

THE AGE  
12/7/79

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Surrey Hills.

## Women's council not democratic

from M. Cray, member, Women Who Want To Be Women.

Women Who Want To Be Women would hardly need to recommend the veil for Lyndsay Connors (New Struggle Begins Among the Feminists, 'The Age' 10/7) because her own ideological blinkers are quite powerful enough to protect her from any real understanding of our aims and objectives.

The basis of our petition to Parliament to abolish the National Women's Advisory Council is that the NWAC has not been democratically elected by the women of Australia, it is not representative of Australian women (as is demonstrated by the "unanimous" decisions the council reaches on controversial issues) and that it is a discriminatory and sexist imposition on Australian women as Australian men do not have a National Men's Advisory Council imposed on them.

There is nothing "emotionally loaded" about our petition — it is a factual statement asking for equal opportunity with men of having issues of concern to women considered, debated and voted on by our elected parliamen-

tary representatives without the interference and intervention of an unrepresentative "advisory council".

We are not opposed to anti-discrimination legislation *per se* but we do object to it being used to engineer a sex-role revolution. Anti-discrimination legislation would be a low priority with the vast majority of women, especially as several States already have equal opportunity legislation and there have been for several years Federal and State committees dealing with discrimination in employment.

The recent conference on anti-discrimination legislation organised by the NWAC in Melbourne went far beyond anti-discrimination legislation. There were proposals for "affirmative action", ie discrimination against males, and a novel suggestion that employers should be presumed to be guilty until they proved their innocence.

There were also suggestions that activists on "affirmative action" should be imported from the US for future conferences. At the same time several persons representing homemakers or parent organisations were denied admission to the conference.

Church-linked women's groups

were also excluded. One delegate who sought permission to present a mother's point of view was grudgingly given three minutes — in a five-hour conference — after which the media were requested "not to sensationalise the conference by reporting a minority point of view".

In our view, anti-discrimination legislation based on sex or marital status should deal with anomalies such as the fact that a married person is excluded from the dole (if the spouse is employed) and the supporting parent's benefit. These are clear discriminations against married people on the basis of their "marital status".

It is also our view that any anti-discrimination legislation should be preceded by reform of the income-tax structure to give economic justice to single-income families. WWWW endorses the income-sharing scheme proposed by the Federal back-bench committee.

We believe that this is not only important in achieving economic justice for single-income families but it is also essential in establishing the status of a wife as an equal partner in the marriage.

M. CRAY,  
Glen Waverley.

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