

PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY'S LAST STAND: THE INSIDE STORY OF THE CONSERVATIVE ICON'S INTERNAL BATTLE FOR SURVIVAL

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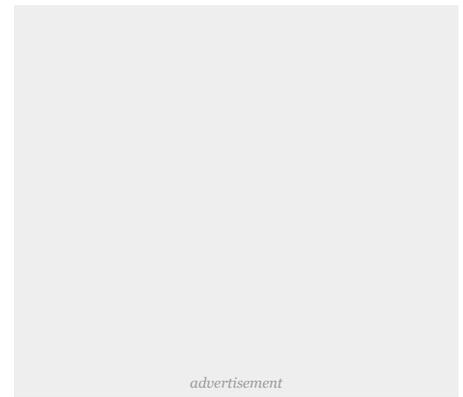
by MATTHEW BOYLE | 25 Apr 2016 | Washington, DC | 3,263

Allies of **Sen. Ted Cruz (R-TX)** Ct 97% are now targeting conservative legend Phyllis Schlafly, a leading grassroots anti-establishment voice for half a century, because Schlafly endorsed billionaire businessman Donald Trump for president in the 2016 GOP primary.

Several Cruz supporters inside Eagle Forum are unhappy with Phyllis Schlafly's Trump endorsement, and have been working behind the scenes against her for months. They have leaked emails, engaged in personal attacks, and even advanced an argument questioning whether the 91-year-old Schlafly is still competent enough to run the organization. Now, several board members of one wing of the tripartite Eagle Forum organization have for the first time in more than four decades of existence called together a special board meeting at which they purported to have voted to remove Schlafly's handpicked successor as president of the organization and claim to have seized control of the organization and its bank accounts from the longtime activist.

They might not be done yet, as they have another special meeting scheduled for early May at which they intend to—sources say—remove Schlafly herself as chairman of the board. What's more, Schlafly's own daughter, Anne Cori, has sided with the other Cruz supporters inside Eagle Forum against her mother, creating a divide inside the family as Phyllis and her other children, including son Andy, back Trump over Cruz in the 2016 primary. Cori admits that her actions run counter to her mother's wishes, but says she is acting out of "love" for her mother.

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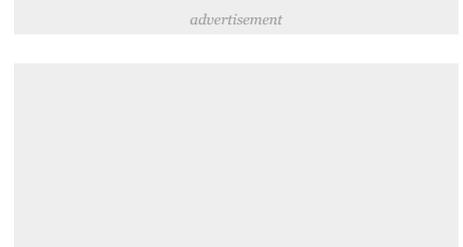
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For the first time here, the inside story of Schlafly's battle for survival—including exclusive interviews with her, her daughter who's working against her, and several of the others involved—will be told. In dueling Breitbart interviews, both Schlafly and Cori detail how painful this has been for both of them—and how it's torn apart one of America's leading conservative families.

This story offers a front row view into how Cruz allies operate throughout the conservative movement. They have aggressively pressured conservatives into publicly supporting the senator—or at least not supporting someone else—and even sought to “blacklist” those who don't, so as to fit Cruz's narrative of being the one candidate who the conservative movement “united” behind.

At one point, according to Eagle Forum president Ed Martin, Cruz allies inside Eagle Forum wrote a press release that they demanded Schlafly sign onto before the Iowa caucuses. The press release was intended to serve as a sort of statement of neutrality that would walk back the positive comments Schlafly had made about Trump and make clear that she likes Cruz too and hadn't endorsed anyone. But Schlafly resisted these pressures, refusing to sign their statement before the Iowa caucuses and later openly endorsing Trump before the Missouri primary.

The story even entangles Cruz's rough-edged campaign manager Jeff Roe, a political operative with deep ties in Missouri politics—Schlafly's home base for half a century, where her endorsement of Trump carried great weight.

Roe had been lobbying Schlafly's handpicked successor Ed Martin for weeks to get Eagle Forum on Cruz's side. Martin says that by doing so, Roe “inserted himself” into this intra-organization dispute. A lot of the dispute centers around internal Eagle Forum emails that were leaked out to the Cruz campaign and made their way to Roe. In the emails, Schlafly's son Andy brutally criticized the Texas Senator and his wife Heidi, even making the explosive charge that the Cruzes are “feminists.” In a roundabout way, thanks to Schlafly's daughter Anne Cori and fellow Eagle Forum board rebel Cathie Adams of Texas, those emails were leaked to Roe—and Roe confronted Martin with them. Roe doesn't deny confronting Martin about the emails, but he does deny deeper conversations with Martin about Schlafly's position on the election. Martin says Roe is lying

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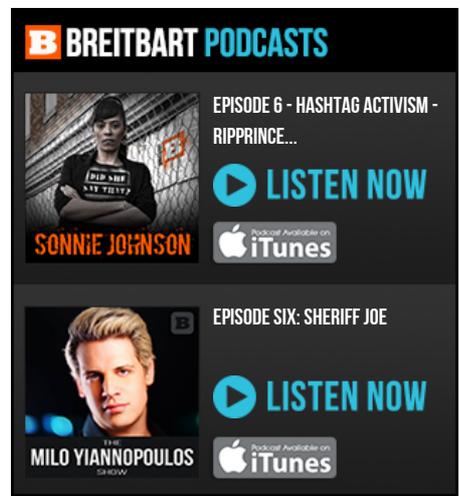
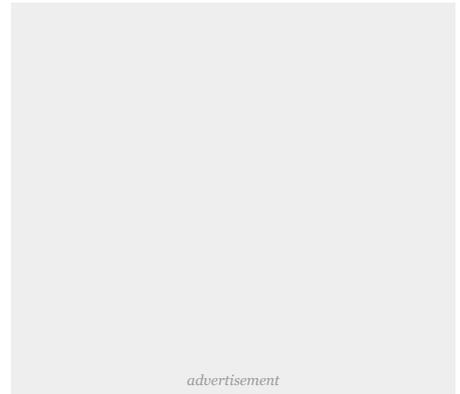
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Meanwhile, all of this coming to light adds a renewed focus to the core issues Schlafly believes are of utmost importance. As the drama unfolds, immigration, education, trade, and, most importantly, national sovereignty, are back at the forefront, Schlafly told Breitbart News in a nearly 20-minute interview.

Schlafly has led Eagle Forum ever since she founded the organization back in 1972. She has fought against the Institutional Left and GOP establishment, elites she calls “the kingmakers,” for decades. Now she's fighting internally for survival, and she's fighting back hard against several rebels who've been around her for decades.



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Schlafly has already largely regained control of parts of the organization, but the plotters against her claim that they have control of one of Eagle Forum's three wings. The organization will likely litigate whether that wing of Eagle Forum, a non-profit part of the group that is technically a 501(c)(4), will remain under Schlafly's control, but she and her allies have successfully booted the rebels from the 501(c)(3) wing already. Last Friday, they fired several people involved in or close to the coup attempt, and officially they are now barred from publicly identifying themselves with the Eagle Forum 501(c)(3) wing.

THE DRAMA BUILDS

Eagle Forum is split into three separate parts: A 501(c)(3), a 501(c)(4), and a political action committee (PAC).

