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Maine NOW Times (Spring 1993)

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National Organization for Women - Maine Chapter

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THE STATE BUDGET "as if people mattered"

The Governor has proposed a budget to meet the billion-dollar shortfall facing the state over the next two years. The Legislature's Appropriations Committee (see member listing inside) began hearings on this budget in February.

During his budget address, the Governor talked about personal responsibility. After reviewing the budget, it is clear that he has not met his responsibility to advance a realistic budget.

The consequences of this budget are callous and costly. It asks greater sacrifices from women and children already living below the poverty level, from low-income elderly people, and from people with mental illness. It effects each and every one of us even if we are not now poor, old, or ill.

The budget uses the language of defeat. It offers no hope for Maine people, either now or in the future. It offers no real solutions to problems, but merely passes the buck, shifting costs to local governments, property tax payers, and to future generations.

By calling the people effected by the budget cuts "special interests," the Governor distances himself from the human costs and consequences of his actions. Who he is really talking about are our parents, children, neighbors, friends, and, ultimately, us.

These proposed cuts may save a few immediate dollars on paper, but in the short and long run the people directly effected, and eventually all of us, pay dearly for more doctor and emergency room visits, hospital admissions, extended need for AFDC, more problem pregnancies, more children in need of special services in school...

It's time for the Governor (and our state legislators) to come face to face with the human costs and consequences of this budget.

Continued on page 2

FACING RACISM IN MAINE

(Original Feb. 13 Workshop Re-scheduled due to storm)

Sponsored by Maine NOW

Saturday, April 24, 1993

8:30am - 4:00 pm (Potluck Lunch)

Unitarian Universalist Church, Winthrop Street, Augusta

Workshop Leaders: Sheila Garrett and Helen Brown

If you aren't already registered, please do so.

Pre-registration is required. Sliding scale fee \$0 to \$35, suggested minimum \$10. Call Cynthia Phinney 778-9506.



M A I N E

N O W

T I M E S

SPRING 1993

**Someday, maybe,
there will exist
a well-informed,
well-considered and
yet fervent
public conviction
that the most deadly
of all possible sins
is the mutilation
of a child's spirit.**

Erik Erikson

a few PROPOSED BUDGET CUTS

AFDC cuts:

Cuts In The Maximum Monthly Benefit

	2 people (adult & child)	3 people	4 people
Present Maximum:	\$337	\$453	\$569
Proposed Maximum:	\$310	\$416	\$522

Impact: Evictions and inability to meet basic needs.

Eliminate "gap" Payment: About 13,000 families will also lose an additional "gap" allowance from earnings or child support of up to \$75 for a family of two; \$100 family of three; \$126 family of four. **Impact:** Eliminates work incentive by requiring a dollar reduction in a family's grant amount for each dollar of earnings. It's also a disincentive for absentee parents to pay child support, since the state, not the children, would receive the support. 1100 families would lose their benefits entirely.

Additional children: No increase in grant to cover birth of additional children to an AFDC family.

Impact: No income to support newborn child.

MAINE ALREADY HAS THE LOWEST AFDC BENEFITS IN NEW ENGLAND.

MEDICAID cuts:

Limit Prescription Drugs: Two prescriptions per month per recipient. Current average recipient uses 3-4 per month. Children, and persons in hospitals, nursing homes, or boarding homes are exempt. **Impact:** Increased illness and costs due to hospitalization and nursing home placements.

Eligibility Limits for Pregnant Women and Children: Reduce limits from 185% to 133% of Federal poverty guidelines. **Impact:** 1,575 pregnant women and 1,200 newborns would lose medical coverage; decrease in prenatal care; increase danger of problem pregnancies and infants with very expensive medical conditions.

Also cuts or elimination of programs that effect elderly and disabled persons having very high medical expenses and those in nursing homes; all adult dental service; medical eye care; medical transportation services; substance abuse and mental health treatment; and on and on.

OTHER PROGRAM cuts:

Maine Health Program: Eliminate. **Impact:** 2,000 low-income (not Medicaid eligible) adults and 6,600 children as well as 2,500 new people scheduled for March through matching Federal grant would lose medical assistance. More hospital and emergency room charity care costs.

Free (Low Cost) Drugs for Maine Elderly: Limits the number of prescriptions for life-sustaining drugs to two per month. **Impact:** Forces much more costly nursing home and hospital stays.

Home-Based Care: Reduces money to home-based care programs by \$1 million. **Impact:** Increased admissions to congregate or nursing home facilities. Average cost of home-based care per client in 1991 was \$4,812; nursing home care was \$28,470.

General Assistance: Repeal statutory requirements for municipalities to provide assistance to people in need. In 1992, an average of 11,760 individuals per month received help, mostly with rent costing the state \$17.6M. **Impact:** More homelessness and deaths due to exposure! There are only 600 shelter beds statewide.

Bureau of Children with Special Needs: Reduce contracts to 6 mental health centers who serve children and adolescents and their families with mental illness. **Impact:** 1,000 children and their families would lose vital services.

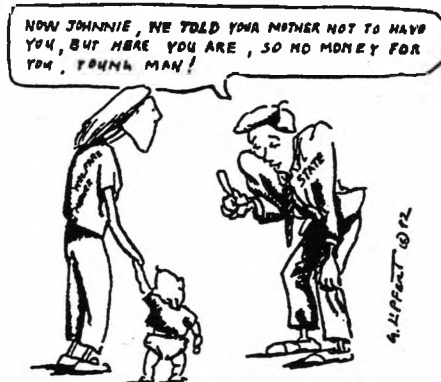
Community Mental Health-AMHI Consent Decree: Eliminate services to 1,200-1,500 consent decree people (removed from AMHI & currently serviced by CMH Clinics.) **Impact:** More emergency room visits, hospital admissions....

Family Planning: Funding cuts. **Impact:** 9,000 low-income women will lose contraceptive and primary prevention services such as breast and cervical cancer screening. \$1 in family planning saves \$4.40 in social welfare and nutritional costs in the long run. Maine has the 3rd highest cervical cancer mortality rate in the U.S.

Pine Tree Legal Assistance: 66% funding cuts. **Impact:** Reduced legal services to low-income people. (This group analyzes the budget for its human impact and is a major opposition to cuts effecting low-income people.)

