



—Washington Star Photographer Brig Cobe

(To be sung to the tune of "Mame")
Who sends us candy, perfume, and
flowers? No one.
Who gives us the pay for his work
hours? No one.
Who buys all that life insurance?
Makes payments on a house in our
name?
And who offers matrimony?
Gives credit cards and alimony?
Or who calls us dear and honey. No one!

The lady from St. Louis, who is singing this, the second verse of "The Women's Lib Lament," as it has been retitled, falters briefly. It's the words. They are Phyllis Schlafly's words, and although Schlafly will tell you she had "so much fun" writing them, which sets this particular experience apart from most of the writing chores she absolutely dreads, it is nonetheless a fact that Phyllis Schlafly's words occasionally have a way of warring violently with the beat of the music she doesn't know how to read.

So the lady from St. Louis, who will be playing Bella Abzug tonight at what Phyllis Schlafly insists on calling her "victory

Phyllis Schlafly readies her victory celebration

By Judy Bachrach
Washington Star Staff Writer

celebration," and the two couples from Lynchburg who will be singing "The ERA Military March" do falter from time to time — but nothing disturbs Phyllis Schlafly's good humor as she hears her own words being sung, and nothing wipes the jubilant smile off her face, as she moves her shoulders in a demure shimmy to the rhythm of the music. "You've got to en-un-ciate," she informs the two couples, both bearing the last name Pantana. "You've got to have a little piano between the two verses. Give 'em time to laugh, those are funny last lines."

"We will shoot and bomb and bayonet,"

sing Joy and Linda Pantana, one very blonde, the other highly brunette ("And don't ask me which is which," implores Schlafly), "We will march and kill and die/ We just hope the battle won't begin/ Till our hair's completely dry."

Accompanying them on the piano in a small airless room at the Shoreham Hotel, is Phyllis Schlafly's eldest son, John. He is skinny and dark with pleasing, regular features, a mild case of acne, and a completely innocent gaze that belies his 28 years. And he looks nothing like his mother with her sculpted blond hair and pale wide face.

"I know," Phyllis Schlafly nods. "It's a standing joke in the family. I've got six children, and not one of them looks like me."

"They're all" — she stops. For the first time her face falls, her eyes turn moody, her tone wistful.

"They're all beautiful," concludes Phyllis Schlafly. The lids she has so carefully painted blue droop, the thin mouth grimaces.

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There is so much to do. Tonight at the Shoreham there will be 1,100 guests attending her Pro-Family Gala which will honor Schlafly's Stop ERA movement. But it doesn't stop there. Phyllis Schlafly bats about the hotel, marshaling forces, giving commands, grabbing at telephones, making arrangements, granting interviews, checking on absolutely everything.

Phyllis Schlafly has chosen March 22 for her "victory celebration" because that was the deadline for ERA's ratification by a necessary 38 state legislatures. The Equal Rights Amendment did not get the approval of the requisite number of states by that date. In fact it had to endure a lot of embarrassment when a number of

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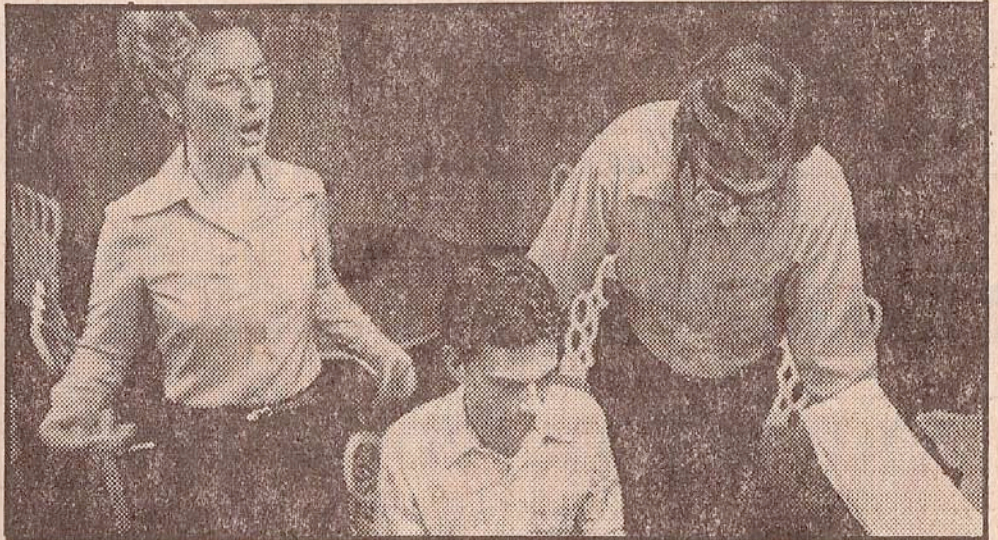
states tried to rescind their approval or declare it null and void by today. But it also did not expire. It was extended by Congress, which makes you think that maybe what Phyllis Schlafly, the longtime foe of ERA, should be throwing tonight is a wake.

But, as Phyllis Schlafly tells "Good Morning America" and AP radio and the Christian Science Monitor from her hotel room, "This is the end of the ERA morally and constitutionally. The seven-year limit was set and they couldn't make it. So we are happy to celebrate the greatest victory for women's rights since the passage of the woman's suffrage amendment."