Last week, for the first time in the organization's decades-long history, a group of Eagle Forum 501(c)(4) board members called for a special meeting of the board. At least two of those Eagle Forum board members who called for this meeting are supportive of Ted Cruz: Cathie Adams of Texas and Eunie Smith of Alabama. Shirley Curry of Tennessee, the third board member who called for the meeting, hasn't publicly confirmed whom she is backing in the presidential race, but sources close to the goings on believe she is a Cruz supporter. The special meeting of the 501(c)(4) board happened on Monday, April 11—and, rather than taking place in person as normal board meetings have since the 1970s, the meeting happened over the phone.

An email was sent to all the 11 board members announcing that Ed Martin, the organization's president and former chairman of the Missouri GOP who is Schlafly's chosen successor, would not be leading the meeting. The Cruz supporters attempting the coup d'etat against Schlafly would refuse to recognize Martin as the officiator of the meeting. The people who called the meeting were Adams, Smith and Curry.

In the lead up to that Monday meeting, Martin—at Schlafly's direction with the involvement of her son John as well—made several moves that further infuriated the pro-Cruz rebels. On the previous Friday morning, Martin fired Glyn Wright as executive director of Eagle Forum. Martin confirmed to Breitbart News that he fired Wright on Friday, and the reasoning was "disloyalty" to Schlafly. The news of Wright's departure came as a shock to many in the conservative movement, as Wright for the past several years has been a core leader in Eagle Forum's Capitol Hill operations. Wright herself has not responded to repeated phone calls or text messages seeking comment about her termination.

Also on Friday morning, Martin used the 501(c)(3) wing of Eagle Forum—again, at Schlafly's direction—to terminate the involvement of several of the 501(c)(4) wing rebels against Schlafly. The five who were terminated for the actions against Eagle Forum and against Schlafly are: Cathie Adams of Texas, Eunie Smith of Alabama, Shirley Curry of Tennessee, Rosina Kovar of Colorado and Carolyn McLarty of Oklahoma. All except Curry have offered public support for Cruz's campaign. McLarty is a Republican National Committeewoman from Oklahoma—and the Cruz campaign prominently celebrated her endorsement of the senator's presidential bid with a press release.

In that 501(c)(3) emergency meeting that Martin called on Friday, which was held via telephone, a number of board members also had successors elected.

A HUGE 'MANIPULATION'

People close to Schlafly have long been skeptical of Adams' motives due to comments Adams made to the *Dallas Morning News* earlier this cycle alleging that Schlafly's endorsement of Trump was a "manipulation." The term suggests that the 91-year-old Schlafly is no longer capable of making such decisions on her own anymore.

"We have no respect for that man," Adams told the Dallas newspaper of Trump back in mid-March. "[Schlafly's endorsement] is going to be widely dismissed. At 91, it is just totally unfair to impose upon someone who has such a beautiful legacy ... I think this was very much a manipulation. When you're 91 and you're not out with the grass roots all the time, it is very much taking advantage of someone."

Schlafly's endorsement of Trump came with a pledge from the GOP frontrunner to support

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the Republican Platform, which is full of policy positions that grassroots conservatives like. But, Adams told the Dallas Morning News, she believes Cruz is better than Trump with the platform.

“If we were going to be asking Ted Cruz about the platform, he would be able to give us a wonderful dissertation on each one of those plans. That is the caliber of the man,” Adams said. “Where with Donald Trump he says he going to bully people, negotiate with people, he’s going to have good people around him. That’s it. And that is going to make America great? Really?”

Adams has since apologized to Schlafly over the phone last week over those comments but hasn’t asked the Dallas Morning News to retract or change them—and told Breitbart News that she was talking about Trump, not Schlafly, when she used the word “manipulation” in that quote to the Dallas Morning News.

“OK, let me ask you a question: Who do you think is being looked at in a way that is negative—do you think it’s Phyllis Schlafly?” Adams responded when Breitbart News read her that *Dallas Morning News* quote and asked her what she meant.

“No, what I’m asking you though is do you think she was manipulated into endorsing Trump?” Breitbart News asked Adams directly as a follow-up.

“What I feel and was trying to say and maybe I didn’t say it as articulately as I could have and should have is that I have, as I said, no respect for Donald Trump,” Adams replied. “And I hit him. So my negative was not in any way intended for Phyllis Schlafly. I love and adore her. I would be hurt more than I can even express if I hurt Phyllis Schlafly. I don’t really think it’s fair to call—it would certainly be an uninformed statement to say that I ever would do anything that would be hurtful to Phyllis Schlafly. But I don’t mind at all telling you that I intended to hurt Donald Trump. That comment, what I was trying to say, was that I don’t support Donald Trump.”

“Right, but again, you said you think it was ‘very much a manipulation,’” Breitbart News followed up again. “What did you mean by that?”

“I think that Donald Trump, when he speaks that he is a very good salesman,” Adams replied. “I think that maiming people who are my friends are not understanding clearly the role that he has played in this and that he thinks he can turn the American government into him just being a CEO. So any negative there, please make it very, very clear that this is a reflection not upon Phyllis Schlafly but upon Donald Trump.”

“OK, but you think she was clear in her... Is she just the same as she’s always been and able to make an endorsement, I mean she’s been doing this for a half a century?” Breitbart News asked Adams in another follow-up question.

“I think that Phyllis Schlafly is just as free today to anchor herself and be able to choose a candidate as she’s always been able to,” Adams replied. “We have had times in the past where we would disagree over a candidate, and this has not been a divisive point at all. But why is it more of a point now? I think it’s because of the stuff of Trump. It has nothing to do with Phyllis. It’s not Phyllis’ ability to make decisions and to think—it’s not any of that. Any negative [I’ve said] focuses on Donald Trump period. Nothing on Phyllis Schlafly. But absolutely no pulling of punches on Donald Trump. If you would write something to that effect, I would be forever grateful.”

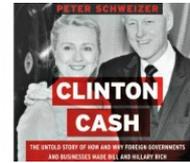
LEAKY FAUCET: MISSOURI MAN IN TEXAS

Adams’ central role in this story connects all the way back to emails she was leaking to Ted Cruz’s campaign. She admitted to Breitbart News that she leaked the emails, in which Eagle Forum board member and Phyllis Schlafly’s son Andy Schlafly was critical of Cruz and his wife Heidi, to the Cruz campaign.

The emails, which Andy Schlafly sent to his mother Phyllis and copied her daughter Ann Cori, ended up being forwarded to Adams by Cori. Adams then sent them to the Cruz campaign—not directly to Jeff Roe, but they eventually made their way to Roe. Roe is Cruz’s campaign manager, [known for his aggressive political style](#). Roe comes from Missouri politics, too, just like many of these Eagle Forum players—and has a personal

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relationship that dates back years with Ed Martin.

Adams—who has been a Cruz supporter for years and is heavily involved in Texas politics, having been the former Texas Republican Party chair—claimed that she didn't know until a couple days ago who Cruz's presidential campaign manager was. Adams is currently running for the vice chair slot of the Texas Republican Party.

"I was surprised to even hear—I hate to express ignorance here—I didn't even know who Jeff Roe was until I heard his name earlier this week," Adams told Breitbart News when asked if she forwarded the emails to Roe himself. "No, I don't think I've ever met him. I mean, I know Ted Cruz and I've been a supporter of his from the very beginning of the U.S. Senate race. I'm a very, very avid supporter of Ted Cruz's, but, no, I didn't know Mr. Roe. I've never had any interaction with him."