State Employees: 570 layoffs. 10-15% wage reduction for supervisors. Reduced retirement benefits and increased employees contribution. Increased employees share of health-care premiums. **Impact:** Lowers employee morale and work performance due to stress and uncertainty. They have already experienced pay cuts, staff cuts, furlough days, and increased work loads.

Domestic Violence Projects: Reduced funding. **Impact:** Reduces the amount of services the 9 statewide domestic violence projects can provide to battered women and their children. Already provide shelter to fewer people because average stay has increased due to elimination of other support services. (One project has seen a 25% increase in demand for services. Average shelter stay has increased from 2 weeks to 3-1/2 weeks.)



Environmental Programs: Cuts in environmental protection law enforcement; licensing agencies staff; loss of state matching funds for air, water and lake programs; environmental damage prevention; loss of information collection services (GIS, Geological survey, mapping). **Impact:** Reduced voluntary compliance in enviro. protection; longer delays in permit licensing; loss of federal matching grant; increased costs controlling disasters; reduced ability to manage natural resources.

Education: Reduce funds for K-12 by \$487M for '94/'95. **Impact:** Schools have already taken cuts. Further cuts will jeopardize the quality of education (eg. increased class size, inability to update materials/books) OR increase local property taxes. (Technical colleges and Univ. of Maine budget cuts are also proposed.)

Additional Revenue

Much of the debate will focus on how much of a role, if any, additional revenues should play in solving this crisis. The \$320M tax package enacted in '91 as a temporary measure to help balance the '90/'91 budget (penny sales tax & corporate and personal income tax surcharge) is due to expire in June.

Given the very slow progress of the economic recovery and our continuing budget difficulties, many argue that additional revenues are needed in order to prevent painful cuts to those who can least afford it. Many people are losing their jobs everyday and it is extremely difficult (and frustrating) to find new ones. It makes no sense to allow \$320 million in taxes to expire when we are facing a billion-dollar shortfall and people are more desperate for work to survive.

Some **POTENTIAL** new sources of revenue that could be utilized to help balance the budget for FY '94 & '95.

- Raise top individual income tax from 8-1/2% to 10%.
- Restructure corporate income tax to make more progressive and increase by 25%.
- Extend sales tax to miscellaneous professional services (eg. accounting, lawyers) not medical.
- Extend sales tax to misc. business services (eg. copying, printing, advertising)
- Extend sales tax to amusements, movies & recreation
- Repeal sales tax exemption on electricity in manufacturing
- Extend sales tax to personal services (eg. barbers, cleaners)
- Raise cigarette tax by 13 cents/pack
- Increase alcohol beverage tax by 10%
- Raise sales tax from 5 cents to 6 cents

It is imperative that legislators and advocates work together for a fair and common sense solution. We have to face the painful fact that what we need today we must pay for today, not on the credit of the future and not by asking local government to solve our problems for us.

Taking income from poor women and children who do not now have enough to pay the rent or to provide an adequate diet is not fair. Cutting family planning or maintenance drugs for Medicaid recipients has significant future costs and does not make sense.

It is a matter of choice:

Do we choose quality education that teaches our children to read or tax exemptions for newspapers and magazines?

Do we continue to provide tax credits to out of state corporations without job guarantees for Maine people, or do we provide property tax relief for Maine families?

Do we provide for the basic care our children & elderly need, or do we allow the tax package of '91 to expire?

It is up to **YOU** to deliver the "fair budget" message to our legislators.

ACTION IDEAS

WRITE/CALL your state legislators with a "fair budget" message. This is especially critical if they are members of the Appropriations Committee.

ATTEND an Appropriation Committee hearing. See how the process works. Talk to Legislators.

Make your INCOME TAX CHECK payable to the Department of Human Services, Education, Conservation etc. Send a letter explaining your desire to support the funding of these programs (AFDC, Medicaid, schools, family planning etc.) If you get an income tax refund, and can afford it, tell the state to keep \$10 or more to use for programs at risk. **Whether you make a payment or get a refund, send a copy of your letter of explanation to the Governor, your legislators, and the chairs of the Appropriations Committee.** It will blow their minds and send a powerful message!

WRITE letters-to-the-editor to your local paper. Talk about why these cuts are not really cost effective. They will shift the cost to local government (ie. property taxes) & increase future state expenditure.

SPREAD THE WORD: Talk to neighbors, friends, relatives, co-workers. Share your knowledge.

POSSIBLE PUBLIC ACTION AT THE STATE HOUSE AROUND APRIL 15.

IF YOU WANT TO BE ON A SPECIAL PHONE TREE FOR BUDGET ISSUES, CALL US: VAL 873-3632 OR CHRIS 873-0878.

This article was written using resources provided by the Taxpayers For a Fair Budget Coalition of which Maine NOW is a member. Special thanks to Fred Pease, Coalition spokesperson, and to Chris Hasteed, Maine Women's Lobby Board Member.

For Legislative Information:
Legislative Information: 287-1692
updates on bills
Document Room: 287-1408
copies of bills

To contact your legislators:
Senate: 1-800-423-6900,
State House Station #3
Augusta, ME 04333

House: 1-800-423-2900
State House Station #2
Augusta, ME 04333

**Don't know your legislators?
Call your town office!**

First, a brief update on the supplemental budget vote. The good news is that the public calls and letters to the legislators did help!!! The Appropriations Committee had originally voted to make serious cuts in AFDC, elderly, prescription drugs, and nursing homes. Due to the public outcry and the help of some determined, compassionate legislators the original cuts have been tempered. The AFDC basic benefit was cut 4% (proposed 8%) and "gap" payment (outside income from work or child support) and housing allowances continue for now. Cuts in mental health funding, originally \$750,000, were reduced to \$250,000. Work begins on the biennial budget (the upcoming two years) so please contact your legislators. They need to hear from you. It does make a difference. (see pg.2-3)

KEEP INFORMED

The first call you should make is to Legislative Information listed above. They will give you: 1) "up to the minute" status on legislation; 2) the Legislative Document Number (LD#); and 3) dates for public hearings, committee work sessions and House & Senate votes. Refer to the L.D. # when expressing your opinion to your legislator and when you ask for information.

Public hearings are a critical time to either drive to Augusta to observe, testify or to submit written testimony. You should bring 16 copies for the committee. The public hearing is followed by work sessions then the bill will make its way to the Legislature for a vote.

