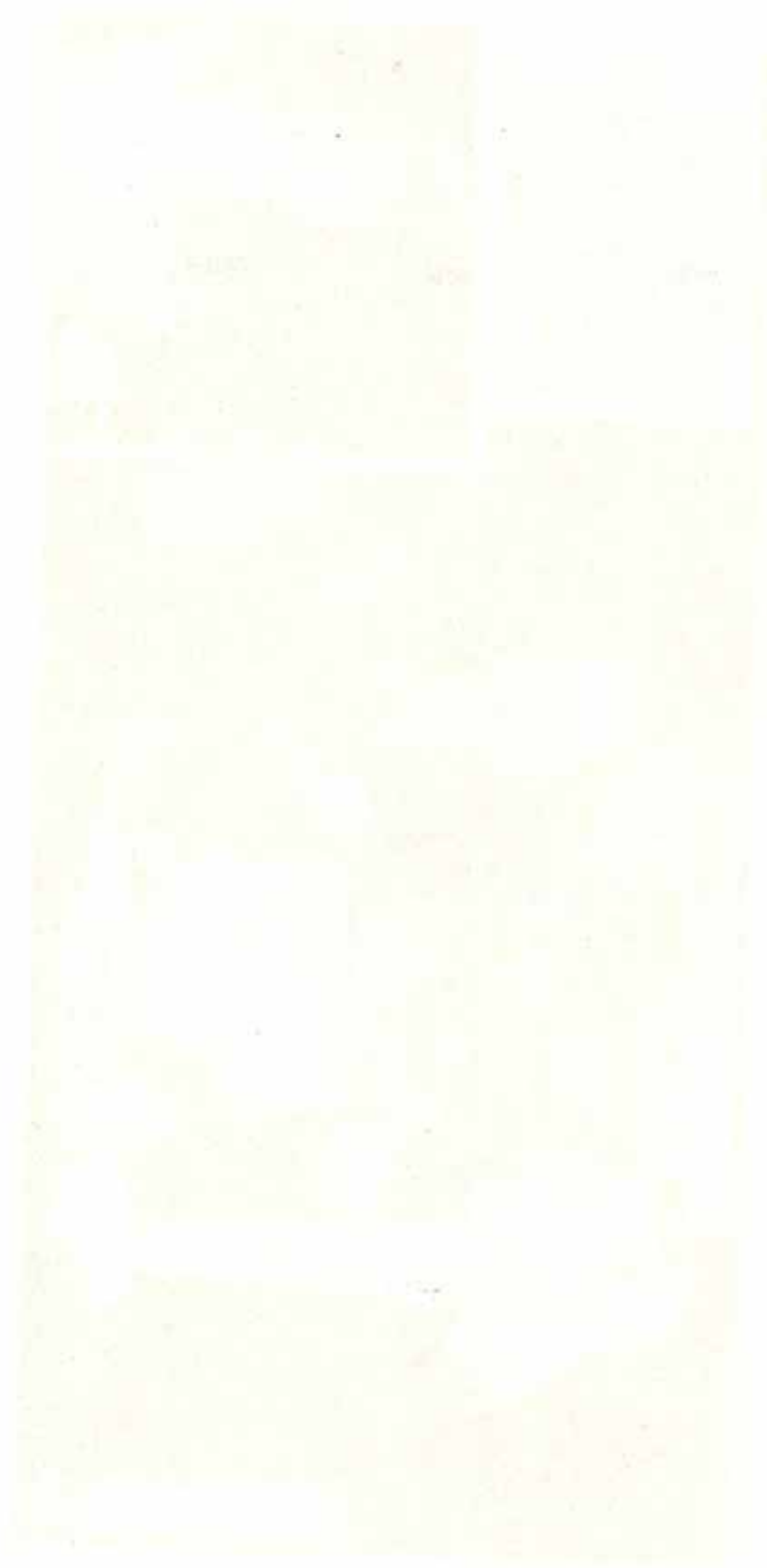
Senator Lana Pollack, Democrat of Michigan, offered an explanation. "Women still walk on a very tight rope, still find themselves in a very precarious position. So to reach out to other women is a far greater risk than it is for a man. We are already at greater risk — and then we are expected to be superwomen." ■

The New York Times
November 18, 1985
(Continued)



State Representative
Mary L. Landrieu of
Louisiana, far left, with
State Senator Mary Just
Skinner of Vermont.
Representative Julie
Belaga of Connecticut.