Roe, in an interview for this story, confirmed that he doesn't know Adams and hadn't interacted with her specifically.

Adams, however, did admit to leaking internal Eagle Forum emails to the Cruz campaign.

"Well, yes, I am not going to deny that—it was a friend, a mutual friend from Eagle Forum," Adams said when asked if she gave emails from inside Eagle Forum to anyone on the Cruz campaign. "I did share an email. But I don't know Roe, and I've never spoken with Jeff about anything."

Adams wouldn't say who specifically she leaked the emails to.

"Of course I do," Adams said when asked if she knew which Cruz staffer she leaked the Schlafly emails to. "But I don't want to get someone in trouble. Whatever that person did with it, it's their own business. When I see things that hurt my candidate, I think that is something that is very much expected. A friend is a friend, and we're going to stick up for our friends."

HEIDI THE 'FEMINIST' AND 'FOREIGN-BORN TED'

In two emails which went to his mother Phyllis Schlafly and his sister Anne Cori among others, Andy Schlafly argued that both Ted Cruz and his wife Heidi Cruz are "feminist." He also calls Ted Cruz "foreign-born Ted" and argued that believing Cruz was a U.S. citizen at the time of his birth in Calgary, Canada, would be like "supporting birthright citizenship" that would ultimately be "hurtful to our immigration positions, on which Trump is so strong."

The argument that Cruz is somehow a feminist—and that his wife is too—is new. Schlafly and Eagle Forum have been fighting against the feminist worldview for decades, and her family stands with her on it. She fought and killed the Equal Rights Amendment, which was being pushed as an effort to amend the U.S. Constitution, and has consistently and repeatedly battled feminists over the course of her career.

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Andy Schlafly sent this email, sources confirmed, to Eunie Smith and her assistant Deborah Love. It was sent on the evening of Jan. 12, 2016, as the battle between Cruz and Trump intensified on the campaign trail in Iowa.

The email subject heading line reads: “reply to Deborah Re: Ted Cruz’s wife is a feminist.” It’s unclear if Smith personally leaked this to the Cruz team, or if Love did—or if they sent it to someone else who sent it to the Cruz team. But it made its way to Roe soon.

“Thanks for your insightful comments,” Andy wrote in the first email obtained by Breitbart News. “But my mother has not endorsed Trump. She has praised several of his courageous positions. If Trump fails early, then those conservative positions go down with him. I don’t want that. Whatever flaws Trump has, he is not a feminist. Ted and Heidi Cruz obviously are, big-time. Eagle Forum stands, first and foremost, against feminism. In addition, in my humble opinion, supporting birthright citizenship for foreign-born Ted at this critical time is hurtful to our immigration positions, on which Trump is so strong. Many, many times fellow conservatives have declared my mother to be wrong on a particular issue, while praising her generally. And every single time that I can think of, my mother ended up being right. Call it intuition, Providence, luck, or whatever, my mother has a certain knack for politics that has virtually never been wrong. I learned that the hard way until I accepted it.”

‘PUSHY FEMINIST MEGYN KELLY’

In a second email from Andy Schlafly—sent on Jan. 27, 2016, to several Eagle Forum board members, many of whom are also his family members—he wrote that like the Cruzes, who are “complete feminists,” the Fox News Channel has been taken over by “the pushy feminist Megyn Kelly.” That email was sent to several people on the board at Eagle Forum, including Phyllis Schlafly and Anne Cori. Cori confirmed she forwarded the private email onto several other people, including Adams. It was Adams who sent it to the Cruz campaign—which eventually got it into Roe’s hands. Adams admitted she leaked the email to the Cruz campaign, and Cori admitted she blasted the email out to several people including Adams. Roe wasn’t sure which one of his staffers he got the email from.

“Donald Trump is the only candidate who stands up against the feminists,” Andy Schlafly wrote in this Jan. 27 email. “Fox News Channel has apparently been completely taken over by the pushy feminist Megyn Kelly, to the point of doing voters an immense disservice and losing millions of viewers. Heidi and Ted Cruz are complete feminists and investment banker Heidi is both running Ted’s campaign and dictating his policy positions. We already will have Hillary on the ballot in November and I don’t see why Republicans should nominate a feminist candidate on our side, too. Eagle Forum, first and foremost, is against feminism.”

READ THE EMAIL:



Cori's explanation for blasting the private email out to Adams and others was that she thought it wasn't confidential—and she thought her brother would support it getting out.

“There was no indication on that email that that was confidential, so I thought he was quite proud of that statement, and I didn't see any reason not to forward it, so I forwarded it because it's clearly something he believes,” Cori said of her brother's communiqué. “I actually sent it to about 30 people, and beyond that who knows—it could have went anywhere from that point.” Even so, Cori did deny sending them directly to the Cruz campaign.

“No, no, because I don't have any connection with the Cruz campaign,” she said when asked if she gave it directly to the campaign.

'I NEED TO TAKE THIS TO TC'

What's perhaps most interesting about these emails is how Roe handled them: The Missourian took the emails to Ed Martin, the president of Eagle Forum and his old friend from Missouri, to tell Martin they needed to talk about it.

“[C]an you call me to discuss? I need to take this to TC,” Roe wrote to Martin on Jan. 23 in an email that contained Andy Schlafly's original Jan. 12 email.

Roe confirmed to Breitbart News that “TC” means “Ted Cruz.”

“That's what I commonly refer to Ted as, yeah,” Roe said in a phone interview.

Though he said it in this email that he was going to take the email up to Ted Cruz himself, Roe told Breitbart News when asked if he did: “Nah, I never did.”

The second email, the Jan. 27 one, went from Roe in a text message to Martin. The text message didn't contain anything other than Andy Schlafly's email content.

In the case of both emails, Roe says he is not sure how they got to him—whether it be from someone inside his campaign who sent them up to him, or from someone outside. He also originally thought they were mass email blasts, not private emails that leaked their way up to him.

“I'm sure it was forwarded from a variety of people, but I got that email from several folks,” Roe said.

“It's probably like I get the letters that they sent out today—I counted before our

conversation, I got probably 25. I got those the same way—there were a half a dozen people who were forwarding information around that time,” Roe added. “I wanted to just at some point—obviously, Phyllis is a giant, and I don’t know her son. It wasn’t that long prior that I think Ted had been there, I think to their meeting. So I wanted to track down if this was in fact a position statement or if this was really the feelings going on internally and what we could do to clean this up.”

On the second email, Roe said it was the “same thing” and that “I got that from several” different people.

“There was wide discussion about the position that they were going to take in the presidential campaign at that time,” Roe said.

Roe told Breitbart News that “nah,” he never ended up actually speaking with Martin about them. But Martin says that’s not true.

PHYLLIS SHUTS DOWN HEIDI’S ‘DUMB IDEA’

When asked about the emails from inside her Eagle Forum leaking out to the Cruz campaign, Phyllis Schlafly told Breitbart News she’s not happy about it—but she turned her attention quickly to Heidi Cruz, the would-be First Lady of the United States, for signing onto that CFR paper calling for a North American Union.

Back when she was at the Council on Foreign Relations, Heidi Cruz—Ted’s wife—signed onto a paper backing one of the most radical globalist and open borders ideas in history: The creation of a North American Union. That hasn’t gotten much attention on the campaign trail, but it has been picked up on by a lot of the grassroots.