It's critical to contact your legislators before a bill appears on the floor for a vote. Maine is a small state.

Senators and House members do receive the messages you send them. They do respond to those messages and do care about their constituents' opinions.

The following is a list of legislation that WLAC (Women's Legislative Agenda Coalition) is considering this session. These items have not been officially approved at press time. The WLAC agenda will come to a final vote on March 9. NOW is a member of this coalition. If you have questions or concerns please feel free to contact me at home: 873-3632.

Parenting Education Bill-Sponsor: Maine Home Economics Assn. Promotes parenting classes for high school students. Still being drafted. No L.D. # yet.

An Act to Restore Funds to Maine Human Rights Commission-Sponsor: Maine Women's Lobby. Still being drafted. Funding for the Commission has been severely cut in recent years. Individual's human rights are being violated due to a lack of staff and delays in the grievances process.

Another bill sponsored by the Maine Women's Lobby assures **safe work environment** in competitive contracts with state agencies. Still being drafted. Businesses who contract with the state must have sexual harassment policies in place.

Maine State Nursing Association is sponsoring two bills regarding the **nursing profession**. These relate to classification of nursing certification and the establishment of two entry levels into nursing. Still being drafted. If you have questions/concerns call the MSNA.

Unlawful Sexual Contact (making it a Class B Felony). Possible sponsor: Maine Coalition Against Rape. Not drafted.

L.D. 246 An Act to Prevent Discrimination-Sponsor: Maine Lesbian/Gay Political Alliance. Referred to the Judiciary Committee for **public hearing on March 24, 1:00pm, Augusta Civic Center. BE THERE!!!** (see p.5)

Maine AIDS Alliance has legislation regarding **prescription requirements for needles**.

L.D. 318 An Act to Preserve Reproductive Privacy in Maine-Sponsor: Maine Choice Coalition. The Family Planning Association and Planned Parenthood will take the lead on this bill. (see insert)

An Act To Provide Family Security Through Quality, Affordable Health Care-submitted by Senator Dale McCormick and Rep. Charlene Rydell, who are eager to speak to people/groups about this bill. Leave a message on the Senate toll-free #.(see p.7)

Displaced Homemakers will be working on legislation on **Home Based Health Care**. Not drafted.

Maine Association of Interdependent Neighborhoods is working on **welfare reform**, allowing more earnings before losing welfare benefits. Not drafted yet.

Child Abuse & Neglect Councils are working on legislation to update and tighten wording supporting the concept of **Prevention as Indispensable**. Not drafted yet.

Other bills of interest:

Stalking Bill- L.D.416. Referred to Judiciary Committee for a public hearing.

L.D. 280 An Act To Amend the Child Protection Laws. Raises the level of proof (makes it more difficult to prove abuse) in child protection proceedings from "a preponderance of the evidence" to "beyond a reasonable doubt."

Don't wait for the next *Maine NOW Times* for updates on these bills. Many have not been drafted yet, but the process is "rolling along." The official Statutory Adjournment Day is June 16. Once pieces have been drafted and referred to a specific committee things happen fast. It is critical to stay alert and call the information number to get updates. Contact your legislators throughout the process and get your friends and family to do likewise. This is a democracy which means everyone needs to be involved. It works best when it works "from the bottom up." Legislators need information from all sources, especially their constituency, if they are to make the proper decisions.

COMMITTEE LIST PAGE 8

AN ACT TO PROVIDE EQUAL ACCESS MEDICAID FUNDING FOR ABORTIONS

AT PRESS TIME, THIS BILL, PROMOTED BY MAINE NOW, HAS NOT BEEN PRINTED. THE SPONSOR OF THE BILL IS REPRESENTATIVE DON GEAN (D-ALFRED). A FEW OTHER LEGISLATORS EXPRESSED AN INTEREST IN BEING CO-SPONSORS.

REP. GEAN AND MAINE NOW BOARD MEMBERS ARE SURVEYING LEGISLATORS ABOUT THE BILL TO FIND CO-SPONSORS AND TO ASSESS THE LEVEL OF SUPPORT. FEEDBACK HAS NOT BEEN OVERWHELMINGLY POSITIVE DUE TO TWO CONCERNS: 1) FEAR OF NEGATIVE EFFECTS ON THE REPRODUCTIVE PRIVACY ACT AND 2) UNWILLINGNESS TO CONSIDER ANY NEW PROGRAMS REQUIRING FUNDING DUE TO THE CURRENT BUDGET CRISIS.

WHEN THE BILL IS FINALLY PRINTED, WE WILL WORK WITH REP. GEAN TO ACCESS THE CURRENT SITUATION AND DECIDE ON AN APPROPRIATE COURSE OF ACTION. IF WE DECIDE **NOT** TO GO FORWARD WITH THE BILL, WE WILL STILL USE THE OPPORTUNITY TO EDUCATE LEGISLATORS AND THE PUBLIC ON WHY FUNDING IS CRUCIAL. **IF WE DECIDE TO GO FULL-STEAM-AHEAD, WE WILL NEED YOU TO MAKE IT HAPPEN! IF YOU CAN ORGANIZE, PHONEBANK, GIVE TESTIMONY, ATTEND THE HEARING, WRITE LETTERS-TO-THE-EDITOR ETC.** CALL CHRIS 873-0878, JOANNE 989-3306, OR MERRIE 874-2899.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT SPEAKING OUT

An item of special interest...In February, the Judiciary Committee held a public hearing to admit Peter Murray of Portland to the Maine Supreme Court. His confirmation was denied thanks to the courage of five women who made public testimony regarding sexual harassment. It would be wonderful to thank those women for their courage. Write to them in c/o of Virgil Roseman, Senate Majority Office, State House, Sta.3, Augusta 04333. The Judiciary Committee should be commended for their honorable vote. On "the down side," the Governor's Legal Counsel played a particularly distasteful role in this story. He harassed these women, calling them repeatedly before the hearing and showing up, unannounced, on the doorstep of one woman at 8:00pm the evening before she was due to testify. The Governor's office should be notified that this is totally unacceptable behavior.

BE A "GRASS ROOT"

Be part of Maine NOW's grassroots lobbying/action network. "Grass roots" will contact legislators on important bills and will be help spread the word about ACTIONS (eg. rallies, marches, lobby days, pro-choice voter identification etc.).

