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The Maine Voter vol. XVIII no. 6 (April 1971)

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Maine League of Women Voters

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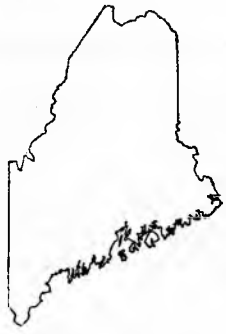
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The MAINE VOTER

Published by The League of Women Voters of Maine
P. O. Box 151, Orono, Maine 04473

VOL. XVIII

APRIL, 1971

Number 6

42nd State Convention

May 18 and 19

Holiday Inn, Auburn
(Turnpike exit 12)

Tuesday, May 18

Wednesday, May 19

- 9:00 Registration and Coffee
(fee: \$3.00 delegates, \$2.00 observers)
- 10:00 First Business Session
- 12:30 Luncheon
Report from National Council by delegates,
Mrs. Nancy Masterton, Mrs. Dorothy Dunton
- 2:00 Second Business Session
- 6:00 Social Hour
- 7:00 Banquet
Speaker: U. S. Attorney Peter Mills

- 7:45 Local President's Breakfast
- 9:30 Third Business Session
- 12:30 Adjournment
- 1:30 Post Convention State Board meeting

We are honored to announce that the Honorable Peter Mills, U. S. Attorney for Maine, will address the 42nd State Convention. Mr. Mills served in the legislature as a Senator from Farmington and he is remembered as the sponsor of the Human Rights Commission bill in the 104th Legislature.

from the
President's Desk

This issue of the VOTER announces our Convention plans and the slate of officers—but it also makes the mute announcement that my term of office is almost over. Like all previous presidents, I greet this period with mixed feelings. One is always sorry for the omissions, the unattained goals, the fact that it has been impossible to talk and work individually with each League member.

I have been ever conscious of the fine support all of you have given League. I know you will continue to do the same and more in the future. League leaves on all of its members an indelible mark. As Leaguers we are trained to think more precisely instead of jumping to conclusions, to ask the right questions at the right times, and to be dissatisfied with short-term solutions.

The talents and abilities of our members have consistently amazed me. Some of you find it easier to raise money, others to interest more women in our organization. Some have the great ability to study and assemble information, to relate the parts to the whole, to express the total to the rest of us. Others know the mechanics of League and shorten the distance between two points for all. Some of us can and do write letters to government officials and newspapers, giving opinions on issues. Others react to ideas during meetings, thereby leading to a better consensus on studies. All of these talents are needed; none is too big or too small. The job of the presidency has been made lighter, more enjoyable, more satisfying, more exciting because all of you were so willing to share in the total effort—and I thank you.

Legislature Thoughts On Staffing

Legislative services is a subject so close to legislators themselves that to supplement the League's study of increased staffing needs each legislator received from the League an **OPINION SURVEY ON LEGISLATIVE PAY, FACILITIES AND SERVICES**. Response to the survey was unexpectedly high—10 out of 32 Senators, 55 out of 151 Representatives, for a 30% participation.

Of those answering, 61% thought the pay was too low, while the same percentage thought the expense allowances were adequate. Some 60% thought legislators needed more office space. Those who returned the survey rated the availability of typists (for letters and speeches, etc.) good (25%), fair (40%), and poor (26%). Asked if legislators need more information and analysis on bills, 69% answered yes. On whether legislators were fully using present research staff: 29% answered yes, 43% no, and 25% did not know.

When asked about "additional staff needed," the breakdown was as follows: Legislative Research Office, 21; Legislative Finance office, 14; Legislative Reference Library, 12; Some standing committees, 12; All standing committees, 14; party caucuses, 4; Leadership, 14; and None, 5. The last question in the survey asked if secretarial help should be available to legislators between sessions, and 61% of the answers were no.

The responses speak for themselves. It is difficult to draw any hard and fast conclusions from an opinion sampling, but perhaps the League can fairly state that many legislators are unhappy with their salary and that many are not getting the back-up staff they feel they need, both secretarial and research.

Foreign Policy - Military or Economic

Coming Trade Wars: (Neo-Mercantilism and Foreign Policy) by Harold B. Malmgren, Overseas Development Council, Development Paper II. A review by Esther Lacognata, state Board chairman, Foreign Policy.

Security and ideology, the guiding principles during the cold war are no longer valid. The author, Senior Fellow of the Overseas Development Council, proposes that commercial and financial issues are surfacing and will ultimately take the place of traditional diplomatic and security questions. He analyzes present trends in world trade, where they are taking us and what we should be doing about developing patterns.

