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Maine League of Women Voters

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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

OCTOBER, 1970

Number 2

New Maine League Publications

The Maine League proudly announces two new state publications available for distribution to interested individuals and groups. A printing of 5,000 copies each of **Pests and Pesticides** and **Effluent Charges in Maine?** makes it possible for each member to receive these timely publications with her local League bulletin. Our members-at-large will receive their copies with this VOTER.

Mrs. Norman Kutscha of the Orono League served as chairman of the Pesticides Study Committee aided by Mrs. John Dimond of Orono. Mrs. Susan Walker of Bangor was chairman of the Effluent Charges Study Committee, aided by Mrs. Stanley Goodnow of Portland. Mrs. Edward Hanis of Brunswick, Mrs. Charles McEvoy of Bangor, and Miss LaRue Spiker of Mount Desert Island.

We are grateful to the Maine Potato Council, the Merrill Trust Company, and the Paper Industry Information Office for publication funds for these "Facts and Issues." Funds were furnished by the three organizations in the interest of furnishing League members, students and the public with objective information on these issues. The League will arrive at consensus on pesticides and on effluent charges later this Fall. Our study will be greatly aided by these publications.

Many hours of study and hard work went into researching and preparing the material. Since this is the first time the Maine League has sought outside funds for publishing a specific study, such details as checking facts with experts as well as funding and printing details were carefully considered. Because this is a Maine League innovation, we hope that members and other interested readers will pass on any comments to the state League office. We are interested in pursuing the possibilities of other publications on our state study items and all critical comments will be most welcome. State President Willabelle Zabel reports that the office is receiving many requests for copies from both individuals and groups.

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES CALENDAR

October 21 to 31	Clean Air Week
November 1	Answers to consensus questions on Effluent Charges due
January 1	Answers to consensus questions on Pesticides due
February 15	Reports on Air Consensus due in LWV National office
February, March, April	At least one Land Use unit meeting and possibly a state seminar on Land Use to be held in the Spring

More Staff For Legislators?

Yes, But What Kind?

Sometimes in the consensus process, the League answers an unasked question. Nobody asked, "Will more secretaries and researchers, higher pay, and expanded office space make a better Maine legislature?" But the Maine League said YES in a 1968 study of unicameralism. Not only a future unicameral, the League reasoned, but the present bicameral legislature needed more pay, staff and space in order to operate effectively. The League supported a \$500 pay increase for legislators in the regular session of the 104th Legislature. Not surprisingly, the measure passed, providing the League with its only success to date in our efforts at legislative reform.

Sometimes in the program-planning process, the League follows an answer with another question. The League said YES to more legislative staff in 1968. At State Council in May, 1970 League delegates asked, "But what kind?"

Scheduled for this fall is another mini-Constitution study to prepare for possible action in the 105th Legislature. What services to the legislator are presently offered in Maine? How do these services compare with those in other states? What are patterns of change? What are the needs of the present legislative staff? What ideas do legislators themselves have on the subject?

Some of these questions have been asked of legislative service officials and legislative leaders. Their replies are revealing. One leader sees legislators as "junior partners in between a better-staffed executive and a professional bureaucracy." How can the League help to upgrade the junior partners? Through their local Leagues sometimes in October, members will receive a study paper, "Legislative Staffing in Maine," to help them in shaping some answers.

Election Night For ABC News

Throughout the state ten coordinators are recruiting reporters for our third election night effort in conjunction with ABC News. Many will be anxious to serve as reporters again since this is a natural extension of our work in getting out an informed vote. For some this will be a new and interesting experience in finding out what happens after votes have been cast.