You can be part of the network by:

1) **Being a District Coordinator.** You would be at the top of the phone tree: a) to activate members to lobby their local state legislators prior to an important vote, and b) to get the word out on ACTIONS. Please fill out the District Coordinator form if you can help.

2) **Helping us identify your legislative district.** We identify the legislative district of each NOW member with their address. However, we cannot do this if you have a post office box, RR, RFD or if you live in a town different from that of your mailing address. Please help us out by filling out the "Address Clarification" form.

DISTRICT COORDINATOR FORM

- ☐ YES, I will be a District Coordinator.
☐ I want to know more about being a District Coordinator.
☐ I WANT TO BE PART OF THE PHONE TREE.
PLEASE PRINT

Name _____

Mailing address _____

Street address (if different from mailing) _____

Town _____ Zip _____

Phone numbers (day) _____ (evening) _____

House district # _____ Senate district # _____

(OR names of State Representative and Senator, if known.)

ADDRESS CLARIFICATION FORM

Please fill out and return this form if your mailing address is a post office box, RR, RFD, or if you live in a town different from your mailing address.

PLEASE PRINT

Name _____

Mailing address _____

Street/Residence address _____

Town _____ Zip _____

Phone numbers (day) _____ (evening) _____

House district # _____ Senate District # _____

(OR names of State Representative & Senator, if known.)

Mail your form(s) to:
 Maine NOW, c/o Chris Rusnov, 11 Bolduc St.,
 Winslow, ME 04901 Questions, call 873-0878.



L.D. 246

GOOD NEWS! We're going to pass the human rights bill in the Maine Legislature **THIS YEAR!** Join in this campaign! The ML/GPA and the Maine Civil Liberties Union are taking the lead on this bill.

If you want to be active call
Maine Lesbian/Gay Political
Action contacts:

Augusta, Judy Edgerly 626-9309
Bangor, Jim Martin 990-3420
Portland, Karen Geraghty 761-8376
Washington/Aroostook,
Dick Dickinson 448-3262

The campaign to pass the Maine state bill to end discrimination against lesbians and gays has never faced such an active and organized opposition. The religious right has mobilized across the nation to beat down any progress we've made. Maine's religious fundamentalists just lost the fight in Portland and now they're hopping mad. Just look at the letters-to-the-editor over the Lewiston ordinance--they're running 10 to 1 against us!

There are two big reasons they're so far ahead. 1) National groups now lead their fight. 2) They turn weekly church services into work sessions and their churches into a vast, organized network for action. We have never before seen a political machine like this in Maine. And it is aimed squarely at lesbians and gay men.

This may at first sound exaggerated or paranoid to you. Not after you look closely at the battle in Lewiston. The opposition is already organized into five separate groups of evangelicals and Catholics. Within days of the ordinance's passage, they mounted a citywide, door-to-door campaign.

The vote on our bill, L.D. 246, is less than two months away. We do not have a single minute to lose.

**EVERYONE OF US
absolutely, positively
HAS to Do something
to help NOW.**

ACT NOW

Sit right down and write some letters. Send a letter to your local newspaper, then copy it and send it to your State Senator and Representative. Next week, do it again. Ask your friends and family to write too. Invite everybody over for a pot-luck and have a letter writing party!!! If you don't know your legislators' names, just call your town office, they'll be glad to help you.



BUSES WILL LEAVE FROM MAINE:
PORTLAND LATE ON FRIDAY, APRIL 23, OR LATE ON SATURDAY, APRIL 24, ARRIVING BACK IN MAINE AT 2 AM ON MONDAY, APRIL 26. ROUND-TRIP TICKET COST IS \$65, WITH A \$20 DEPOSIT REQUIRED. THE **BANGOR** BUS WILL LEAVE ON THURS. AND RETURN ON MONDAY.

CAR POOLS AND SPECIAL TRAINS (\$150) ARE ALSO BEING ARRANGED.

For all travel or march info:
MMOWD, P.O. BOX 11502,
PORTLAND, ME 04104 OR
CALL 871-0432.

What Will The ACT DO?

Makes all forms of discrimination illegal--you can not be fired from a job, evicted, denied a loan or turned away from a restaurant or hotel if you are, or someone just thinks you are, homosexual, bisexual or even heterosexual.

Does Maine Have Any Discrimination?

YES. Anti-gay beatings and harassments are on the rise. Victims are afraid to press charges for fear of being evicted or fired. 1986 Maine Civil Liberties Union study of gay men and lesbians found: 46% have been fired or have experienced employment discrimination, 28% evicted or denied housing, 89% suffered harassment or violence.

Will this ACT Endorse Homosexuality?

NO. It won't grant new rights or legalize anything. It will only provide the same protections that already exist based on age, sex, race, marital status, disability, religious conviction, and national origin.

Does the ACT Restrict Religious Organizations?

NO. It exempts all religious organizations, thereby guaranteeing all denominations their right to follow their own beliefs. (Still, many religious organizations want every individual to have the "special right" to discriminate against gays and lesbians in the public sector, too.)

What the Act Will NOT Do.

It does not grant marital rights, not establish gay/lesbian adoptions, not create affirmative action, not require the teaching of homosexuality in schools, not legalize criminal activity such as prostitution or child molestation.

HEALTH CARE IN MAINE

In 1988, Consumers for Affordable Health Care (CAHC) a statewide coalition of consumer organizations, businesses, health care providers and labor organizations was organized. Maine NOW is a member of the coalition whose stated purpose is to preserve existing health programs in the state of Maine and to develop new ones; to develop a state wide universal single payer health care program and to plug into the national level health care debate. Successful legislation endorsed by CAHC with Maine NOW's support includes:

- * **1989 Maine Health Program** covers 8500 adults and children not covered by employer; income is too low to purchase private coverage; or working poor who do not qualify for Medicaid coverage
- * **1990 Continuity of Health Insurance Coverage Law** prohibits group insurers from denying coverage to businesses and workers with pre-existing conditions. Known as community rating.
- * **1991 An Act to Study the Feasibility of a Statewide Universal Health Plan in Maine.**
- * **1992 Small Business Affordable Health Insurance Law** requires small group insurers to guarantee, offer & renew coverage and prohibits higher rates on the basis of age, health status, sex, or industry.