More women moving into state politics

With cuts at the federal level, many want to stay

By Victoria Irwin
Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

New York

Slowly but steadily, more women are beginning to wield the gavel in leadership positions in state legislatures throughout the country.

"Women are at the forefront," says Illinois State Sen. Joyce Holmberg (D). "With all the cuts in social services at the federal level, the action is going to be in state legislatures."

Ruth B. Mandel, director of the Center for the American Woman and Politics (CAWP), agrees.

"That's where public policy agendas are being moved today," she says. "Critical decisions are being made at this level, at a time when women are coming in in greater numbers."

There is a higher proportion of elected women in state legislatures than at any other level in government, says Dr. Mandel of CAWP, which is part of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University.

In 1985, women comprised 14.8 percent of all state legislative seats, according to figures gathered by CAWP. New Hampshire has the highest percentage of women, with 33 percent. Mississippi is at the bottom, with 2.3 percent. Blacks constitute 6.7 percent of women in state legislatures, while Hispanic women make up only 1.2 percent.

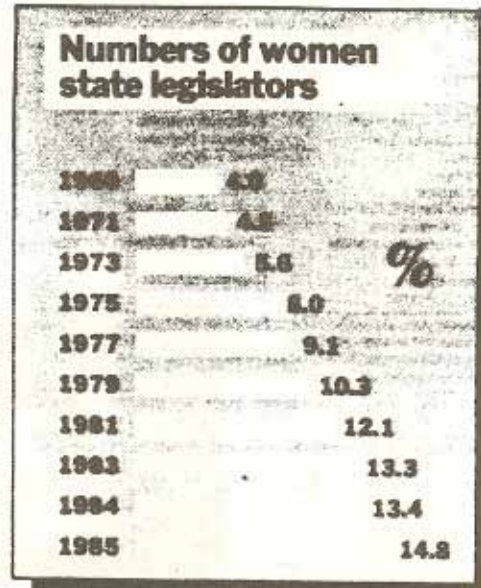
Women comprise 10.7 percent of the state legislative leadership posts, which include jobs such as house speaker, senate president, and majority and minority floor leaders.

Middle-level posts still serve as a springboard to higher elective offices, but many women are happy to stay in the state legislature.

There is going to be a congressional seat vacant in North Carolina next year, but Helen Rhyne Marvin is not really interested.

She just wants to make sure she is reelected to her seat in the North Carolina Senate, where she has served since 1976. A former political science teacher

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Source: Center for the American Woman and Politics

WHITNEY O. WOODRUFF - STAFF

WOMEN

from page 3

whose students urged her to "practice what I teach," Senator Marvin sees the state legislature as a place where a lot can be accomplished.

"I think our track record is good," says Marvin, who chairs a committee on pensions and retirement, and vice-chairs a committee on child care.

Recently some 80 female state legislative leaders met in Princeton, N.J., at a conference sponsored by CAWP. There was definitely a feeling of solidarity and collegiality among the women. But conversation at lunches and in hallways centered more on political issues than on the stereotypical question, "What is it like to be a female legislator?"

Rep. Jennifer Belcher (D) of Washington and Rep. Jane Maroney (R) of Delaware talked about the impact of the Gramm-Rudman deficit-reduction bill during lunch. Rep. Penny Williams (D) of Oklahoma gave the names of resources in education, while Rep. Alyce Clarke (D) of Mississippi, the first black woman elected there, asked other legislators about teen pregnancy legislation.

The women at this meeting have run competitive races and often have to raise a lot of money, points out Mandel. The state legislature is a pool out of which people will emerge to take higher state and federal posts. Speakers at the conference — Gov. Madeleine Kunin of (D) Vermont, US Rep. Jan Meyers (R) of Kansas, and former

"They don't need to," answered another, adding that a bipartisan caucus in her Southern state has enabled legislation on day care and education to get through. Mandel sighs over the issue.

