

Editorial

A Whiff from the Highfalutin Women

For many years now charlatans have known that the quickest and most certain way to snare the American dope is to deck out every preposterous scheme, every enterprising swindle or every flagrant dive into the limelight as a "matter of human rights." The more extravagant or peculiar the claims regarding those "rights," the more credible they become, and the more securely the dope is hooked.

It is this one aphorism, of course, that explains the extraordinary interest Americans are focusing on Women's Liberation. If the promoters of Women's Liberation had actually addressed themselves to women's changing role in a society whose family life, for various reasons, has changed drastically simultaneous with a vast economic and vocational transformation, they would be on to a serious social problem, but alas their audience would respond with snores and groans. So the charlatans of Women's Liberation had to whoop it up for women's rights and sexual fantasy, and it is now only a matter of time before they snare the American dope — the self-proclaimed Concerned Citizen. Once they have bagged him they will have taken complete command of America's primary weapons for combatting reality, to wit, legislation and financial appropriation.

Now to reach the Concerned Citizen one must start at the source of all concern and paranoia in modern America, so a year or so ago the feminologue brought her moonshine to the universities. Fearing that the academics might recall that certain of her programmatic demands conflicted with labor reforms from the progressive era, she furiously shoveled out fragrant chunks of human rights and simply overwhelmed them. The academics pounced on the cheese and now that their disciples have sniffed the stuff a veritable stampede threatens. If you doubt my claims ask your local librarian to pull from under her counter the last few issues of *The New York Review of Books*; a glance will convince you that this year Women's Liberation will sweep the campus as devastatingly as Venezuelan equine encephalo-myelitis swept the panhandle.

Of course, we can marshal less profound reasons why Women's Liberation will replace Vietnam and negritude as the campuses' burning monomania, and all of them inform us as much about the silliness of Women's Liberation as it informs us about the hopelessness of most of the academic reserves. For one thing Women's Liberation was bound to prove irresistible to the media, and though no one else takes televised history seriously America's educated elite certainly does. No analytical journalist could remain unmoved by the perverse spectacle of mobs of unruly harridans railing away at

the cruel injustices of childhood and family. The sight of them burning piles of underwear drew the cameramen like flies to garbage, and when the media discovered that these feminine idealists subscribed to almost every aspect of incivism abroad in the land, they could do no less than devote oceans of print and billows of chitchat to their struggle. The result is that everytime something like Bella Abzug flaps her jaw before a college audience the intellectuals smell the sweat of human chattel, hear whips crack over the backs of Georgia field hands and see a forlorn negress shivering before the mob at a Charleston slave market — all this they experience while Bella speaks of Women's misery in America.

Further, the turgid disquisitions written by Women's Liberationists ooze with the kind of pseudo-Marxism that spins brilliant flashes of light in the otherwise dank cranium of the average university professor. When Mrs. Shulmuth Firestone announced that "the doctrine of historical materialism, much as it was a brilliant advance over previous historical analysis was not the complete answer," she even outclassed Dr. Marx. How long can the common professor of literature be expected to ignore such a wangdoodle of a bandwagon? I expect the prestige universities will soon give themselves over to a building-spree that will raise vast institutes devoted to pondering the complexities of feminology — imagine, if you will, the Simone de Beauvoir Institute for Strategic Study of the Glands.

The ideologues of militant feminology are twenty-four-carat American revolutionaries. Such credentials cannot but arouse the interest of all those mediocre graduate students who tremble at their desks, dutifully applying themselves to the mystifications of the various social sciences. In fact, I imagine that even some of the more intelligent graduate students are warmed by the women's glorious ideals, for Women's Liberation is just the kind of burning issue that is edging its way into trendy university curriculum, making the universities relevant and leaving students and professors incompetent to contrast Charles Reich with, for instance, a sophisticated fungus.

Women's Liberation is philosophically illiterate. Its ideas are idiotic and contradictory. No one has written a coherent analysis of the subject, because it coheres around not one valid question of essential significance. Women's Liberation is a blunderbuss aimed by misanthropes and idiots at the productive elements of society. Naturally, the very abundance of silly ideas it clumsily embraces commends it to the modern university — an institution utterly entranced by the second-rate because it is over-populated by the third- and fourth-

rate. Only the rarest department of literature ever graduates serious students of Chaucer or of Shakespeare. Political science has become the study of sophisticated daydreams, and hardly a government professor in the land really believes in American democratic process. Even historians are less and less able to justify their disciplines.