“I’m not in favor of leaking anything or forwarding anybody else’s emails without permission, I’m not in favor of that,” Schlafly said in the interview. “But I will tell you I spent about a year of my life fighting the issue of trying to put the United States in the North American Union. I thought that would have erased our northern and southern borders. I’m very much opposed to that. I like the United States borders we have now, and I have recently learned that Mrs. Cruz was one of the authors of the CFR [Council on Foreign Relations] article that endorsed the North American Union. And as I said, I devoted a lot of my life to fighting this dumb idea of combining our country with any other countries.”

She wouldn’t back up the claim from her son Andy in those private emails that Sen. Cruz is a feminist and wouldn’t expand on the claim that Heidi Cruz is a feminist, other than to say she has heard the criticism of the would-be First Lady.

“Well, I never heard anybody say Cruz was a feminist, but they have said that about his wife,” Schlafly said.

Schlafly next explained feminism and why it’s not good for society.

“A feminist has their goals, and one of their goals is to change the Constitution to add the Equal Rights Amendment—that’s what they worked so hard on—and they’re always trying to push the feminist goal, and I think the feminists are not good for our country,” she said. “For example, women in combat was another big issue for us when the ERA came up in the 70s. The feminists wanted to get women drafted and treated just like men. We opposed that. We oppose women in combat. I just haven’t heard the Cruzes speak out against women in combat.”

IS DONALD TRUMP THE REAL FEMINIST?

When asked about the “feminist” criticism in his interview with Breitbart News, Roe laughed it off.

“I haven’t either, that’s why I wanted to talk to Ed,” Roe said when this reporter noted he hasn’t heard that criticism of Cruz before this ever. “I don’t have any reaction. It’s obviously a lot of drama going on over there. I don’t have much to add, but it’s a silly accusation.”

Roe did however point to a New York Times article in which Team Trump seems to be floating all over the place on the issue of feminism without a clear or defined point of view on the matter. It is a similar problem that has cropped up with Trump on issues like abortion or marriage or certain elements of defense policy—or really anything he has not yet randomly come across and learned—where he does not have a stated policy position and relies on pure instinct.

In an article filed from Milwaukee on the day before Cruz trounced Trump in the Wisconsin primary, the *New York Times*' Ashley Parker [wrote about](#) Trump's complicated issues with women in light of a recent interview Ivana Trump did with the New York Post. Ivana Trump's team, Parker's article explained, didn't appear to understand whether Donald Trump was a feminist or not.

"A spokeswoman for Ivana Trump, Catherine Saxton, said the interview was simply the result of good timing — The Post asked, and Ms. Trump was able to do it," Parker wrote. "(At one point during the interview Mr. Trump even called his ex-wife.) Yet in a sign of Mr. Trump's complicated relationship with women, Ivana Trump's staff later called the paper to say Mr. Trump was, in fact, a feminist, before calling again to say he was not — and then calling a final time to say he was, indeed, a feminist."

'JEFF ROE INSERTED HIMSELF IN THIS'

While Schlafly hadn't officially endorsed a candidate in the 2016 presidential primary until March, when she endorsed Trump in St. Louis before the March 15 Missouri primary, she had spoken very highly of Trump in a variety of interviews before the Iowa caucuses. The populist and nationalist wing of the conservative grassroots has viewed Cruz as a second choice of sorts to Trump. If Trump couldn't make it, they believed, Cruz wasn't a bad alternative. There was even what appeared to be an alliance between the two candidates for the first several months of the campaign, as they avoided attacking each other while they each battled the rest of the GOP field.

But Schlafly had done several interviews praising Trump without necessarily officially endorsing him. That undercut Cruz's narrative, which was—and still is—that the conservative movement was uniting behind him. It is the tactic Cruz used to box out everyone from Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker to Dr. Ben Carson to **Sen. Rand Paul (R-KY)**    to former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee to former Pennsylvania Sen. Rick Santorum. Trump's support from a longtime movement leader, one who Cruz personally idolized and who shared a home state with his campaign manager, hurt that carefully crafted image.

"Jeff Roe inserted himself in this," Martin told Breitbart News.

"Listen, he's lying," Martin said when told that Roe denied speaking with him about this particular stuff. "He and I talked about this in December, I told him about—look, I'm not bragging but I know the rules. I talked to him in December, and he said, 'Come work for us on these rules stuff,' and I said, 'No, I can't do that.' I talked to him personally, texted regularly, up until right before Iowa. What they're really mad about is that Phyllis met with Anne Cori and a few other Eagles and they said, 'We need you to put out a statement that says you're not really for Trump—will you do that?' So, Phyllis, as Phyllis does, said—and she called me right after—said, 'I just told them I'd think about it.' Now, for Phyllis, that's her way of saying, 'No.' She doesn't say 'no' directly to people she knows. The next day, this is Friday before Iowa, Roe was texting saying, 'I need to talk to you' because he wanted a statement. I suspect Anne Cori and Cathie Adams had predicted, and promised, that they would get a statement out of Phyllis."

Martin said that leading up to the Iowa caucuses, Cruz backers led a pressure campaign against Schlafly to try to get her to issue a statement saying she backed no one—neither Cruz or Trump.

"The thing that's crazy about this, the thing that's silly, if you look at her writings over the last seven or eight months, she had written about Trump and Cruz, and she had written about the issues as you know," Martin said. "So her perspective was that both those guys had made really good progress on the issues, and yet she was still really assessing it all. So it's the week before Iowa, the Cruz people are amped up, and they're trying to force Phyllis to put a statement out. So I went to see Phyllis after this meeting, and she said, 'What do

you think I should do?’ I said, ‘What do you want to do?’ She said, ‘I don’t want to say anything.’ She said, ‘If I say something now, the Friday before Iowa, it’ll be all over Iowa.’ And in fact, her daughter ran a robo-dial into Iowa the Sunday of that weekend. And again Phyllis’s point is, again, ‘People are going to do what people are going to do, and I’m not going to sweat it. But I’m not going to have people force me into having to do anything.’ Roe in the middle of that called me and said, ‘Hey, I need to talk to you,’ and I said, ‘Hey, I’m in the middle of my weekend with the Eagles. I’ll call you Monday.’”

Martin says it’s clear to him looking back on it all.

“His response, I can picture it now, he said, ‘Ha,’” Martin said. “Because he knew I knew what they were doing. They were trying to get Phyllis to be the big story, ‘Phyllis Schlafly softens statements on Trump.’ The point is, she didn’t fall for it. Those guys all think I was the one [who made that happen], but [what really happened] is when I got to her house I said, ‘What do you want to do?’ She said, ‘I don’t want to put out a statement.’ So I said, ‘Then don’t put out a statement.’ Then she said, ‘It’s really getting people upset.’ Then I said, ‘Well, do what you want.’ But they had drafted a statement they wanted from her, and it read like a Cruz press release, and she said, ‘I’m not doing this.’ So for him [Roe] to say that he hasn’t talked to me, that’s just—again, I can just tell you, he’s from Missouri, I’m from Missouri. I talked to every campaign except for Jeb [Bush] all the way through, I talked to Carly [Fiorina], I actually didn’t talk to [Marco] Rubio much... but I talked to [Ben] Carson, Carly, I even talked to Jim Gilmore regularly.”

