



The local chapter of the National Organization for Women has prepared a petition to the delegates to the Louisiana State Constitutional Convention asking them to include a provision in the new constitution which will prohibit discrimination based on sex in Louisiana. This would be a state Equal Rights Article to protect and enforce in all situations, not just those involving federal jurisdiction. It is in no way intended to preclude efforts to have Louisiana ratify a federal Equal Rights Amendment (twenty-two states have already ratified the ERA; thirty-eight votes are needed before it can become law.)

The provision called for by the proposed petition to the State Constitutional Convention reads as follows:

"Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by or in the State of Louisiana on account of sex..."

On Sat., Jan. 6, the Baton Rouge and New Orleans chapters of N.O.W. met with representatives from various women's groups and discussed alternatives and plans of coalition action. So that more groups can be contacted and invited to participate and more extensive consideration can be given to the proposal, a second meeting has been scheduled for Sat., Jan. 20, 1:30p.m., at the Human Relations Institute, 6323 St. Charles Avenue (Loyola University). All groups are encouraged to send representatives to this meeting. Information is available by writing N.O.W., P.O. Box 13604, New Orleans, La., 70125, or by calling N.O.W. President, Annabelle Walker 866-2501 or Clay Lafitte 897-0769. The State Constitutional Convention begins its purpose of rewriting the constitution this month and will continue meeting throughout the year. The new constitution must be submitted for ratification by the voters by 1975.

N.O.W. meetings are held every fourth Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. on the 2nd floor of the Red Cross Bldg.; the public is invited.

Parish Prison, which houses males exclusively, receives its fair share of publicity but little if anything is ever heard of the Women's House of Detention located on the ninth floor of a high rise building across from Parish Prison. Approximately 45 women are kept there on various charges and a wide range of sentences. There are no recreational or rehabilitation services available to the women, and conditions for them are often as bad if not worse than their Parish Prison counterparts.

In the past few months, Concept, Inc. which is an inmate-run organization to deal with prisoners inside Parish Prison as well as help them upon their release, has attempted to set up classes and a similar program in the Women's House of Detention. Approval and red tape have slowed things down, but the group has finally been given permission to go ahead. Mary Jo Condon is in charge of the program and can be reached at the Concept office 821-8894 weekdays 9-5. Women are needed to serve as sponsors for inmates and to staff the classes now being planned.

Another project to help women prisoners is started by National Organization for Women. They are participating in a half-way house project set up for women who have been in prison and are now in a work release program. Their activities include taking the women on various types of outings and to rap groups and meetings, furnishing referral and resource services such as employment and medical and child care. For information call N.O.W. president, Annabelle Walker 866-2501.



The Women's Center of New Orleans moved from its former location at 1024 Jackson Avenue in November. In lieu of necessary funds to rent another office, the center is operating temporarily from the Women's Collective at 1821 Robert. A library of feminist literature is set up there in the basement and is available to local women evenings. One hundred dollars received from a liquor raffle at Christmas is being used to set up a switchboard number at the collective. For more information call 895-1362 at the collective.

Discrimination against women in local TV coverage is being protested by a group of women in New Orleans. Their action is prompted by the fact that license renewals for TV stations will come up on June 1, 1973. Stations must file for a renewal with the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) three months before that, and any petitions to deny a station renewal, any complaints of discrimination or unequal time must be filed with the FCC by April 1973.

The following list of suggestions for action has been compiled but women have been slow to volunteer help. If you are interested in any area below, call Sue Westbrook evenings at 486-3527.

1) Organize a massive letter writing campaign to the station, with copies sent to FCC files in Washington. (These letters are reviewed by the Commission in determining whether the protest against the station should be investigated or not.)

2) Request in writing from the station their original application for a license. Use this as a base in proving whether or not they have accomplished what they promised to do in giving the issue of women's rights equal time with other current issues.

3) Contact other groups in the city who have gripes about the station: consider the possibility of sharing support with them.

4) Carefully document what percentage of station time is given to local programs and how much of the local programming deals with women's issues.

5) Set up a schedule whereby various women watch the station at different times throughout the day and monitor cases of discrimination.

6) Prepare ideas and program material for a women's TV program if the station offers to give women equal time.

7) Document the current employment situation at the station; how many women have been hired as compared to national guidelines for hiring. File complaints with the Office of Equal Employment Opportunities if federal law is being violated.

SISTERS HELPING SISTERS

A free abortion counseling collective is willing to help you. Call for more information evenings: 891-8267

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