

# ERA still alive?

## Original ratification deadline passes, court cases filed

WASHINGTON — Supporters and opponents of the Equal Rights Amendment agreed Thursday they will do battle in the courts, as well as in the legislatures whose votes could make it part of the Constitution.

The original deadline for ratification of ERA passed at midnight Thursday — and a court test shaped up to determine whether Congress acted legally in extending it until June 30, 1982.

So far, 35 of the needed 38 states have ratified ERA.

The first suit against the extension will be filed today in Washington state, where a legislator demanded Gov. Dixie Lee Ray retrieve the state's ratification papers from the General Services Administration in the nation's capital. "The extension

is the law of the land," said Rep. Elizabeth Holtzman, D-N.Y. "It will be the responsibility of the United States Department of Justice to defend it — and they will."

"The Supreme Court has already ruled that Congress and Congress alone determined the period for ratification of constitutional amendments," said Eleanor Smeal, president of the National Organization for Women. "We're ready to fight in the courts."

"The extension is wrong, illegal, immoral, unprecedented and unconstitutional," countered Phyllis Schlafly, chairman of Stop ERA.

Even if the extension were valid, she said, 30 of the ratification votes now expire since they all mention the original seven-year limit. That is the argument to be used in the Washington state case.

Both sides held news conferences to observe the seven-year anniversary, and 1,100 opponents scheduled a banquet honoring Schlafly and officially declaring ERA dead.

Representatives of 200 groups supporting ERA — claiming their membership totaled 65 million — said they would shift their emphasis to "one unified, massive, national campaign" to pressure the states that have not ratified.

"We intend to create a political climate which will not allow the last-minute deals and trades by one legislative leader to defeat the ERA," Smeal said. "Women are not going to crawl into the Constitution — we are going to march into it proudly."

Schlafly treated ERA like a thing of the past, saying its "death is the greatest victory that American women have had since the ratification of the Women's Suffrage Amendment."

"The expiration means that women will not have to be drafted or put into military combat," she said.

"What is she talking about?" responded Rep. Margaret Heckler, R-Mass., waving in her hand several bills introduced in Congress that would allow women to be drafted. "You don't need ERA to draft women."

Schlafly accused President Carter

of misusing the powers of his office to lobby for ERA, and said the administration offered a "\$50 million bribe" — the Democratic National Convention — for Florida to pass ERA.

Democrats have passed a resolution ordering the convention be held in a ratified state, and have given Florida an April 15 deadline for approval if Miami Beach is to be considered.

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## Foreign oil imports seen as threatening to national security

WASHINGTON — The Treasury Department has shoved aside the talk of high prices and possibly long lines at gasoline stations with a startling new aspect of America's thirst for oil: Our imports may threaten national security.

The department released a year-long study Wednesday, saying the U.S. dependence on foreign oil — now nearly half the nation's supply — poses a greater threat to national security and economic stability than ever before.

"Oil imports are entering the United States in such quantities and under such circumstances as to threaten to impair the national security," the report warned.

It said vigorous steps, which it did not outline, must be taken to cut oil consumption and boost production.

Treasury Secretary Michael Blumenthal said in a memorandum to President Carter that 45 percent of oil consumed in the United States comes from foreign countries, compared with 39 percent in 1975 and 18 percent in 1959.

"This growing reliance on oil imports has important consequences for the nation's defense and economic welfare," he said.

The Treasury study included a warning from the CIA: "There is a high probability that acts of nature, human error, or deliberately targeted terrorist attacks will interrupt the flow of oil in one or more of the oil-exporting nations during the next several years."

While that report was being made public, the Senate Energy Committee was hearing of still another potential oil crisis: a shortage of lighter crude oils — the ones most suited to production of gasoline and other high-demand, high-priced fuels.

## Legion disease studied

BOSTON — Scientists are closer than ever to understanding Legionnaires' disease nearly 1,000 days after it took the lives of 29 people who attended an American Legion convention in Philadelphia.

The search for the cause and treatment of the disease is the subject of a report published Thursday in the New England Journal of Medicine.

The surprising thing about the respiratory disease "is the fact that we've found a newly-recognized organism," said Dr. Jay P. Sanford, of the Uniformed Services University School of Medicine in Bethesda, Md.

Doctors were able to isolate a previously unknown bacteria that causes the disease, he said. Since then, they have been able to confirm it caused cases of respiratory disease pre-dating the July 1976 Philadelphia outbreak.

The disease can now be treated effectively with the antibiotic erythromycin, and it appears a vaccine could be devised if it were ever needed.

Researchers are also working on a test to speed diagnosis of the disease. Doctors were hampered in treating patients in the Philadelphia outbreak because of the speed at which the disease progressed — less than four days.

Sanford said patterns for the disease are also emerging: It is most frequent between June and November; it is more common in men than in women; and it generally strikes people in their mid-50s.

## What movies do YOU want to see next Fall?

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- Commons Lounge
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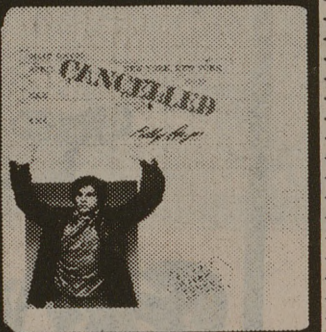
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Wed. March 28