"Personally I say we are leaders and we are women. They are linked intimately," she says, suggesting that it is hard to splinter off a key part of one's identity.

Rep. Sandra Reeves (D) of Missouri says that when she was first elected to office, she did not want to be perceived of as a "women's candidate." But after her experience as a legislator, she began to understand what working women often have to put up with to move up.

"We had to fight to get a restroom for female legislators," she remembers. Since then she has become more upfront about women's issues.

There was plenty of discussion over differences in the way male and female legislators approach their jobs. Women see themselves as better at details and homework. They support consensus building, but are also willing to take risks for important issues.

tor says she has had to learn to invite herself out to lunch and dinner with male legislators, just to keep up with what is going on behind the scenes.

Sometimes they have had to learn to not take the glory. One woman from the South wanted to pass a major piece of day care legislation. She had not been able to make any inroads after several years of trying, so she handed it to a group of "young male eager beavers," and let them take leadership of the bill. It passed.

But others still exhorted women to strive for power, and not be content to let others be heroes. "We need to build consensus, but we need to do it from a power position," she said.

Representative Clarke points out how proud women are to see other women in office. She says it hit her during the last weeks of her campaign when so many black, elderly women were out knocking on doors for her.

"We do have ideas," says Mrs. Clarke, whose husband cooks meals when she is extra busy. "I'd like to encourage more women to run."



Kunin: from Vermont's legislature to governor

The Chris
November

Discussion Group Questions

Friday Morning

The following issues were explored during the Friday morning discussion groups on **Legislative Leadership Strategies**:

1. To what extent is a leader's style dictated by a particular leadership role regardless of the personal characteristics of the incumbent? Have you observed any general differences in your legislature between the leadership styles of women and men? What effects of any such differences have you observed?
2. In what ways does a leader measure her/his effectiveness in a leadership position? What techniques of leadership are most successful in getting other to follow? Do women in leadership possess special advantages or face special problems in this regard? What can a woman do to ensure that she really has an appropriate level of input into male-dominated leadership circles and decisions?
3. Does the fact that there are so few women in leadership and in the legislature as a whole cause any problems or result in any benefits for women in leadership? What are the advantages and disadvantages of a women's legislative caucus to women in leadership? What other support networks can women in leadership develop?
4. Are women in leadership treated differently from men in leadership by male legislators? Female legislators? Constituents? What advantages and disadvantages result from any such differences?
5. Are there any leadership tasks to which women bring a particular strength? A real or perceived weakness? What special opportunities or limitations do women in leadership have with regard to strengthening legislative processes and operations?

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Dorothy Gilliam
Washington Post

Kathy Kleeman
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Leslie Phillips
USA Today

Discussion Group Questions

Friday Afternoon

The following issues were explored during the Friday afternoon discussion groups on **Legislative Leadership and Issue Advocacy**:

1. Does a position in leadership affect a legislator's ability to act on specific issues? To what extent must a leader attend to the legislative process at the expense of involvement in issue advocacy? Conversely, in what ways can a leader's influence on process be used to affect specific issues? What balance must she/he strike between visible identification with issues (especially "women's issues") and behind-the-scenes maneuvering on those issues? Are there any differences in this respect between women and men in leadership?
2. To what extent can a leader balance party loyalty against participation in bipartisan activities (including legislative caucusing, networking, coalition-building) on specific issues (especially "women's issues")? What are the advantages and disadvantages of a leadership position in this respect? How can such activity be integrated into winning the next election?
3. In what ways can a woman in leadership increase awareness among the men in leadership, and among legislators in general, concerning:
 - (a) specific issues of particular importance to women,
 - (b) relevant perspectives of women on issues of general concern,
 - (c) the male-female dynamics experienced by women in public life,
 - (d) other questions (e.g., hierarchical power vs. empowerment) which are currently dealt with predominantly by women?

Do women in leadership have a special responsibility to encourage women legislators with varying degrees of support for "women's issues" to work together on mutual goals?