‘INTERNAL THINGS,’ NOT AN ‘EXTERNAL PRESIDENCY’

However, like Adams and Smith and all those on the side against Schlafly, Roe believes that this whole storyline does not appear to relate too much to the internal divisions at Eagle Forum. Instead, he thinks it more has to do with many of the Eagles’ views on Martin. The narrative those against Schlafly put forward is that Martin is the real problem, not Schlafly. Roe supported this point of view in his interview with Breitbart News.

“It’s sad to see an organization that’s been a leader in the conservative movement and truly an iconic person in Ms. Schlafly—that’s been a leader in the conservative movement for generations—it’s sad to see,” Roe said. “From my reading, I’ve not—I don’t know anything except for what I read. But I don’t know if it’s as much as strife between internal [forces] in an organization as it is a result of the presidential. There’s obviously a divide in who they all supported, but that’s not uncommon in presidential campaigns. At this level it’s uncommon, but there’s probably other factors at play than just the presidential. This looks like it’s beyond just who’s supporting whom for president because the group has also had kind things to say, and Ted has been an advocate of the organization and views Phyllis in high regard. So I think it’s more to do with internal things than external presidency. Until you called me yesterday, I’d not been paying hardly any attention to it and hadn’t heard about any of these much outside of what was being publicly reported about what was going on.”

Schlafly herself believes that presidential politics is at least one of the driving motives of those who have plotted against her inside Eagle Forum.

“Well, I don’t think that’s the main cause. I think that may be being used by some people because I think our organization is pretty well divided between Trump and Cruz,” Schlafly said when asked if the divide between Cruz and Trump is the reason behind this infighting. “We have a lot of people supporting Trump, and we have a lot of people supporting Cruz, and Cruz people had attempted to make an Eagle Forum endorsement a couple years ago, but I said we have free speech and anybody can endorse anyone she wants. I endorsed Trump when he came to St. Louis and gave that big event, and I did it because he endorsed the Republican platform, which has been the major focus of a lot of the work I’ve done in politics. The one we passed at the last convention is truly a great platform that’s right on all the issues—right on life, right on marriage, right on what I’m particularly interested in which is national sovereignty and military sovereignty. I don’t think it’s enough, I’m not satisfied with language like ‘a strong national defense.’ I feel that we’re stronger when we’re the best in the world, and I think that the world likes that too because our friends feel safe when we have military superiority.”

WEEKEND FROM HELL

Tensions flared even more Sunday night as Schlafly took two actions in the hours leading

up to Monday's telephone conference.

Schlafly sent a letter to Cori, McLarty, Curry, Smith, Adams and Kovar calling for them to resign their positions on the board effective immediately.

"I write this letter with a heavy heart," Schlafly wrote to her longtime friends in the short one page letter, obtained by Breitbart News. "For over a week now, I have tried to understand what you are doing and what you intend. Some of you have delayed returning my calls while others have not responded at all. Over the past few days I have heard different versions of what you intend with the board meeting tomorrow. First, it was a question about how we have operated and Eunie said she thought we needed outsiders at Eagle Forum. Next, a reporter told us Cathie is saying this is about planning the future. Finally, this morning Eunie said this is about my judgment on personnel. I don't know what the true plan is but I believe it is an attack on me and my work. I have fond memories of our work together and our friendships. I will cherish those. At this time, I ask you to resign immediately from the Board so that I may continue with Eagle Forum's important work."

[Phyllis Request for Resignations April 10, 2016.pdf](#) by [Wynn Marlow](#)



PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY
FOUNDER

EAGLE FORUM

Leading The Pro-Family Movement Since 1972

EDUCATION CENTER: 7800 BONHOMME AVE., ST. LOUIS, MO 63105, (314) 721-1213, fax: (314) 721-3373

CAPITOL HILL OFFICE: 316 PENNSYLVANIA AVE., S.E., WASHINGTON, D.C. 20003, (202) 544-0353, fax: (202) 547-6996

OPERATIONS CENTER: P.O. BOX 618, ALTON, IL 62002, (618) 462-5415, fax: (618) 462-8909, eagle@eagleforum.org

April 10, 2016

Dear Eunie, Shirley, Cathie, Rosina, Carolyn, and Anne,

I write this letter with a heavy heart.

For over a week now, I have tried to understand what you are doing and what you intend. Some of you have delayed returning my calls while others have not responded at all.

Over the past few days, I have heard different versions of what you intend with the special board meeting tomorrow. First, it was a question about how we have operated and Eunie said she thought we needed outsiders at Eagle Forum. Next, a reporter told us Cathie is saying this is about planning the future. Finally, this morning Eunie said that this is about my judgment on personnel. I don't know what is the true plan but I believe it is an attack on me and my work.

I have fond memories of our work together and our friendships. I will cherish those.

At this time, I ask you to resign immediately from the Board, so that I may continue with Eagle Forum's important work.

Faithfully,

The second move Schlafly made against the plotters was the hiring of legal counsel that ordered them to immediately cease and desist all activities related to this coup. The legal counsel's letter, sent on Sunday to all six, notified them that any actions they planned to take at the meeting on Monday would be beyond their legal authority and therefore void from the outset. Also, their call to a meeting—the official meeting notice—was as such “null and void.”

“Eagle Forum therefore demands that you immediately cease and desist any actions to move forward with that meeting,” the letter sent to all six, also obtained by Breitbart News, reads. “Eagle Forum further demands that you cease and desist all actions you are taking or may take that violate your fiduciary duties to Eagle Forum. Be advised that any actions you take in violation of your fiduciary duties to Eagle Forum will result in your being personally liable for any damages caused.”

The letter, from attorney Stephen R. Clark of the St. Louis-based Runnymede Law Group who also serves as the president of the St. Louis Federalist Society, went on to order the preservation of all documents by these rogue board members. It also noted that Eagle Forum will “consider taking legal action” against any of these people involved in this

action especially if they go public with statements that are untrue about what is going on inside the organization.

[ceaseanddesistletterfinal.pdf](#) by [Wynn Marlow](#)



Stephen R. Clark

April 10, 2016

Eunie Smith - [REDACTED]
Carolyn McLarty - [REDACTED]
Anne Cori - [REDACTED]
Rosina Kovar - [REDACTED]
Shirley Curry - [REDACTED]
Cathie Adams - [REDACTED]

Re: Legal Demand by Eagle Forum/Cease and Desist Letter

Dear Ms. Smith, Ms. McLarty, Ms. Cori, Ms. Kovar, Ms. Curry, and Ms. Adams:

Eagle Forum, through Phyllis Schlafly and Ed Martin, has retained our firm to represent it. We understand you have attempted to notice a meeting of the Board of Directors of Eagle Forum to take place by telephone on Monday, April 11, 2016 at 2:00 p.m. As further explained below, that meeting notice is null and void, and any actions you purport to take at that meeting are void *ab initio* and *ultra vires*.

Eagle Forum therefore demands that you immediately cease and desist any actions to move forward with that meeting. Eagle Forum further demands that you cease and desist all actions you are taking or may take that violate your fiduciary duties to Eagle Forum. Be advised that any actions you take in violation of your fiduciary duties to Eagle Forum will result in your being personally liable for any damages caused.