Our present efforts for a statewide universal health care plan have included conducting workshops, providing testimony for legislative committees and developing a model plan. CAHC's model plan is built on the following five points:

Access to comprehensive health insurance to all Maine citizens

Cost controls on health items, services and drugs

Administration by one non-profit publically accountable agency.

Broad-based, equitable financing by individuals and businesses.

Freedom to choose provider in Maine and when traveling out of state.

Proposed legislation for the 1993 session (described below) is in the process of committee re-drafting. CAHC has reviewed the original version and found it addresses the above five points. How-

ever, the effectiveness of cost controls will need closer evaluation since the bill assumes multiple insurers and compromises on the amount of administrative overhead allowed. Obtain your own copy of the bill by calling 287-1408. What do you think? Talk to Sen. McCormick and Rep. Rydell, the legislative sponsors, to get more information and to share your ideas.

AN ACT TO PROVIDE FAMILY SECURITY THROUGH QUALITY, AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE

by Mary Garvey Donnelly, Maine NOW representative to Consumers for Affordable Health Care coalition. If you have questions or want to become active on this issue, call Mary at 729-5843. Legislative sponsors of the bill are Rep. Charleen Rydell-Brunswick and Sen. Dale McCormick-Monmouth.

OVERVIEW

The Family Security Act will make comprehensive health care a right of citizenship and accessible to everyone whether working or not. The proposed plan will be managed by a newly created Maine Health Agency, who will collect premiums and set spending and price limits for providers and hospitals. The Maine Health Agency will act as trustees of a Maine Health Fund and will be the single payer to providers and hospitals.

BENEFITS

The plan covers all medically necessary in-patient and out-patient hospital services, doctors visits, laboratory services, home health services for acute and chronic illnesses, rehabilitation services, prescription drugs, mental health, dental, vision, medical supplies and hospital care. Long-term care will be studied and initiated by 1995.

AFFORDABILITY

Businesses and individuals will pay wage-based premiums to the Maine Health Fund. Taxes on unearned income will also be collected for the Maine Health Fund. Fairness adjustments for low-wage earners and employers will be created.

MULTI-PROVIDERS

Individuals will choose hospital, doctor or other health provider services through a selection of plans. The choices will be an open plan (your current doctor) or any health maintenance organization (HMO) or preferred provider organization (PPO) that meets system criteria for services and price.

COST CONTROLS

Expenditure targets will be set each year for hospitals and providers by the Maine Health Agency to bring medical inflation in line with general inflation and the Maine wage index. Emphasis is on primary and preventive care.

SAVINGS

The Maine Health Agency, a publicly accountable non-profit agency, will save 577 million dollars by minimizing insurance paper work and bureaucracy.

The Maine Health Agency will collect and analyze health data to improve quality of care, reduce costs and balance the allocation of health resources to people living in rural Maine.

Federally funded programs will be included in the Maine Health Plan assuming waivers are received from the federal government. The federal programs include Medicaid, Medicare, Togus, Champus, Rural Health Clinics and Indian Health Services.

GENDER APARTHEID ON A GLOBAL SCALE

Ambassador Dessima M. Williams, who served as the head of the delegation to the Organization of American States and as Ambassador to the United Nations from Grenada from 1979 to 1983, will speak **Saturday, April 24, at 8 p.m. UMA campus. Admission is FREE.** A dessert and coffee reception will precede the lecture at 7 p.m. A \$10 donation will benefit the Brandeis University Grenada Project.

Ambassador Williams contends that power and wealth in the United States and throughout the world is controlled by institutions which foster inequality based not only on race, class, and nationality but also on gender. Apartheid (legalized inequality) of the sexes is generally viewed and defended by public and private policy-makers as an acceptable and normal condition. Her goal is "a holistic re-alignment of wealth and power" throughout the "developed" as well as "developing" societies.

Ambassador Williams is currently the Jacob Ziskind Visiting Professor of Sociology at Brandeis University in Waltham, MA. She is directing the Brandeis University Grenada Project in which students from a number of colleges and universities during the summer of 1993 will be obtaining an oral history of the last fifteen years from women in Grenada. It was almost 15 years ago that the people's revolution gained power in Grenada and 10 years ago this coming October that the prime minister was assassinated and the United States invaded the island.

For further information or tickets to the reception please contact Burt or Gladys Richardson, RFD 3, Box 9, Winthrop, ME 04364, Tel. 377-2114.

a presentation by
AMBASSADOR DESSIMA M. WILLIAMS

WOMEN TODAY: FROM GENDER APARTHEID TO EMPOWERMENT

SATURDAY, APRIL 24, 1993 - 8 pm.

**JEWETT HALL AUDITORIUM UNIV. OF MAINE AT AUGUSTA
Admission is FREE and OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

.....
DESSERT AND COFFEE RECEPTION

JEWETT HALL GALLERY

7 p.m. PRECEDING PROGRAM

**Reception donation of \$10 requested
for Brandeis University Grenada Project**

For information or tickets to the reception contact
Burt or Gladys Richardson, RFD 3 Box 9, Winthrop, 04364, Tel. 377-2114
Co-sponsored by Maine NOW.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEES

APPROPRIATIONS AND FINANCIAL AFFAIRS

Senators:

Michael Pearson, D-
Penobscot, Chair
Bonnie Titcomb, D-Cumberland
Ruth Foster, R-Hancock

Representatives:

Lorraine Chonko, D-
Topsham, Chair
Roger Pouliot, D-Lewiston
Donnell Carroll, D-Gray
Michael Michaud, D-
East Millinocket
Charlene Rydell, D-Brunswick
Clyde Hichborn, D-Howland
George Kerr, D-Old Orchard Beach
Judith Foss, R-Yarmouth
Mary MacBride, R-Presque Isle
Gary Reed, R-Falmouth

This committee hears or has the last word on all bills involving money. They need to be reminded of the "human face" of the budget.

JUDICIARY

Senators:

Gerard Conley, Jr., D-Cumberland, Chair
Georgette Berube, D-Androscoggin
Dana Hanley, R-Oxford

Representatives:

Constance Cote, D-Auburn
Susan Farnsworth, D-Hallowell
Mary Cathcart, D-Orono
Andrew Ketterer, D-Madison
Edward Caron, Jr., D-Biddeford
Sean Faircloth, D-Bangor
Jane Saxl, D-Bangor
David Ott, R-York
Sumner Lipman, R-Augusta
Debra Plowman, R-Hampden

This committee will hear the all important Maine Reproductive Privacy Act, The Act To End Discrimination (civil rights bill), and the anti-choice bills (24 hour waiting period and parental consent).

