

28

H

THE
CINCINNATI BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL
WOMEN'S CLUB

SCHEDULE BD.

DATE RECEIVED

JUL 27 1970

RMN MESSAGE
SPEAKERS BUREAU
OTHER

APPOINTMENT OFFICE

603 TERRACE HILTON BUILDING
CINCINNATI, OHIO 45202

July 22, 1970

Hon. Richard M. Nixon
President
White House
Washington, D.C.

Dear Sir:

While all of us appreciated the lovely hospitality of the White House during the recent Women's Bureau Conference and the graciousness of Mrs. Nixon; it was saddening to think that no official of the administration could spare the time to attend the anniversary banquet - or really any of the functions. The Secretary of Labor opened the Conference and after that all we had were Deputies or Assistants.

It seems rather indicative of the "Status of Women" when leading women from 38 states could take the time and money to gather in Washington; and no one from the White House or the Cabinet could attend. The Golden Jubilee of the Women's Bureau, the magnitude of the conference; and the forthcoming Golden Jubilee of Women's Suffrage. One reads in the papers and national business magazines of the luminaries who attend other such gatherings - but, of course, these gatherings are not just women. Congressmen and Senators did attend some of the BPW events when their National Convention was in Washington and Vice President Humphrey did drop in and speak at the Banquet. That was another regime.

While I had met you and Mrs. Nixon at the Young Republican Reception at the Eisenhower inauguration; and since that time I have heard you speak many times here in Cincinnati, others at the conference have not had this opportunity and I am sure it was very disappointing. As some one has remarked it is probably the first time in history that a group that is part of a majority is consistently treated as any other minority. The rumblings are there why must we wait for an eruption to be recognized.

While I found some of the conduct of the conference distasteful since I believe in parliamentary procedure and above all good manners; I can understand how those who have not had the education and environmental background of most of us become impatient with being ignored and lack of accomplishment. Fifty years is a long time. My sympathy goes to Liz Koontz and her staff. They did a whale of a job - but

THE
CINCINNATI BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL
WOMEN'S CLUB

510 NETHERLAND HOTEL
603 TERRACE HILTON BUILDING
CINCINNATI, OHIO 45202

Page -2-
July 22, 1970

they do not have the power either only you had that and you chose to ignore. Most of us recognize the demands on your time, the overpowering decisions that must be made but that still does not account for the time that is found for other groups even very small ones that are apparently important enough to be greeted. |||

Again may I say that Mrs. Nixon and the White House staff were very gracious and I do appreciate their kindnesses; also the conference itself - the physical arrangements and the content were well planned; but all were doing their job and doing it well as they were told. If it had only been the discussions, etc. I do not think I would be criticizing; it is the lack of serious treatment of the women of this country. The serious treatment of their lack of equal opportunity. WE were there to discuss such matters - but punch and cookies is like the entertainment for the wives of some conventioners. The women must be entertained and impressed while their husbands attend to the serious business of state. Many women (and certainly many men too) may fall into this category but those of us attending the Women's Conference are interested in the serious business of state - unfortunately many of us are the wage earners and the taxpayers and what goes on in Washington is our concern. We came to Washington to discuss our concerns and hopefully to hear the thinking of those who represent us - unfortunately those who represent us did not wish to hear our thinking nor to share theirs. In fact they did not wish to even see us or have us see them. I now know what others have meant by "second class citizenship" - never before have I experienced it in this manner. I do hope that you and your staff will pause just a moment and attempt to understand the point I am trying to make. The Conference was sponsored by the Department of Labor but the Secretary could not be at the Golden Jubilee Banquet - only the Deputy, who had spoken (eloquently) already at lunch; the President or Vice President could at no time wave to the 1000 women; the President's wife could greet 600 women but the president could not look out the window and wave. All of these can attend the Washington Press Club Gridiron dinner; but not even one can look in on the Women's Banquet. Are women citizens and voters? Yes, but obviously not of much repute - at least not to this administration. For a few years it looked like some progress was being made but now it is doubtful. What has happened to |||

THE
CINCINNATI BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL
WOMEN'S CLUB

510 NETHERLAND HOTEL
603 TERRACE HILTON BUILDING
CINCINNATI, OHIO 45202

Page 23-
July 22, 1970

the Equal Rights Amendment? When does it go to the floor of the Senate? Why haven't hearings been scheduled in the house? Word is that it is McCoullough (R) of Ohio and not Eastland who is blocking. Griffith (D) of Michigan is trying to get it to the floor through the discharge petition but we need 68 signatures and I am told the two congressman from Ohio's District 1 and 2 have not signed in spite of our request and vague replies.

No major appointment of a woman and even the presentation of an appointment to the supreme court of a man whose record indicated a bias toward the women's cause. The latter in the face of the repeated requests for the appointment of a woman to the Supreme Court.

All of these things are not new; but to these add the complete ignoring of the Women's Conference and you have over a thousand women from all parts of America rather embittered. Obviously we cannot depend on our representatives as presently constituted. I guess we have really known this all along - and that the answer lies in a grassroots movement of unification of women and women's groups. Also we may have to become "mugwamps" to use the late Senator Taft's term; or we shall have to learn politics and get women in policy making spots as well as elective and appointive offices from the bottom up. Political parties' women's divisions will have to go; they have never been satisfying to most of us but we were stuck with them. If they stay they shall have to become activists as I note the Nationals are moving toward. All of this will take time let us hope we are allowed it thus we will return. The activist groups do not wish to allow time and many of us feel like the "boy with the finger in the dyke". They are inspired by the history of the suffragette movement - if you haven't seen the pictures or heard the Nat'l Republican Women's Club skit I suggest you and Mrs. Nixon and your staff take a look at it. Those with these leanings and a special ax to grind are the 200 that didn't come for cookies and a few who came to gripe; while the rest of us smiled and were polite still believing in the orderly procedure and that equality still prevails in this great land of ours.

Very truly yours,
Marie Brady
(Miss) Marie Brady