Please confirm in writing, by not later than 12:00 noon Central Daylight Time on April 11, that you will cease and desist any actions to move forward with that meeting. By the same time, please confirm in writing that you will not take any actions in violation of your fiduciary duties to Eagle Forum.

CASE OF THE MONDAYS

When the time came on Monday for the impromptu board meeting conference call, all sides were dug in. The board members were determined to remove Martin from his post. The new steps Schlafly took in the interim had escalated matters further. The rebels were not backing down—and they were moving forward with their runaway board meeting despite Schlafly's and her lawyers' warnings that doing so was not within their power.

On this conference call board meeting, they ran down a list of things they intended to accomplish. First, they passed a motion terminating Martin as the president of Eagle Forum. Then they moved forward with a motion to seize the bank accounts of Eagle Forum and then through other parts of their agenda. Schlafly blasted them in a statement shortly after the meeting.

"At 2 p.m. today, 6 directors of Eagle Forum met in an improper, unprecedented telephone meeting," Schlafly said in the statement, which was publicly distributed by Martin. "I objected to the meeting and at 2:11pm, I was muted from the call. The meeting was invalid under the Bylaws but the attendees purported to pass several motions to wrest control of the organization from me. They are attempting to seize access to our bank accounts, to terminate employees, and to install members of their own Gang of 6 to control the bank accounts and all of Eagle Forum. The members of their group are: Eunie Smith of Alabama, Anne Cori of Missouri, Cathie Adams of Texas, Rosina Kovar of Colorado, Shirley Curry of Tennessee, and Carolyn McLarty of Oklahoma. This kind of conduct will not stand and I will fight for Eagle Forum and I ask all men and women of good will to join me in this fight."

In response to that, the plotters against Schlafly blasted out a press release of their own that reported Phyllis Schlafly was on the call for the full meeting—implying that Schlafly was involved in their decisions and, somehow, supported them. Their release did not say she objected to everything they did with her organization.

"The Board of Eagle Forum, a 501(c)(4) corporation, held a Board meeting in accordance with and pursuant to the Eagle Forum By-Laws and Illinois State Law at 2 pm CDT on

April 11, 2016,” the release reads. “Pursuant to the By-Laws, Eagle Forum First Vice President, Eunie Smith, presided over the meeting. Eagle Forum Founder, Mrs. Phyllis Schlafly, the Chairman of the Board, was present during the entire meeting, including expressing herself on all seven votes. In Schlafly’s opening statement she said she has spent her life building Eagle Forum as a unique organization of volunteers. She also said that paid staff cannot order volunteers around.”

Martin told Breitbart News that this characterization of Schlafly’s involvement in this meeting was unfair and inaccurate.

“Under the law, you can listen and hear what’s going on and be present only for the person of objecting,” Martin said of what happened on the call. “This is why they’re cynical—they’re cynical and not telling the truth. Phyllis at the beginning of the meeting said, ‘Before the meeting begins, I would like to say the following: I object to this meeting taking place over the phone, we’ve always met in person, it’s outside of the bylaws, and I want to say this. I always had volunteers—we were always volunteer and we always worked together—so why this is happening, and I think this organization is too important and I object.’ Then the lawyer said she will be staying on the call, per her rights, to listen. And she could only participate, every single vote was 6-0 with an objection from Phyllis, and that was because under the law—and I said to her because I knew they were going to ask her, ‘Phyllis, they’re going to say you were there the whole time.’ And she said, ‘I’m staying to hear what they say about my organization.’”

Martin continued by noting that this conversation between himself and Schlafly happened in the presence of their lawyers, and that one lawyer recommended that they leave the meeting before they proceeded with their plans to decimate Eagle Forum and Schlafly’s mission. Schlafly, stubborn as ever, insisted on hearing what they had to say about her organization—the only reason why she stayed on the call.

“So I looked at the lawyers, and one lawyer had recommended we not stay. We’re legally entitled to, but he didn’t think we’d want to, but I said, ‘Listen, you don’t tell Phyllis [what to do]. When she wants to do something, that’s how it goes,’” Martin said. “And then they put out a press release on Phyllis Schlafly. Today there’s a rumor mill email saying that Phyllis is not mentally healthy which is, you know, an actual slur. Now, they’re spinning it saying she’s penalized for staying on the phone call where their purported actions were removing leadership, questioning Phyllis’ personnel decisions, trying to take the banks. I mean, it’s incredible stuff. And by the way, the breach of their fiduciary duty to the organization is significant, and they will be personally liable. Eunie [Smith] is sending emails all over the place, and she’s sending them to the wrong people, who are not employees, and she’s causing herself [legal trouble].”

‘THE LORD TAKES HER HOME’

Both Smith and Adams, in interviews on the Friday before the meeting, denied outright that the purpose for all of this was to remove Schlafly—and promised that there would be no such effort. Adams was particularly colorful with her allusions to Schlafly’s age, and it’s among these different interviews that the story about the reasoning for all of this among the so-called “Gang of 6” begins to change.

“You know, when you have a leader who is doing such a fabulous job for 50 years and is so capable and just so right on,” Adams told Breitbart News when asked to explain the purpose of calling the meeting. “There’s a couple things that happened. First of all, we get bored because the need for a board is so minimal with such a fine leader. And then hopefully she passes the baton and is preparing for retirement. Phyllis Schlafly is so brilliant and so capable she’ll never fully retire until the Lord takes her home, but when you have a person in that place—and, yes, it is likely that some things are going to be a little bit different than from what has been done in the past. So, we are very much entering that transition front with the woman that we absolutely love and adore.”

In a follow-up question, Breitbart News asked Adams directly if she meant that Schlafly was incapable of leading Eagle Forum because of her age. She said that’s not what she meant, but again repeated the line “until the Lord calls her home.”

“No, I’m not saying that at all. No, no. I’m just saying that there needs to be a transition in place for the future,” Adams said. “When you’re 91 years old, that’s something that Phyllis has made a very deliberate plan to pass on as much information to volunteers. This [Eagle

Forum] is Phyllis Schlafly-oriented from the beginning and all the way until the Lord calls her home. This is absolutely Phyllis Schlafly centered.”

Over the course of several questions and answers later in the interview, Adams repeatedly kept referring back to Phyllis Schlafly’s age—and that she didn’t want to leave anything to “chance,” and that Schlafly has shown more “frailty” in recent years. Below is a transcript of that section of the interview:

BREITBART NEWS NETWORK (BNN): “Since 1972, there has never been a special meeting called like this—of the board?”

ADAMS: “Well, Phyllis hasn’t been in this particular place before where she is preparing for the future of Eagle Forum even if she is not there. Phyllis Schlafly’s agenda is to do that. As the board, we feel responsible to come along her side and be a blessing to her. That is what this is all about. For anyone to spin otherwise, it’s like ‘oh my goodness. What is your motive?’”

BNN: “So this is for planning for the future and everything, but again why do it in the way that is ‘call a special meeting’ like this? Is there not a regular order way to do this rather than calling an emergency meeting?”