The greatest victory for women since suffrage simply couldn't have happened at a worse time — Phyllis Schlafly has scratched one of her eyes with a contact lens; the pain is killing. She lies back on her hotel bed, pouring solution into the offending eye. "It's all strictly vanity," she moans, wiping away a tear. "You won't believe how long I've been wearing these things. I'm the oldest living artifact ever to have contact lenses." Another soothing drop. "Since 1946."

There is now a smudge of mascara, a bit of vestigial blue under the lids. Hastily, she whips out her compact, wiping it all away — and with it, seemingly, the pain as well. In 60 seconds she has checked on the cake for Utah's Sen. Orrin Hatch, whose birthday it is today, and who will be emceeing the celebration tonight. Darting out of her room, she surveys the singing Pantanas. Snatching the phone like a blatant thief, she calls her home in Alton, Ill., to check with her secretary on messages.

Phyllis Schlafly is 54, a woman who says she believes "most men make better executives than women," but she has the air of an executive, she gives orders like a general, and she is as organized as the best efficiency ex-



pert. Tell her this and she giggles, blushing furiously.

"I have to say I am organized," she allows, racing down the hall with long, purposeful strides that are impossible to match. "That's one thing I am." Within seconds she has reached the office of Ted Homans, the

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hotel's banquet sales manager. He opens his mouth a few times, attempting speech. Sometimes he succeeds. But for the most part, he doesn't stand a chance.

"We're all set," Schlafly informs him in a rush. "We'll stick with the figure 1,100. And it sounds great. The piano is set. I talked to the security men, we're all set. You're going to

have the banners hung, and I guess everything's in order. I guess those screens on the stage — you don't think they're very attractive — when do I see that? You don't think we can get to rehearsal until 4. We have a few hours. You're going to have a delicious dinner for us tomorrow night."

Homans is finally allowed to insert a question. What about her breakfast on Friday?

"Yes, now. Friday breakfast. I'm guessing on 200 with a head table for six with a lecturn and I — uh — I guess a flag. Yes. A piano there too. I like flags and pianos. They will be there at 8-8:15-8:30. Now I'm doing the best I can. I'll give you a count tomorrow night, so don't worry. I'm going to have the girls take a count of how many people will show up exactly, because it could be 100 or it could be 400 for breakfast. So" — Phyllis Schlafly pauses for breath — "should I call you? When? Midnight? Or 4 o'clock in the morning?"

Homans seems dazed by the silence. "Do I have a choice?" he manages finally.



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Ann McGraw, the singing St. Louis lady, who is chairman of the Stop-ERA political action committee, explains during rehearsal how thoroughly organized one has to be working with Schlafly and other volunteer causes. "And our husbands love it, too," she concludes gaily. "Because this way, their underwear isn't in the drier all the time."

As she speaks, Phyllis Schlafly is telling her problems to the CBS crew that has come to film. She doesn't really want them to film the singing of "The Women's Lib Lament," which is sung to the tune of "Mame." It really would be far preferable if they filmed the singing of "The ERA Military March," which carries the tune of "From the Halls of Montezuma."

"Whenever, we're shown singing copyrighted tunes, I get all these nasty letters," Schlafly explains.

"But the legal problems arise only when it's done for profit. You're not doing it for profit," protests the CBS reporter.

"So what do you want to do?" in-

quires Schlafly, who is no one's fool—particularly when it comes to pleasing the press. "Do you want to do a few lines from "The March of the States?"

Her son makes a face. Of all the songs, "The March of the States" (sung to the tune of the Visa commercial) has been the most troublesome.

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"I can do 'Put On A Happy Face,'" offers Ann McGraw.

"I guess you don't want to do 'The March of the States,'" sighs a resigned Schlafly.

"Phyllis!" Ann McGraw cries out with exasperation. "You can't know everything, Phyllis. Give us a little something we can do."

In her room, Phyllis Schlafly looks sad. Perhaps it's the pain in her eye. Perhaps it's fatigue. In any case, the general impression she gives right now, her overnight case, her can of Adorn hair spray and a bag labeled "JUNQUE" beside her, is one of utter weariness and depression. Gone is the thrill of hearing her own words being sung to copyrighted tunes. The stiff bearing of her militantly teased and frosted hair no longer matches her mood.

But then perhaps all this is merely the result of a question. Phyllis Schlafly who is fond of singing the praises of the American woman in "her beautiful home" is very far indeed from her own beautiful home. Phyllis Schlafly is asked why she has fled the virtues of a beautiful home for proselytizing and travel and speech-making? One might even call it a profession.

"Well, I'm exhausted," she replies with a nervous little laugh. "If anyone else can do it they're welcome to it."

Phyllis Schlafly is told that this is hard to believe.

"Well, I don't have any more children at home."

A sigh. "I have made enormous personal sacrifices for this fight. Last summer I had a lovely vacation all planned with my children. And I had to spend it in Washington fighting the extension of the ERA. So the children went off on vacation without me."

She shrugs miserably. It all sounds so much like the classic dilemma of the liberated working woman, anxious to have both a career and a family life, torn by the complexity of her desires—one can't help asking Phyllis Schlafly why, the lure of home and family being so very enticing to her, she bothers?

"Oh well. . . ." Another shrug. Then the back straightens and the voice grows strong and firm with authority. "Once I got into it, I just couldn't let it go."