4. How is the exercise of power by women in leadership being evidenced? Are women influencing agenda-setting within their parties? Priority-setting through the budget process? Do the definition and the perception of "power-wielding" differ for women and men in leadership?
5. What strategies are successful for leaders in dealing with the pressures of extremist single- or multi-issue constituent groups?

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Representative Katie Hurley (D)
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Arizona

Representative Debbie McCune (D)
Minority Whip

California

Assemblywoman Gwen Moore (D)
Chair, Utilities and Commerce
Committee

Colorado

Senator Polly Baca (D)
Minority Caucus Chair

Connecticut

Representative Julie Belaga (R)
Deputy Majority Leader
Representative Pauline R. Kezer (R)
Assistant Majority Leader
Representative Adele Kusnitz (R)
Chair, Public Health Committee
Representative Alice V. Meyer (R)
Chair, Planning and Development
Committee
Representative Marilyn M. Roche (R)
Chair, Education Committee
Representative Elinor F. Wilber (R)
Chair, Transportation Committee
Senator Anne P. Streeter (R)
Deputy Majority Leader

Delaware

Representative Jane Maroney (R)
Chair, Human Resources Committee;
Co-chair, Children's Committee

Georgia

Representative Dorothy Felton (R)
Representative Mary Jane Galer (D)
Representative Cathey Steinberg (D)

Idaho

Representative Dorothy L. Reynolds (R)
Chair, Commerce, Industry and Tourism
Committee

Illinois

Representative Peg McDonnell Breslin
(D) Majority Whip
Representative Barbara Flynn Currie (D)
Chair, Committee on the World's Fair
Senator Joyce Holmberg (D)
Chair, Elementary and Secondary
Education Committee

Iowa

Representative Florence Buhr (D)
Assistant Majority Leader
Representative Sue Mullins (R)

Louisiana

Representative Diana E. Bajoie (D)
Chair, Municipal, Parochial and
Cultural Affairs Committee; Chair,
State Budget Committee
Representative Mary L. Landrieu (D)
Vice Chair, Women's Network, National
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Maryland

Delegate Helen L. Koss (D)
Chair, Constitutional and
Administrative Law Committee
Delegate Jerry Eileen Perry (D)
National Chairperson of National
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Senator Catherine I. Riley (D)
Chair, Joint Committee on
Administrative, Executive and
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Michigan

Representative Justine Barns (D)
Chair, Constitutional Revision and
Women's Rights Committee
Representative Juanita Watkins (D)
Majority Floor Whip; Chair, Labor
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Senator Connie Binsfeld (R)
Assistant Majority Leader; Chair,
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Senator Lana Pollack (D)
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Missouri

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Representative Sandra L. Reeves (D)
Chair, Local Government Committee
Representative Sue Shear (D)
Chair, Human Rights and Resources
Committee
Representative Kaye H. Steinmetz (D)
Chair, Youth and Families Committee

Montana

Senator Judy Jacobson (D)
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Nevada

Assemblywoman Jane Ham (R)
Chair, General Elections Committee
Assemblywoman Barbara Zimmer (R)
Chair, Labor and Management Committee

New Hampshire

Representative Mary P. Chambers (D)
Minority Leader
Representative Patricia M. Skinner (R)
Chair, Labor, Industrial and
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Representative Sara M. Townsend (R)
Majority Whip
Senator Susan McLane (R)
Chair, Public Institutions, Health and
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New Jersey

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Representative Annie Brown Kennedy (D)
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Senator Wanda Hunt (D)
Chair, Senior Citizens Committee
Senator Helen Rhyne Marvin (D)
Chair, Pensions and Retirement
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Senator Lura Tally (D)
Chair, Natural and Economic Resources
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North Dakota

Representative Janet Wentz (R)
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Oklahoma

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Oregon

Representative Delna Jones (R)
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South Dakota

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Utah

Representative Olene S. Walker (R)
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Vermont

Representative Marie P. Condon (D)
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Representative Elizabeth Edwards (R)
Chair, Municipal Corporations and
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Representative Jeanne Kennedy (D)
Representative Betty A. Nuovo (D)
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Senator Mary Just Skinner (D)
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Virginia