ADAMS: “Well, actually, board meetings being once a year, when they are going through this transition that Phyllis has initiated, it really does require a more than just once a year meeting. And I don’t know if I’ve even said this to you, but my father is 91, he’s the same age, and he lives with us. When he has the will to be drafted, or a change in his will, or whatever, we don’t wait for six months or whatever to take care of it because he wants it done sooner rather than later. We don’t know what the future holds; we have absolutely no idea the number of our days—only the Lord knows that. And so, it’s not an extreme measure to say that we want to meet more than once a year; and calling the bylaws requires three of the board members to do anything, so the three board members are the first vice president, the second vice president—and I’m the second vice president, by the way—and then a woman who was sitting at the table coming up with the name Eagle Forum when Phyllis Schlafly started the organization. The three of us, who absolutely love and adore and want everything done according to Phyllis’s will, should be accomplished and not to leave anything to chance. I think you don’t leave anything to chance. When we are responsible as board members, we just don’t want to leave it to chance. We want her will to be accomplished.”

BNN: “Ok, now every single one of you guys who called this—so, you, Eunie, Shirley, Rosina and Carolyn—are all Cruz supporters, right?”

ADAMS: “This is not about Cruz and Trump, but, yes, that is a fact. But that is not what this is about. That, of course, is something that we knew was a lift in calling this.”

BNN: “So, she’s 91. Why not do this when she was 75? Why not do this when she was 80? Why not do this when she was 85? Why not do this when she was 90? Why wait until now in the middle of a presidential election?”

ADAMS: “I think the difference is she was much more—at 75, Phyllis Schlafly was wearing me out, when I was a much younger age. It’s just now that we are seeing the need for being responsible for our duties as board members and as far as in a presidential election or whatever, it’s just—it’s not a presidential issue. There are needs, and just a timeframe of uncertainty that has culminated. It’s not presidential.”

BNN: “So what changed from when she was 90, or 85—this year—that you guys have to call for this? What has changed in her behavior or the way that she’s been leading the organization? What’s different this year?”

ADAMS: “There have been some changes over the past couple of years that we have as a board decided, so it’s time for us to revisit some of those and make sure we’re on the right track and make sure that we’re going in the right direction according to the mission that Phyllis has laid out. I assure you it has nothing in any way whatsoever to do with hurting Phyllis Schlafly. And, no, the intent is not—that is the nuttiest thing

in the world—to remove her from the board. That is just crazy.”

BNN: “Again, what I’m trying to get at here is: Is there something different about Phyllis this year than last year or the year before that or the year before that? I mean, she was in her high 80s and then 90?”

ADAMS: “Maybe some more frailty. I mean, she’s not traveling as much—she’s still traveling, she’s still doing well. I just think it’s not anything bad or emergency or anything like that, no. But there is more frailty than there was five years ago, 10 years ago. My father, who is even more mobile—still driving and so on—if he decides there needs to be a change of some sort, we don’t [delay]. We get it taken care of. We don’t know when the Lord is going to call him home. Maybe, in my own mind and my own heart, because my father lives with us, maybe that was part of my thinking. It maybe changed some of my thinking, made me more aware of a need to prepare for the future because of my own home and my own father moving in with us.”

After Adams stated that she didn’t intend to do anything to “hurt” Schlafly, Breitbart News asked: “If I’m understanding you correctly, you intend to support Phyllis remaining as the head of the organization? You keep saying that you don’t want to do anything to hurt her, but does that mean you want her to remain as the head of Eagle Forum—all of the different umbrellas of it?”

“Absolutely,” Adams replied. “Absolutely. It is the most cruel thing for anyone to intimate that someone would in any way whatsoever say that Eagle Forum is not yours. That is just unconscionable.”

MATRICIDE BY BOARD MEETING

But Schlafly’s own daughter Cori would make no such commitment when asked multiple times directly if there were plans at a forthcoming May 2 board meeting to remove Schlafly as the chair of the board.

Below is a transcript of that part of Cori’s half hour interview with Breitbart News:

BNN: “At that meeting, will there be an effort to remove any board members?”

CORI: “Well, we will find out what happens on that meeting.”

BNN: “OK.”

CORI: “I mean, it’s a board of directors with a lot interesting people, and we will take a vote, and we will abide by the bylaws.”

BNN: “And you’re not intending to remove your mother as chairman of the board at that meeting, are you—or?”

CORI [scoffs]: “I fully love how the scurrilous emails that were put out last week full of lies and innuendoes were intended to make this strange idea about a coup d’état. There is no coup d’état. Because what we have is we have a board of directors who are in charge of the hiring and firing of the paid president. And so that’s what we do. And then we discharge our duty of care for the organization.”

BNN: “OK, but again—you’re not confirming to me whether or not there’s going to be any effort to remove—“

CORI: “Well, we’ll just have to—you know what? That is in the future. We’ll have to have that board meeting.”

BNN: “OK, but can you tell us: Is Phyllis Schlafly going to be the chairman of the board of Eagle Forum at the end of this?”

CORI [laughs]: “Well, I think you’re attempting to put words in my mouth on something, and I have no interest in playing into this kind of gotcha questioning.”

BNN: “OK, I’m not trying to ask you a gotcha question.”

CORI: “But that’s what it sounds like, because I’ve already said that to talk speculative about future board meetings is not a good idea. So, then you’re trying to work around the edges then, to say ‘Well, will you do this or will you do that?’ Well, there’s no way around—I’m damned if I do and damned if I don’t in how I answer that question. So, I think the way that you have presented your question is not an acceptable way to present a question.”

BNN: “OK, moving forward here, is there anything else you can tell us about the upcoming board meeting?”

CORI: “We have an upcoming board meeting is what I can tell you.”

‘ANNE SEEMS TO HAVE JOINED THE OTHER SIDE’

In her interview with Breitbart News, Phyllis Schlafly said that she is deeply hurt by the fact that not only her longtime friends and board members are turning on her, but also her own daughter.

“Yes, it’s very hard,” she said when asked about her daughter Anne Cori’s support for the rebelling board members. “My sons are all very supportive of what I’m doing. Anne seems to have joined the other side. And I’ve not got any criticism for Anne, but she tries to tell me it’s all because of love for me that they’re doing what they’re doing. I kind of laugh.”

When read this quote from Schlafly over the phone in her interview with Breitbart News, Cori responded by saying: “I love my mother.”

After a long silent pause, Breitbart News followed up: “And are you guys doing what you’re doing out of love for Phyllis Schlafly?”

“Yes,” Cori replied.

Below is a transcript of what happened next:

BNN: “OK, and then that gets back to the whole point of why not respect her wishes? Again, she’s made it very clear what she wants.”

CORI: “We are doing this out of love for Phyllis Schlafly. And we feel strongly about it that this is the best. And there is no other guiding motive for our choices and votes yesterday other than our love and respect for Phyllis Schlafly.”

BNN: “OK, and why isn’t she able to make the decision for herself?”

CORI: “Well, you’ll have to ask her that. I mean, I’m not going to comment on what she might say to something because that’s speculative. I just know what my actions are, which are love. And I had a beautiful conversation with her last night.”

BNN: “And you just said though that you think that this is best for her, right?”

CORI: “Well, no, it’s best for Eagle Forum.”

BNN: “So, if you’re doing this out of love for her—and...”

CORI: “Well, yes, because Eagle Forum is her life’s work. And this is what’s best for Eagle Forum.”

BNN: “OK, and why doesn’t Phyllis Schlafly know what’s best for Eagle Forum?”