Women's Liberation is arrant nonsense, but because it is clothed in the highfalutin rhetoric of human rights it has conquered the campus and will soon sear itself into the consciences of every American dope. Never in recorded history has the dope been able to abstain from nonsense. Whether served with tea and cakes by the Women's Christian Temperance Union or served up piping hot by one of the gaggle of radical reform organizations so furiously elevating and humanizing the Supermarket Republic today, sooner or later the dope falls head over hoof for it.

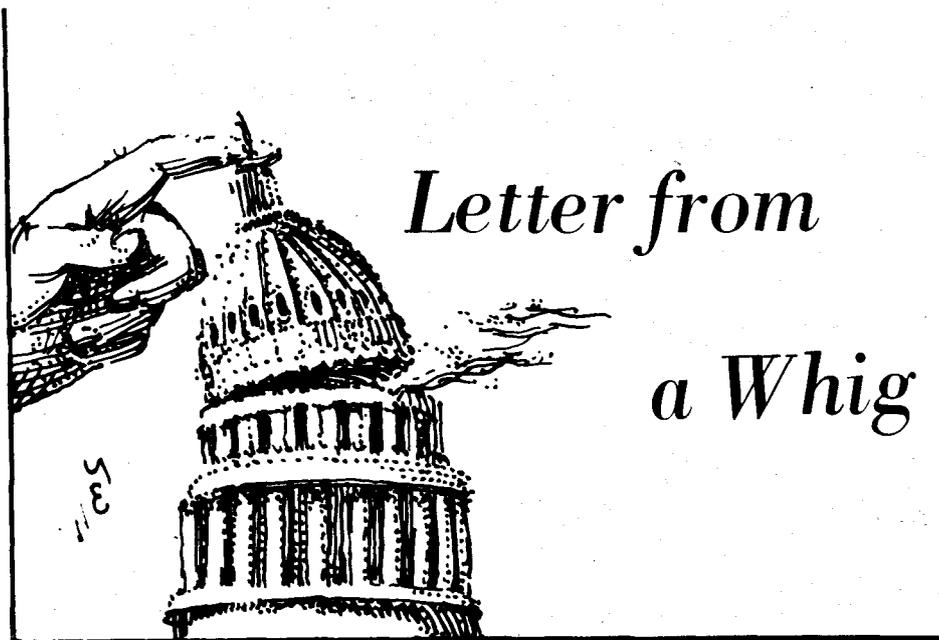
As a phenomenon Women's Liberation represents the quintessence of affluence in that nation possessed of the world's highest standard of luxury. No other nation is so bored and so demanding of titillation that it would allow dyspepsia to be inflated into a serious topic. Though the dope will be mesmerized, by Women's Liberation's flatulent talk of human rights, Women's Liberation is the other trivialization of idealism and dissent. Kate Millett and all her sweet charlatans are simply joy-riding on the legitimate claims of the civil rights movement. Even in their slogan, "Sisterhood is Powerful," they are playing on the sincere aspirations of the Negro ((Black is Beautiful)). Ms. Millett is bamboozling Americans in the same way Aimee Semple McPherson hood-winked them during America's last Renaissance. One's bait is human rights; the other's was magic. Sister Millett fishes for yahoos with college degrees while Sister McPherson trolled for carp. Sister McPherson was loved and respected during her stay on this glob of dirt, and it seems that this is to be the destiny of Sister Millett. Yet there is a stunning dissimilitude between the two and it is a dissimilitude that manifests the peculiar pathologies of contemporary America.

Sister McPherson's followers gathered together to give themselves over to the Divinity, to forget their sore feet and to escape their various calamities. Sister Millett's assemble to put on the crown of the Divinity, to exchange boredom for grievances and to dream up a cauldron of crises.

The frauds of yesterday put Americans on a cloud; today's fakes put a cloud over Americans — still many Americans would have it no other way.

R. Emmett Tyrrell, Jr.

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Letter from a Whig

John Lindsay's Journey Into the Night

George F. Will

WASHINGTON — John Lindsay is bright, handsome, young, ambitious, moving fast and going nowhere. That is the conclusion suggested by three facts.

The people who know him best — residents of his City — like him least.

The politicians upon whose favor he depends — leaders of the Democratic Party — have absolutely no use for him.

If he wants to win elective office again, he cannot avoid returning to the scene of the crime.

Why did he switch?

The most implausible explanation is the one he gives. He says that his philosophy of Government is more congruent with the philosophy dominant in the Democratic Party than that dominant in the Republican Party. That is true and explains nothing.

Both parties accommodate a respectable and respected minority of office holders whose philosophic disagreements with their majority are every bit as pronounced as Lindsay's disagreements with Republicans.

Lindsay switched for reasons of prudence.