A look at current trade patterns reveals that the U. S. is no longer in the world's largest trading unit. The European Economic Community (EEC) has surpassed us. If Britain and others join the EEC, economic power relationships will quickly shift. In Asia, meanwhile, Japan is moving up fast to become a prime trading unit.

What we are witnessing today is the fundamental clash of national policies primarily oriented toward solving domestic political and social problems. Businesses, workers, and farmers in all countries expect their governments to manipulate national economics to ensure full employment and prosperity. Where conflict arises with another country's interests, the domestic economic requirements are expected to prevail. This is what is meant by mercantilism, the policy of pre-industrial Europe which was the highly nationalistic conception of how governments should act. "Neo" makes it here and now.

Recent developments between our country and Japan serve to illustrate what Mr. Malmgren means by neo-mercantilism. The breakdown in trade negotiations and the current battle between Wilbur Mills and President Nixon illustrate a major technical break in our commercial machinery. American insistence, in violation of Japan's rights under the international trading rules of General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), that Japan must limit textile exports to the U. S., grew out of a campaign maneuver to gain Southern votes. In Japan the foreign minister and the minister of trade have resigned over the issue. What to this country seems a minor political gambit can set another country reverberating in revolt. To make matters worse, U. S. spokesmen claimed there were no problems with imports from Europe—the issue has blossomed into yellow-skin discrimination.

As with most cycles, it is not easy to say who started the latest wheel of neo-mercantilism rolling. Certainly Europe with its highly discriminating import restrictions on agricultural products has contributed. The U. S. can fairly be said to favor mercantilism, although we resisted the trend longer than others. The underdeveloped countries practiced these policies among themselves. What has happened in Europe is what also is happening in the Philippines with rice resulting from the "green revolution." It is an example of neo-mercantilism: in order to protect the domestic market, a tax or tariff is imposed on imports to bring the imported product up to domestic prices or to force domestic prices up. Production is stimulated to the point where there is a surplus. In order to keep high prices, it is necessary to subsidize the producer to export. Mr. Malmgren comments that this is an attempt to pass on to other countries the economic and social costs of domestic adjustment.

The countries most affected by mercantilism are the developing countries. As we know from recent studies, trade provides 80% of the foreign exchange for the underdeveloped world. The major political issue raised when Nelson Rockefeller visited Latin America in 1969 was that of American trade restrictions, particularly in beef and textiles. The underdeveloped world is finding that success in the export of labor-intensive products will breed restrictive reactions. The incentive to produce for export is not very great, and gov-

ernments of developing countries have trouble encouraging private investments in the export business.

An important effect of restrictions on manufactured goods as opposed to agricultural raw product is that the economic losses will hit different kinds of people from those affected in the past. Previously, restrictions on commodities only hurt the landholder class. Today people hit by fluctuations in the export market are living together in concentrated areas and their frustration seems bound to generate intense pressure on governments and politicians.

What has been the response of the American government toward this new reality? Mr. Malmgren notes that broad policy consequences of economic actions are hardly ever considered by secretaries of state. As Europe and the underdeveloped countries revert to neo-mercantilism, the United States is following suit instead of offering outward-looking economic policies and taking the initiative in multi-lateral negotiations.

In summary, the outlook is not bright. The author says the present structures of governments, the disdain of diplomats and political theorists for these issues, all seem to portend worsening problems among the rich and heavier repression of the weaker nations. If trade wars come, they will come hard.

Nominees For State League Office 1971-73

PRESIDENT

Mrs. Nancy Masterton, Portland League

1st VICE PRESIDENT

Mrs. Susan Walker, Bangor League

2nd VICE PRESIDENT

Mrs. Dorothy Dunton, Lewiston-Auburn League

SECRETARY

Mrs. John O'Toole, Portland League

TREASURER

Mrs. Louis Farley, Portland League

DIRECTORS

Mrs. Charles Allen, Portland League

Mrs. Robert Lindquist, Portland League

Mrs. Jennie Magaro, Bangor League

Mrs. Charles McEvoy, Bangor League

Miss Velma Oliver, Orono League

Mrs. Larry Seymour, MAL

NOMINATING COMMITTEE 1973

Mrs. Lowell Zabel, Chairman, Orono League

Mrs. Kenneth Barnard, Lewiston-Auburn League

Mrs. Eugene Wakely, Brunswick League

The League has arranged a meeting of all tax-committed organizations to plan a course of **united action** to save the Income Tax. The meeting is to be held at Bowdoin College on Saturday, April 24, with Mrs. Dorothy Dunton, state Board Tax Chairman, presiding.

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