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Washington

Representative Katherine Allen (R)
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Representative Jennifer M. Belcher (D)
Chair, State Government Committee
Representative Lorraine Hine (D)
Chair, Majority Caucus; Chair,
Employment Committee
Representative Louise Miller (R)
Assistant Republican Whip
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Assistant Floor Leader

Wisconsin

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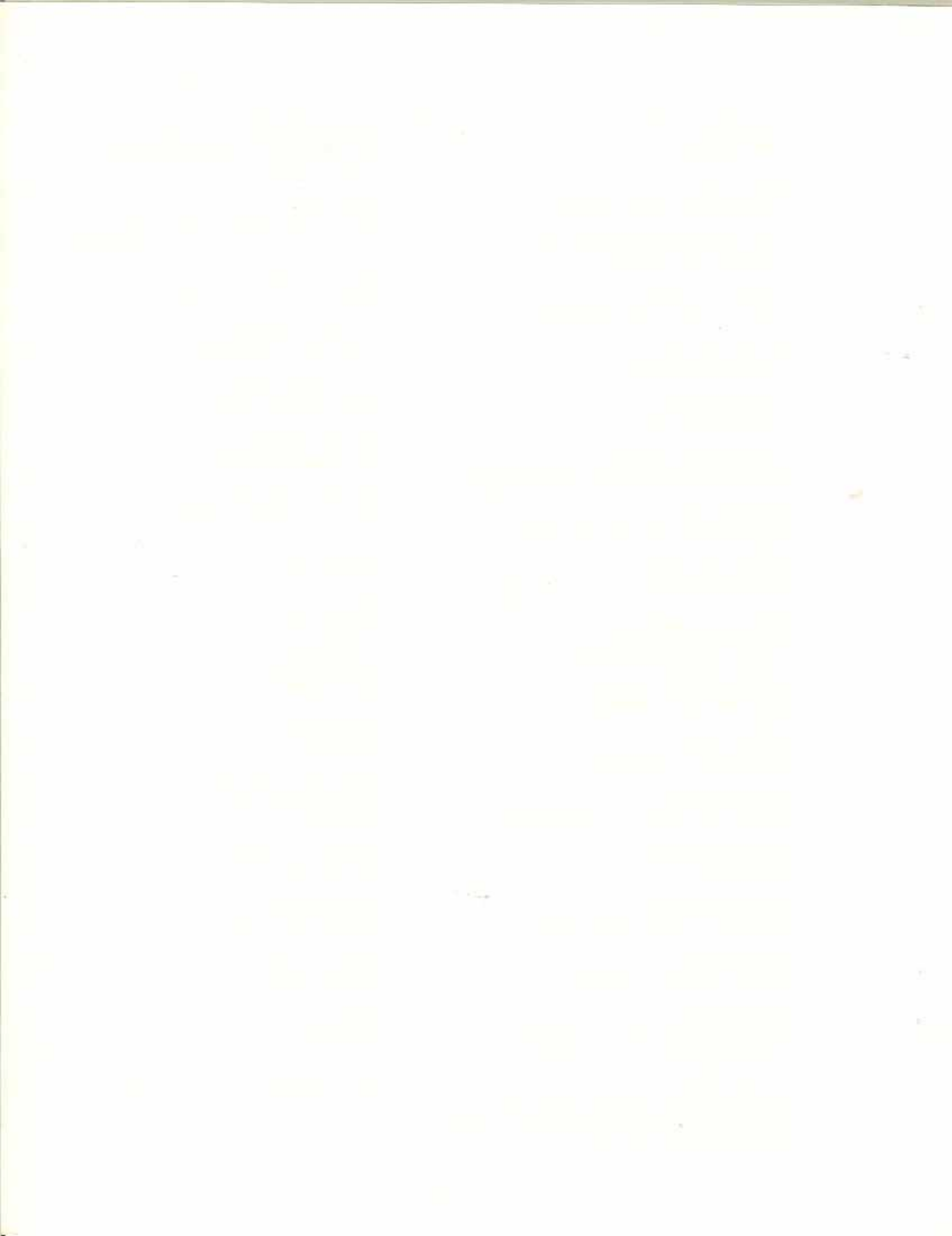
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