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Mary Krane Derr
1401 E. Hyde Park
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Dear sister feminist, Mary Krane Derr:

Happy to have your inquiry and to be of some service to you if I should be.

Yes, I knew Alice Paul, beginning 1944 when I moved to Washington D.C. as a bride. I worked with her for 18 years until 1962 when we parted company philosophically- but not over abortion.

I found the ERA, for which I had been lobbying, to be faulty in its concept. We do not want rights equalized. We want equal recognition and protection of our rights as individuals. But all that is another matter.

On abortion, Alice Paul was quite definite. She termed it: "The ultimate in the exploitation of women." She felt women were demeaning themselves by allowing their bodies to be used as a method of birth control. I quite agree.

Things were said those days, that one never hears now, especially about the power of woman's ability to say no. Whatever we have made of it, the primary function of sex is to insure that the human race continues and progresses. Therefore the woman is the one who should control the situation for she is the one to bear the child with the accompanying consequences. If the sex act is used for relaxation or the male's needs, then adequate protection should be taken. But why is the woman expected to provide the means of avoiding pregnancy by devices of questionable effectiveness, often producing harmful side effects?

Why is it always the woman's responsibility to prevent conception? I cannot quote Alice Paul on these details but I got the feeling from what was stated that these were her sentiments. I do recall her saying to me that the National Woman's Party was established to help women (females). "How can one protect and help women by killing them as babies?" she said.

We are going through a me! phase in human development. The rights of the unborn are not recognized for selfish reasons. Progress is never a straight line upward. It has its dips and this, I believe, is one of those "dip" times when egocentricity flourishes.

Alice Paul did not easily tolerate unseemly behavior. She was not a man-hater. She was always dignified but friendly. I personally feel she would frown on some feminists' behavior and their arguments. There are a lot of man-haters out there and these Miss Paul felt were counter productive.

If you wish, ask specific questions. The subject provides good material for a doctoral paper.

Good luck,

Evelyn K. S. Judge
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