



National Women's Political Caucus

THE SUNDAY STAR and DAILY NEWS,
Washington, D.C., February 4, 1973

HISTORY-MAKING WEEKEND

By ISABELLE SHELTON
Star-News Staff Writer

Women will make history next weekend in Houston, Tex., at the first national political convention of women in this country since 1872...

The caucus was formed in Washington a year and a half ago, as a political mechanism to achieve action on a myriad of special "women's" problems, and for a fledgling organization it has had considerable success...

It obviously played a large role in the number of women delegates to last year's Democratic and Republican National Conventions,...

It claims—with considerable documentation—that it had much to do with the election of five new women to the U.S. House of Representatives, and 20 percent more women to state legislatures around the country.

The caucus also played an important role in congressional passage of the Equal Rights Amendment, and was in the forefront of the groups pressuring the Nixon administration to appoint more women to top office.

THE WASHINGTON POST, Friday, February 9, 1973

WOMEN WIN ROUND 1 AGAINST TEXAS HOTEL

By JULES WITCOVER
Washington Post Staff Writer

HOUSTON, Feb. 8—The first national women's political convention in 100 years began tonight at Houston's staid Rice Hotel with one small step for womenkind already achieved.

For the first time since the hotel opened 60 years ago, delegates to the convention of the National Women's Political Caucus—and all other women, for that matter—may be paged in the lobby and over the Rice's intercom system...

THE HOUSTON POST, Saturday, February 10, 1973

Post/commentary

WOMAN POWER

Women make up 53 per cent of the electorate and have been a part of the electorate for 63 years. But they are holding their first national political caucus in Houston now. The long overdue caucus is both genuine and pertinent. It is as new and diverse as the new breed of women now moving into politics—not because they have inherited a husband's political office but because they have their own political ideas and represent a constituency...

Houston salutes the National Women's Caucus.

THE NEW YORK TIMES, Monday, February 12, 1973

TEXAN WILL HEAD WOMEN'S CAUCUS

MRS. FARENTHOLD ELECTED BY
NATIONAL POLITICAL GROUP

By EILEEN SHANAHAN
Special to The New York Times

HOUSTON, Feb. 11—Mrs. Farenthold, in a brief speech after her election, spoke of the opportunity that the new women's movement presented "to bring desperately needed change to our society." She committed herself to that cause.

In an earlier keynote speech to the convention, she had called the women's movement "a revolution without arms, thank God" and had observed that "sisterhood does not mean the end of brotherhood..."

The caucus is organized in all 50 states and has about 30,000 individual members. More than 1,200 delegates from 48 states—all but Idaho and West Virginia—attended the convention. The principal aims of the caucus are to get more women active in government, in both elective and appointive jobs, and to seek adoption of legislation and other policies that concern its members.

NEWSWEEK, February 26, 1973

Politics: 'THIS BEAUTIFUL FORCE'

The sisters marched on Houston, some 1,300 strong, for the first national women's political convention to be held in a century. After three stormy days they had succeeded in electing new leaders, raising some money and writing a constitution for the National Women's Political Caucus. But would they become a genuine political force? NEWSWEEK Associate Editor Helen Dimos Schwindt covered the convention and returned with this appraisal:

Houston may not have been liberated from its oil-town machismo, but it was surely startled by the invasion. For this was neither feminist consciousness raising nor a complacent gathering of the converted. It had all the arm twisting, all-night caucusing, slate making and parliamentary skulduggery of a political convention.

The gathering itself was a milestone, and it was duly celebrated with exuberant keynote speeches twined like bouquets in a daisy chain. The attendant celebrities ranged from Liz Carpenter to Gloria Steinem, from newly elected Democratic Congresswoman Pat Schroeder of Colorado to a ladylike Republican State Supreme Court Justice, Mary Coleman of Michigan. But the real subject was political power, and that was what brought the meeting to life. Congresswoman Bella Abzug drummed out a crescendo of recent political feats; her colleague, Shirley Chisholm, warned that "the NWPC is not to be the cutting edge of the women's liberation movement... but the weight and muscle."

Therein lay the dilemma. For the weight and muscle in Houston included not only Democrats, Republicans, independents and a few Feminist Party members, but also middle-class club-women from small towns, black working mothers from New York, delegates from small states and big ones and special interest blocs of blacks, chicanos, welfare mothers and union members...

The women of the caucus must now talk effectively not to each other, but to Congress and the President.

DETROIT FREE PRESS, Sunday, February 11, 1973

'GET MOVING,' WOMEN URGED

By VERA GLASER
Knight Newspapers Writer

HOUSTON--...As leaders of the National Women's Political Caucus, gathered here for its first convention, they urged that action come now "from the bottom up, not from the top down."

More than 1,000 women from 48 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico heard Rep. Chisholm, D-NY., say, "We're sick and tired of seeing our faces on TV. We need to see the faces of women all over this country."