Check the bills in our Legislative Update and throughout the newsletter. Write to the legislators on the committee hearing a bill that is important to you. This is especially necessary if you live in their district. Don't wait. ACT TODAY!

If you want a complete list of legislative committees ask your state legislators, go to a local library, or call Chris 873-0878.

THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE - TOO IMPORTANT TO LOSE

L.D. 318 An Act To Preserve Reproductive Privacy in Maine had a public hearing on March 8. Votes in the Maine House and Senate will take place any time now. **Don't allow the election of a pro-choice president lull you into complacency. ACT TODAY TO PRESERVE REPRODUCTIVE PRIVACY!**

WHAT THE BILL WILL DO.

- * Preserve current Maine law regarding reproductive choices in Maine.
- * Eliminates the Maine law requiring a 48 hour waiting period, currently under court injunction.
- * Removes from the books a 1979 parental notification law which was effectively repealed when the legislature passed Maine's 1989 adult involvement law.

The Supreme Court, in the Pennsylvania Casey decision, opened the door to states to pass restrictive legislation that harms the health and well-being of women and serve no other purpose but to obstruct a woman's right to make this personal decision with her family and doctor.

THE BILL INCLUDES

- * Provisions for **informed consent**;
- * Retains current law that requires responsible **adult involvement for minors**;
- * Allows only **licensed physicians** to perform these procedures;
- * Gives physicians and healthcare workers the right to refuse to perform or assist in providing abortion services if they have religious objections (**conscience clause**); and
- * Maintains current **restrictions on post viability abortions**, allowing them only when the life or health of the woman is endangered. (91% of abortions in Maine are performed in the first trimester)

ACTION ALERT

The Judiciary committee vote is impending. It will be followed soon by a vote in the House & Senate! Contact your legislators ASAP! Quick Action needed!

There are also two anti-choice bills this session meant solely to obstruct access to abortion - a 24 hour waiting period and parental consent.

CALL YOUR STATE LEGISLATORS

ASK THEM TO VOTE FOR L.D. 318. WITH NO AMENDMENTS

Call your town office, if you don't know who your legislators are.

TOLL FREE STATE HOUSE NUMBERS
LEAVE A SIMPLE MESSAGE ASKING FOR THEIR SUPPORT.
Rep. 1-800-423-2900 Senator. 1-800-423-6900

WRITE THEM TOO. BOTH IS BEST.

This is especially important if your legislator is on the Judiciary Committee.

WRITE LETTERS-TO-THE-EDITOR TO YOUR LOCAL PAPER ON THE FACTS OF THE BILL.

THIS IS AN ESSENTIAL WAY TO EDUCATE THE PUBLIC ON THE FACTS OF THE BILL.
THE OPPOSITION IS SPREADING BOLD-FACED LIES ABOUT THE BILL.

SPREAD THE WORD...SPREAD THE WORD...SPREAD THE WORD

SHARE THE FACTS OF THE BILL WITH YOUR FRIENDS, NEIGHBORS, CO-WORKERS, FAMILY, ETC.
ASK THEM TO WRITE AND CALL THEIR LEGISLATORS.

"On The Pulse of Morning" A Poem by Maya Angelou

A Rock, A River, A Tree
Hosts to species long since departed,
Marked the mastodon,
The dinosaur, who left dry tokens
Of their sojourn here
On our planet floor.
Any broad alarm of their hastening doom
Is lost in the gloom of dust and ages.

But today, the Rock cries out to us, clearly, forcefully,
Come, you may stand upon my
Back and face your distant destiny,
But seek no haven in my shadow,
I will give you no more hiding place down here.

You, created, only a little lower than
The angels, have crouched too long in
The bruising darkness,
Have lain too long
Face down in ignorance.
Your mouths spilling words
Armed for slaughter.
The Rock cries out today, you may stand upon me,
But do not hide your face.

Across the wall of the world,
A River sings a beautiful song,
Come rest here by my side.

Each of you a bordered country,
Delicate and strangely made proud,
Yet thrusting perpetually under siege.
Your armed struggles for profit
Have left collars of waste upon
My shore, currents of debris upon my breast.
Yet, today I call you to my riverside,
If you will study war no more. Come,
Clad in peace and I will sing the songs
The Creator gave to me when I and the
Tree and the stone were one.
Before cynicism was a bloody scar across your
Brow and when you yet knew you still
Knew nothing.
The River sings and sings on.

There is a true yearning to respond to
The singing River and the wise Rock.
So say the Asian, the Hispanic, the Jew,
The African and Native American, the Sioux,
The Catholic, the Muslim, the French, the Greek,
The Irish, the Rabbi, the Priest, the Sheikh,
The Gay, the Straight, the Preacher,
The privileged, the homeless, the Teacher.
They hear. They all hear
The speaking of the Tree.

Today, the first and last of every Tree
Speaks to humankind. Come to me, here beside the River.
Plant yourself beside me, here beside the River.

Each of you, descendant of some passed
On traveller, has been paid for.
You, who gave me my first name, you
Pawnee, Apache and Seneca, you
Cherokee Nation, who rested with me, then
Forced on bloody feet, left me to the employment of
Other seekers—desperate for gain,
Starving for gold.
You, the Turk, the Swede, the German, the Scot ...
You the Ashanti, the Yoruba, the Fru, bought
Sold, stolen, arriving on a nightmare
Praying for a dream.
Here, root yourselves beside me.
I am the Tree planted by the River,
Which will not be moved.
I, the Rock, I the River, I the Tree
I am yours—your Passages have been paid.
Lift up your faces, you have a piercing need
For this bright morning dawning for you.
History, despite its wrenching pain,
Cannot be unlived, and if faced
With courage, need not be lived again.

Lift up your eyes upon
The day breaking for you.
Give birth again
To the dream.

Women, children, men,
Take it into the palms of your hands.
Mold it into the shape of your most
Private need. Sculpt it into
The image of your most public self.
Lift up your hearts
Each new hour holds new chances
For new beginnings.
Do not be wedded forever
To fear, yoked eternally
To brutishness.

The horizon leans forward,
Offering you space to place new steps of change.
Here, on the pulse of this fine day
You may have the courage
To look up and out upon me, the
Rock, the River, the Tree, your country.
No less to Midas than the mendicant.
No less to you now than the mastodon then.