CORI: “She had a vote on the board. It’s majority rules because we live in a democracy, and we live by the rule of law.”

HEIR OR THERE?

Another reason for this battle, in addition to the presidential race divisions over Cruz and Trump, is internal strife at Eagle Forum over who should be Schlafly’s successor.

Cori, in many ways, believes she should be the one who follows in her mother's footsteps. But her mother, sources say, tried her out on the state level in Missouri politics close to home and wasn't impressed with her leadership skills. So, Schlafly set out on the search for a successor and considered former Rep. Michele Bachmann (R-MN) for some time, but ultimately decided upon Ed Martin.

"Well, I have said that, but I don't know who else would say that," she said when asked to confirm that Martin was her chosen successor. "I feel entitled to pick my own successor. Everybody knows that most of our people wanted Michele Bachmann, and I had endless conversations with her trying to work out an arrangement, and we never achieved that. So, I had to give up on that, and so then I found Ed, and Ed agrees with me on all the issues. He knows everybody in politics, so that was extremely helpful."

Cori confirmed multiple times during her interview that she's aware her mother wants Martin as her successor. So did Martin.

"Now look, Anne Cori—and this is a well known situation—was hired in a leadership role at Eagle Forum, and she was kind of not, it's not her life's work. She's never been active in conservative politics beyond the last few years," Martin told Breitbart News. "You know, she's Phyllis's daughter, and she has certain talents, but all I can say is Phyllis asked me to be her successor because she thought I had skills that would let me be able to keep the organization going and succeeding both in politics and the rest of it. Beyond that, that's sort of a Phyllis question. You won't get Phyllis Schlafly to say bad words about her family, but there came a moment—Look, when I became the president, Michele Bachmann made a run at the job; she wanted it. Anne Cori talked about [it]. And Phyllis said to her board that 'Ed is the kind of guy that has the combination of policy, experience and politics, and I want him to be my successor.' The board voted on it, and for 15 or 16 months it's been working that way. I don't know what more to say."

AMERICA'S IRON LADY FIGHTS BACK

Phyllis Schlafly's anti-feminist nature means she's scrappy, a hard-nosed fighter, and certainly doesn't play victim. It also means she won't go down without a fight.

"Of course, I've won all of my fights," Schlafly told Breitbart News when asked if she'll win this one too.

She is convinced she'll be back in the saddle before long and harbors no ill will toward those honest brokers throughout Eagle Forum's network who do genuinely support Cruz.

"I've built the best and most respected and most unusual organization," Schlafly said. "This is an organization of volunteers. A lot of these conservative organizations are based on money. They will have a smart guy at the top and a mailing list. We are an organization of volunteers. I am a volunteer—I do not take a salary out of Eagle Forum. All my state leaders are volunteers. It's a different ballgame to run an organization with people who are really all independent contractors that make their own decisions. Now, at one time, I don't know how many months ago that was, there were a dozen of them who decided to sign a paper endorsing Cruz. And I said that's alright; if they want to endorse Cruz that's okay. Free speech."

But there's no way she's backing down from her own endorsement of Donald Trump, and she bristles at any suggestion that it was the product of a "manipulation" from Martin or anyone else.

"I don't think Ed [Martin] knew about my endorsement until he read it in the paper," she said. "He had nothing to do with that. If you want to know why I endorsed Trump, read 'A Choice Not An Echo.' I've been fighting the kingmakers for, what is it, 40 years—since 1940 or whatever—Trump was the one willing to take on the kingmakers, and I didn't see anyone else who was doing that."

And what about the claims and allusions by some of her detractors that she's no longer able to lead her own organization?

"They've made all kinds of charges against me, but I think they're just all wrong," she said. "They've tried to say I'm not competent. That's why I'm doing about two live interviews a

day, which you have to be able to do that. I had my doctor write to some of them to deny the fact that I'm heavily medicated. I'm not at all. I'm taking the same three pills morning, noon and evening that I've been taking for about 20 years."

So what really provoked this attempted coup? Was it the Trump endorsement?

"I would say that it isn't the whole story, but it is certainly part of it, and they are using that as an excuse," Schlafly said when asked if this happened at least in part because of her endorsement of Trump.

"It's certainly part of it because a great many of my Eagles are for Cruz, and really the fight started when they distributed the list of Eagles who are supporting Cruz and acted like it was my list," she continued. "It confused people, and I did not approve that, but I did not speak out against that. I have never spoken out against Cruz—I've only said nice things about him."

She believes the actions of the rogue board members are all about who controls of the influential organization she founded.

"Part of it is some of them think they want to run Eagle Forum," she said. "They want to take it over. It's the best organization on the conservative side, and they'd like to control it."

Schlafly said they are using her endorsement of Trump as a tool to do that.

"Yes. Yes, I think the Trump fight is part of it," Schlafly said when asked if the Trump endorsement was a "mechanism" by which her detractors have aimed to take control of Eagle Forum. "I think a great number of our members are for Trump. They tell me all the time. And a great many are for Cruz. And I have said we believe in free speech, and individually you can endorse anybody you want. But I did object when they pretended it was Eagle Forum doing it."

Also, importantly, Schlafly specifically stated that she believes the Cruz campaign itself "could be" behind much of the actions against her internally at Eagle Forum.

One reason she gives for that belief is an internal contact list that was leaked to the Cruz campaign. In an article in World Net Daily, Martin pinned the leaked list on an unnamed Eagle Forum member who was also working for the Cruz campaign and passed on the list to them.

BNN: "Do you think that the Cruz campaign has had a hand in this as well? Do you think that part of this is retaliation—I would argue that Trump won Missouri because of you and your endorsement. And there's plenty of other places where you've made a demonstrable difference in this Republican presidential primary. I mean, do you think that part of this is retaliation by the Cruz campaign almost agitating them to do this?"

SCHLAFLY: "Well, that could be. That could be. They tried to make it look like Eagle Forum was endorsing Cruz. But Eagle Forum has not taken a position like that. And somebody leaked part of my calling list to the Cruz campaign. I know that because they called some of my best people and asked them to work for Cruz. The only way they could have gotten that calling list is getting it leaked by somebody who is not loyal to me."

It remains to be seen whether Schlafly and her daughter will patch up their relationship before it's too late, but at the end of her interview with Breitbart News Cori made clear she had a message for her mom: "I love my mother very much. I think that says it all."

Schlafly is frequently compared to Maggie Thatcher, another strong woman leader who led the world with President Ronald Reagan back in the 1980s, and now America's Iron Lady is turning her guns squarely on a possible contested Republican National Convention in Cleveland in July.

READ LETTER MAGGIE THATCHER WROTE TO PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY



“The thing that I’m particularly interested in is the issue that we’ve been so concerned about: The [Republican] National Convention,” Schlafly told Breitbart News, changing the conversation away from the internal strife at Eagle Forum literally on the second question of a 20 minute interview back to what her heart is focused on. “You know all of you press people are now predicting that nobody will get the 51 percent, so we will have an open convention [for] first time I guess since I don’t know what—1976? We want to be players. So I’ve encouraged our people to try to get elected as delegates, and we’ll meet you in Cleveland. We all want to go to Cleveland in the summer where it’s so hot and muggy.”

WATCH: PHYLLIS SCHLAFLY MAINTAINS SHE HAS CONTROL:



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