Republican Jill Ruckelshaus, wife of the Environmental Protection Administrator, urged, "Let's get moving into city hall, the governors' mansions, into the White House."

"We've got welfare reform to talk about. We've got child care to talk about. We've got minimum wage to talk about, and the only way we can do it is if we are organized."

In the packed ballroom of the Rice Hotel, many stood for more than three hours to hear a dozen VIPs of the women's movement urge them to run for public office and promote solidarity among women, regardless of political party or economic level.

A good-humored, buoyant, emotional quality marked the gathering here.

THE EVENING STAR and DAILY NEWS, Washington, D.C., Friday, February 9, 1973

Women Aim for Office CRY 'FILE AND RUN'

By ISABELLE SHELTON
Star-News Staff Writer

HOUSTON, Tex.--Women were flocking here from all over the country today to attend the first women's national political convention since 1872.

As the three-day National Women's Political Caucus convention began this morning, more than 1,300 had registered. This was twice as many as the convention planners had expected....

Convention Headquarters, the Rice Hotel, was bursting at the seams, and the spillover was being accommodated in dormitories at nearby Rice University...

The multi-party gathering included Republicans, Democrats, Chicanos, American Indians, blacks, whites, Catholic nuns and representatives of several labor unions, among others...

Price Daniel Jr., speaker of the Texas State Legislature, arranged for that body to be in recess today so five women legislators could attend the caucus sessions.

HOUSTON CHRONICLE, Saturday, February 10, 1973

WOMEN'S CAUCUS FOCUSES ON OFFICE-GETTING SPECIFICS

By ELLIOTT JONES AND
MARY LU ZUBER
Chronicle Staff

The National Women's Political Caucus zeroed in today on its chief order of business--getting more women elected to political office.

About 2000 women, twice the early estimate of those expected, overflowed meeting rooms at the Rice Hotel to hear how they can develop a powerful political punch.

Some brought their children, as young as 4 months, and put them in the free day care center provided by the caucus....

The delegates and participants split into 20 workshops where men and women experienced in the political arena talked specifics on breaking barriers...

THE NEW YORK TIMES, Saturday, February 10, 1973

CHIEFS OF WOMEN'S POLITICAL UNIT DIFFER ON COURSE

By EILEEN SHANAHAN
Special to The New York Times

HOUSTON, Feb. 9---...in Mrs. Bentley's speech, when she read a telegram of greeting from Mr. Nixon, she was warmly applauded. In the telegram, the President expressed the hope that by the time the nation celebrates its 200th birthday in 1976, "the denial of equal opportunity will be a thing of the past in our land."

Another Republican woman, Jill Ruckelshaus, assistant to the co-chairman of the Republican National Committee, struck a unity theme that was also expressed by many of the Democratic women present.

She said that the women who were present for the caucus convention had traveled a long way to get there "and I'm not thinking of just the number of miles from Washington or Des Moines or 'Pouch V, Juneau, Alaska'"--the mailing address of the delegate who had traveled the longest distance.

"But it was a one-way trip," Mrs. Ruckelshaus continued, "because we're not going back."

She said that the caucus should reach out to all women, "including those who think they have nothing in common with us."

THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR, Monday, February 12, 1973

WOMEN'S POLITICAL CAUCUS SIFTS ISSUES

By JEANNYE THORNTON
Staff Writer of The Christian Science Monitor

BOSTON--Now that one of the biggest U.S. women's political meetings in 101 years is over, delegates are headed back home--toward the grass roots and toward more debate on strategy and tactics...

The convention, which met in Houston at the weekend with more than 600 delegates and 1,400 participants, was no different from any other political convention where groups divide to pursue their own interests and come together to effect change...

What they wanted was specific stands on child-care and day-care centers, credit for women in their own names, party reform, a firm stand on various sex discrimination problems, labor--including a resolution seeking a minimum wage for domestic workers--and campaign spending...

THE WASHINGTON POST, Thursday, February 15, 1973

WOMEN'S CAUCUS IS TESTED

By JULES WITCOVER
Washington Post Staff Writer

HOUSTON--...And considering that this was the first national political convention held by women in a century, the frustrating hours of parliamentary confusion were expectable growing pains.

The convention opened Friday morning with an impressive series of upbeat, humorous and determined speeches by female politicians who had made the grade around the country. Their numbers and the jobs they held--members of Congress, city councils, of state legislatures, a State Supreme Court justice--themselves spoke of the reality of women's recent political progress.

Through the long and often maddening hours that followed as the convention sought to work out the structure on which to build a national political movement, a sense of women's history kept the delegates plugging away...

At one juncture, a sister wearing blue jeans walked through the Chicano delegates saying, "Support our chairlady. She's one of us". It was that kind of mood that sustained the convention through the turbulence...

Finally, there were all those hundreds of women--764 had a vote but there were more than 1,000 present at times--who were unknowns on the political scene, but who had come from 48 states to cut themselves into the action. For all the missteps, collectively they were taking a forward step that American women had not really tried before.