Here on the pulse of this new day
You may have the grace to look up and out
And into your sister's eyes, into
Your brother's face, your country
And say simply
Very simply
With hope
Good morning.

The Eighth Annual Maine
Women's Studies Conference

WOMEN AND THE ARTS IN SOCIETY

Saturday

April 10, 1993

The University of Maine at
Farmington

*Performance, participatory and
academic presentations.*

For more information contact:
Linda Britt (778-7459) or Marg-
aret Gould (778-7141), Univer-
sity of Maine at Farmington,
Farmington, ME 04938-1990

YOM HA SHOA OBSERVANCE

(Holocaust remembrance day)

Sunday, APRIL 18, 7 pm

Woodfords Congregational Church

Portland (tentative location)

Candlelight ceremony to
commemorate the many holocausts
throughout history.

Co-sponsored by:

Holocaust Human Rights Center

Maine Project on Women and Disability

Questions/confirm location:

Cynthia Phinney 778-9506

MAINE GREENS STATE MEETING

Saturday, MARCH 27, 1993

10am-4pm

Bowdoinham Town Hall

Potluck lunch

Child care available

Call Karen Mayo 666-3996.

Questions or info

Call Greg Gerritt 778-0796

Dear Editor:

Recently Channel 13,
WGME, aired a Calvin Klein com-
mercial showing a young male in
jockey shorts who faces that camera
and grabs his crotch. This gesture
has always been obscene, and offen-
sive to women; to men it means the
seat of their power, pun intended.
Off camera, in the real world, that
gesture is usually accompanied by
remarks suggesting that a woman
hasn't lived unless she's experienced
what the crotch-grabber has to of-
fer. He's got your whole world in his
hand. Whoa!

It is simultaneously bla-
tantly demeaning and insidiously a
reminder of what's important, and
who has the power.

I called the station manager
and briefly explained to someone
why I wanted to speak to him - he
never called back.

There are more laws meant
to protect us from harassment, and
therefore more subtle ways to let us
know that it isn't the hand that
rocks that cradle that counts, but
the hand....

If we tell the merchants who
carry the products whose advertis-
ing is offensive to us that we won't
buy those product, then we have
that other great power, the dollar,
to let people know we will not accept
their insults. One needn't be mili-
tant; all that's needed is a quiet
comment, but enough of those will
become a roar.

A.R.

Bath, ME

MNT Credits

Thanks to all who submitted
articles, letters, and notices for this
issue. It really feels like a member
newsletter. Please send more! Car-
toons and poems are also welcome.

A warm welcome to Joann
Clark who has generously agreed to
help with the newsletter. It's great to
share the work & more fun!

Also, thanks to Farmington
NOW, Cynthia Phinney and Annie
Lunt for mailing the newsletter.

NEXT MNT Deadline: MAY 10, 1993
MNT Editor: Chris Rusnov, 11 Bolduc
St., Winslow, ME 04901 873-0878

EQUAL PROTECTION LEWISTON

by Donna Dolham

On January 6, the Lewiston
Hate/Bias Task Force submitted an
ordinance to the city council which
would ban discrimination of the basis
of sexual orientation in the areas of
employment, housing, credit and pub-
lic accommodations. The proposed or-
dinance is almost exactly the same as
the one enacted in Portland.

The Lewiston City Council
approved the ordinance with a 5-2
vote in the early morning on January
7. It was both exciting and eye-open-
ing to be there. The Junior High au-
ditorium was filled, half with sup-
porters and half with people I can
only describe as scared and scary.
There were brave people who testi-
fied to the need of such an ordinance
in our community and others who
yelled violent threats at them. Many
of us held our signs in support while
opponents held their signs of fear. I
watched a local daycare provider (the
daughter of a local minister who spoke
in opposition) leave the hearing; she
swore at me as she left. Her sign
stated "Save the Children." I think
we must save our children from the
people who preach oppression and
teach fear of others.

There has been a petition
since the ordinance passed to bring
this issue before the people of Lewiston
in a November referendum. The work
has just begun. The amount of fear
and the lack of understanding will
take months or years to overcome.
Equal Protection Lewiston is launch-
ing a campaign to end discrimination
in Lewiston, and has set goals of edu-
cating the community and sustaining
the ordinance in the referendum vote.

EPL has general meetings
every other Monday at the Multipur-
pose Center in Lewiston. We need
people to: participate in fundraising
events, make donations, write letters
to the editor, organize or work in the
grassroots campaign. If you'd like to
know more give me, Donna Dolham,
a call at 784-5524, or write to Equal
Protection Lewiston, PO Box 7804,
Lewiston 04243.

Calling all members...

The **1993 National NOW Conference** is being held at the Sheraton Hotel in BOSTON July 2-4. We would love to see lots of Maine NOW members attend this conference since it is so close to home. There will be tons of great workshops, vendor tables, empowering entertainment and great feminists with which to network. Maine NOW will probably have a hotel room to share but we also encourage folks to stay with friends in the Boston area.

In order to be a **voting delegate** at the conference you must be a dues paying member for ninety (90) days prior to the conference. Therefore, you must **become a new member or renew your membership by April 1, 1993**. Use the membership form on page 11 to join TODAY! Renew your membership (cannot be more than 3 months expired) with National NOW.

If you intend to go to the Conference as a voting delegate, notify Cynthia Phinney, RFD 1, Box 1467, New Sharon, ME 04955 778-9506 by June 1, 1993. **If you have questions about your membership status ask Cynthia before March 21, 1993.**

Of course, if your current membership does not expire until after July 4, 1993, you're all set. Be sure to double check, current membership rules are very strictly adhered to for voting rights. **Non-members are welcome to attend the Conference but cannot vote.**

Maine Project on Women and Disabilities

A new organization called the Maine Project on Women and Disabilities has formed to provide assistance to all women with disabilities and their allies.

This organization currently has an Executive Director, Susan Harkin, an Executive Assistant, Cindy Leach, and a Board of Directors (11 women with disabilities). It is in the process of forming an Advisory Board (30-35 women and men committed to supporting the goals of the organization).