Lindsay is a big boy. He has been around, and compiled a record. He recognizes that he cannot rise on the basis of that record. He thinks that if he disavows the party of his past he can separate himself from that record. And he actually seems to believe that the tough, ambitious leaders of his new party are lucky to get him.

The Lindsay track record, in office and as a vote seeker, is well known.

Under Lindsay taxes have increased almost as fast as pollution, and the City's booming industries have been pornography and prostitution.

Since 1965 the city payroll has grown by 90,000. The welfare rolls have grown by 500,000. Approximately 600,000 taxpayers have fled to suburbia. In so doing they have lost their right to one substantial pleasure — voting against Lindsay. That is about the only pleasure remaining to New York City residents, and they grab it with gusto.

Running in 1969 as the liberal candidate in the Nation's most liberal city, Lindsay managed to pull forty-two percent of the electorate away from liberalism.

Remember that in 1968 the combined Nixon and Wallace votes — the anti-liberal vote — amounted to only fifty-seven percent of the vote nationwide. So Lindsay, campaigning as an incumbent in the most liberal city in the Nation, managed to drive the liberal share of the vote below the national liberal vote attracted by that distinctly non-heroic flower of liberalism, Hubert Humphrey.

Given Lindsay's record, it is easy to understand why Republicans kept a stiff upper lip when he bailed out. It is easy to keep your composure when the local crank gets cranky with you.

What is significant is that Lindsay's arrival occasioned about as much jubilation among Democrats as his departure occasioned lamentation among Republicans.

A McGovern aid was commendably candid: "John Lindsay is an idea whose time has come — and gone."

If there is anything about which the gaggle of Democratic candidates are agreed, it is this: one of them should get the nomination. They all understand that it would be a fearful confession of Party weakness for the Democrats to award their most coveted prize to a Republican re-tread.

Those Lindsay advisors who represent themselves as "realists" want their thoroughbred to pass up the 1972 Presidential sweepstakes and, instead, run for Governor of New York in 1974. This advice may be tinged with realism, at least as regards Lindsay's Presidential hopes. Still, it is like advising Floyd Patterson to fight Frazier rather than Ali.

If Lindsay does run for Governor in 1974, the chances are excellent that he will be thrashed by Malcolm Wilson, who is currently Nelson Rockefeller's Lt. Governor. Wilson is a solid, con-

servative Republican, a proven vote-getter, and a favorite of the Party regulars. Moreover, by 1974 he may be the incumbent Governor.

Rockefeller may be headed for a position in the Cabinet.

This autumn John Mitchell will resign as Attorney General and take charge of the Nixon campaign. It is possible that Secretary of State William Rogers may move over to the Justice Department, where he served as Eisenhower's Attorney General. That would open up the Secretary of State position — one of two Cabinet jobs which Rockefeller might want.

The other job — Secretary of Defense — will be available if Nixon wins in 1972. Secretary Laird already has announced that he intends to resign in 1973. Rockefeller's ability, philosophy and appetites qualify him as a replacement.

What this means is that between Lindsay and Destiny stands a fine politician (Wilson) who can be expected to enjoy the cooperation of another fine politician (Rockefeller) who detests Lindsay.

Still, Lindsay's current maneuvering has a rough logic. Lindsay is acting on a familiar political rule: When your performance in office has ruined your standing with your constituency, seek a larger constituency. A larger constituency implies a higher office; the result is the curious phenomenon of advancement dictated by failure.

Another recent example of this maneuver is Senator Harris' campaign for the Presidency.

Harris has become increasingly intoxicated with liberalism. His Oklahoma constituency is especially abstemious regarding liberalism. So a veteran Oklahoma Congressman, Ed Edmondson, announced that he would challenge Harris in the Democratic primary.

Two things were clear. Edmondson would trounce Harris in the primary. But a divisive primary might open the way to a Republican victory in the general election. So before this calamity could result, Harris — to no one's surprise — began to hear voices from the ether telling him that he should be President.

Some money men ginned up a campaign fund sufficient to get Harris through a few primaries, after which, one can safely predict, the voices from the ether will fall silent. But by then Harris will have a graceful exit from politics and Congressman Edmondson will have clear sailing.

So Harris will clutter up the early primaries in order to gracefully escape a dismal showdown with his constituency. We can expect Lindsay's career to involve a similar scenario.

But chances are that Lindsay peaked a little early — in 1965. Since then he has managed to receive — nay, earn — the enmity of his old city; he has jeopardized his ability to win a statewide election; he has fled his Party; and he has poised himself for a plunge into Presidential politics just at the moment when such a plunge will generate — nay, earn — the lasting enmity

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