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Letter from Mildred Persinger to Patricia Schroeder, September 17, 1993

Mildred Emory Persinger

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Politics

26 JUDSON AVE. DOBBS FERRY, NY 10522

17 September, 199^{3 or 4?}

The Hon. Patricia Schroeder,
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Pat,

Despite the immediate political situations you face I would like to call your attention to questions that are being raised in other countries as to whether the United States has abandoned the women's cause. This was asked me recently by European NGO representatives on the "facilitating committee" planning the logistics of the NGO forum to take place parallel to the 1995 World Conference on Women currently slated for Beijing.

They follow preparations closely, particularly those for intergovernmental regional meetings next year that are being given high priority. Because the North American-European region is a more significant player than formerly, several asked with some chagrin, Where is the U.S.?

They said their governments already have draft positions for the regional meeting and have even given support to NGOs for their efforts to prepare. They don't understand why Arvonne Fraser has not yet been confirmed as U.S. representative on the UN Commission on the Status of Women and asked, Is this a measure of the priority women have in U.S. government programs? When I explained that the head of the bureau to whom Arvonne reports has not even been confirmed, they just looked at me.

Amateur that I am, it seems to me that there is potential political advantage in stimulating the Administration to get into this and undertake even a modest program to assure U.S. women that there is interest in Washington in preparations for the 1995 World Conference. Some initiative needs to be taken now by Democrats, or Bob Dole may decide the issue could furnish more polish for his image!

The fact that the Conference is to be held in Beijing may be an obstacle to whole-hearted U.S. support, I realize. However, in two years, much can change, as has happened in the past. Further, the question is not the conference venue. Wherever it takes place, will the U.S. weigh in on the side of women?

Your public out here follows your activities enthusiastically for what you are doing with the hard problems. Getting this ball rolling seems easy by comparison. I hope you find it so.

Sincerely,
Mildred
Mildred Persinger