Mission Statement

The mission of the Maine Project on Women and Disability is to eliminate sex and disability bias in our society, to promote women with disabilities as equal and active members of the Maine workforce and community, and to enlist all women and men as our allies. We will start by facilitating one or more support groups and by providing information and referral on women-and-disability issues. In addition, we will provide assistance to women's organizations in reaching out to disabled women, and to disability organizations in eliminating sex-bias in their programs.

The Project on Women and Disability serves women whose lives are affected by disability. This community includes women with disabilities, their mothers, partners and friends of disabled people, and women who work in disability services.

Maine Project on Women and Disability, 39 Pleasant Hill Road
Freeport, ME 04032 865-3970 or 781-7712

Persons with hearing impairment are urged to call via the Ingraham Volunteers relay system (774-4357) until the Project can purchase a TDD.

Affirmative ACTIONS Ideas

one

Keep watch on magazines and write to them if diversity (people of color, women, ages, disabled..) is not represented.

two

Maine NOW is interested in supporting candidates to bring diversity to our political bodies. If you are a person of color consider running for a state or local political office. If you know someone, encourage their participation. Contact us!

Celebrate
Spruce Run's
20th Anniversary
with
**SWEET HONEY
IN THE ROCK
CONCERT**

MARCH 27, 8:00 PM

Maine Center For The Arts
University of Maine, Orono

Tickets: \$18 There is a \$3 per order (not per ticket) processing fee. So gather your friends together and order as a group.

Tickets can be ordered by calling MCA at 581-1755. TDD-TTY is 581-1888. Anyone needing financial assistance to purchase a ticket, please contact Maureen Flagg 945-5102.

SPRUCE RUN serves battered women and their children in Penobscot and Hancock counties.

NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR WOMEN



Maine's Leading Feminist Grassroots Organization
Phone Number: 797-8508



Maine State Coordinator - Cynthia Phinney 778-9506
Assistant State Coordinator - Merrie Allen 874-2899
Recorder - Donna Dolham 784-5524
Treasurer - Kathryn Dunn 626-3554

Task Force/Coalition Contacts

Affirmative Action Task Force - Valerie Howard 877-7627
Computer Wizards - JoAnne Dauphinee 989-3306
Consumers For Affordable Health Care-Mary Donnelly 729-5843
Dirigo Alliance - Beth Edmonds 865-3869
Lesbian Rights Task Force - Bettina Blanchard 737-2822
Maine Choice Coalition - Chris Rusnov 873-0878
Maine NOW Phone Coordinator - Annie Lunt 883-1195
Maine NOW PAC Treasurer - JoAnne Dauphinee 989-3306
Maine NOW Times - Chris Rusnov 873-0878
Women's Legislative Agenda Coalition - Valerie Mitchell 873-3632

NORTHEAST REGIONAL NOW BOARD MEMBERS

Beth Edmonds, 9 Guptill Ave., Freeport, ME 04032, 865-3869
Ellen Convisser, 89 Dover St., Somerville, MA 02144, (617)625-9786
Pat Murphy, 210 Wadsworth St., Avon, NY 14414, (716)243-0637
Ruth Laws, 31 Wimbleton Lane, W. Seneca, NY 14224, (716)675-7437
Erima Vaughan, 37 Manor Ct., Hempstead, NY 11550, (516)489-7262
Clarice Pollack, 1853 Central Park Ave., Yonkers, NY 10710, (914)337-7159

GREATER BANGOR NOW

P.O. Box 2672, Bangor, ME 04401
JoAnne Dauphinee-Coodinator 989-3306
Meets second Monday of each month

GREATER FARMINGTON NOW

P.O. Box 375, Farmington, ME 04938
Peggy Stubbs-Coodinator 778-5609

KENNEBEC VALLEY NOW

P.O. Box 503, Augusta, ME 04330
Co-Coordintors - Brenda Beckwith 437-2093
Monica Castellanos 623-2744
Meets second Wednesday of the month

BRUNSWICK AREA NOW

P.O. Box 133, Brunswick, ME 04011
Coordinator-Pat McCormick 833-6935
Meets first Wednesday of each month

GREATER PORTLAND NOW

P.O. Box 4012, Portland, ME 04101
Co-Coordintors: Kathryn Baptista 879-0877
Jennifer Halm-Perazone 871-0618
Meets fourth Tuesday of each month

UNIV. OF MAINE-ORONO chapter forming
Call Kristina 581-7889 Meets every Wed. 7pm

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

COUNT ME IN! I wish to join NOW and commit myself to take action to bring women into full participation in the mainstream of American society now, exercising all privileges and responsibilities thereof in truly equal partnership with men. **MAINE NOW, P.O. BOX 4012, Portland, ME 04101. Make check payable to MAINE NOW.**

NAME (Please PRINT) _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

RACIAL/ETHNIC BACKGROUND (optional) _____ to help us analyze our organization's diversity.

CHAPTER (see above) _____ If there isn't a chapter near you, leave this space blank and we will enroll you as an at-large member.

Dues rate includes membership at the national, state & local level.

\$ _____ dues enclosed. \$35 Regular Dues. A sliding scale of \$20 - 34 is available, if you need it.

\$ _____ additional contribution enclosed. \$ _____ Political Action Committee contribution. Payable to Maine NOW PAC.

☐ PLEASE CHECK HERE IF YOU DO NOT WANT MAINE NOW TO SHARE YOUR NAME WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS. (see Maine NOW policy below)

☐ Please check here if you do not want National NOW to share your name with other groups.

NAME SHARING POLICY: Maine NOW shares our member list for coalition work, in which we are active (see list above). We also occasionally, on a case-by-case basis, will share the list with progressive groups who are advertising events or sharing information.



INSIDE

State Budget 'as if people mattered' - pg. 1-3
Racism Workshop - p. 1
Legislative Update - pg. 4-7
Gender Apartheid to Empowerment - p. 8
Equal Protection Lewiston - p. 9
Maine Project on Women & Disabilities - p. 10
Preserving Reproductive Privacy - insert
A Poem by Maya Angelou - insert

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March is Women's Herstory Month!

*Commemorate the lives of the women who came before us...
who dared to take action to make a difference, to make change!*

Make some herstory yourself!

TAKE ACTION TO

☛ **PRESERVE REPRODUCTIVE PRIVACY IN MAINE - see insert**

☛ **END DISCRIMINATION - see page 6 & 9**

☛ **DEAL WITH THE STATE BUDGET**

"as if people mattered" - see pages 1-3