There are forty-three precincts in the state. These have been selected to give ABC a miniature picture of the state of Maine. Each is vitally important to ABC and of course to our state League. In addition to a not insignificant sum of several hundred dollars which will be added to our treasury by this effort, there is also the matter of upholding our reputation. As John H. Thompson, manager of the political unit at ABC reports in his letter to reporters: "If a state is as-

(Continued on page 4)

from the
President's Desk

We have positive proof that the same spirit of dedication-to-cause that existed among League members 50 years ago is just as alive today. A few weeks ago, Maya Miller, a member of national Board and involved in action at local League level, was arrested. She had joined blacks of Reno, Nevada, who were picketing the census office in protest over none of their race being employed to take the population count. Mrs. Miller protested to a policeman concerning his treatment of one of the two blacks arrested. Subsequently she was also arrested and fined. To quote one paragraph of the story as it appeared in the September 18 **Christian Science Monitor** . . . "What's particularly striking about her [Maya Miller] is she's the sort who has liked to study such issues and do her part by patient, reasonable negotiation. She hasn't been a direct action sort at all." She says now that she is convinced that one has to be followed by the other.

While individual Maine Leaguers may not have had as dramatic and moving an experience as Mrs. Miller, we too are undertaking more and more action at all League levels. To give some examples of action and cooperation, note in your own League how many members of local Boards are devoting time to state committees whose activities lead directly to action. We saw and heard Dr. Marianna Cherry of the Mount Desert Island League on ETV when she testified for the Maine League during Senator Muskie's hearings. The action of the Portland League in contributing an extra \$100 to the 1970-71 state League budget was a different kind of action, but one we all welcomed. And we all appreciate the many hours spent this past summer by Sue Walker, Lois Kutscha and many other dedicated people in preparing our two new state **Facts and Issues**. These publications are a first for Maine and prove that study can and does lead to action.

The state Board recently contacted the Boards of the New Hampshire and Vermont Leagues suggesting that a tri-state conference on land use be held. We believed that many problems in land use, common to the three states, could be better understood and acted on through a regional approach. Much to our regret, however, this idea had to be abandoned because the three states as well as the three Leagues are at different stages of development in this important area of concern.

We have many more members-at-large this year and their contributions in dues and finance gifts will help provide us the means to carry League messages throughout Maine. State Board members at the October meeting will consider more opportunities for MAL's to become involved in League program and action in their areas.

These are but a few examples of cooperation and action among Maine League members. All of us are constantly aware of wanting to do more within our present areas of League interest and we are also aware of other areas in which we could, should and would like to be involved. Such accomplishments can only come about through a large, well-informed, hard-working and action-oriented membership. All of you took action when you joined the League of Women Voters—thus there is no such thing as an "inactive" member. Do avail yourselves of all the opportunities that your membership offers you: attend all the meetings that you can; become informed; and become involved in the process of reaching consensus. Speak out on these formulated convictions—influence others. This is good citizenship and it is fun. But above all, this is action.

Preview Of Regional Workshops

The state Board is responding to requests from local League leaders for regional meetings and more face-to-face consultation between state and local Board members by arranging two identical workshops, one in the north and the other in the south. The first will be held on October 29 at St. Joseph's Community Center in Portland and the second on November 5 at Hammond Street Congregational Church in Bangor. The time for each workshop has been set from 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The Brunswick, Lewiston, Portland, and South Portland Leagues will attend the southern workshop. The northern region will be represented by Augusta, Bangor, Houlton, Mt. Desert, and Orono.

The theme of the morning sessions will be "How to Do Your League Job." Mini-workshops covering every local League Board assignment are being planned by the members of state Board. Each local Board member has been invited by her state Board counterpart to attend the mini-workshop that relates to her Board responsibility.

"Cooperation for Effective Action" will be the theme for the afternoon sessions. These will be general sessions focussing on cooperation among local Board members, among Leagues, among League levels and between the League and the community.

These workshop days are an opportunity for local Boards and the state Board to communicate directly. We hope for interaction and an exchange of ideas that will stimulate League activity throughout the state during the coming year.

The state League office received the following message from Mrs. Bruce B. Benson, National President: "I just read your July VOTER and was so impressed by the statistics in the 50th Anniversary story! A statewide membership contribution of 72% is wonderful."

And from Jean Tyler, National Development Chairman, Maine received sincere thanks for all those in our state who worked, through good and bad, on the local and state campaigns. We can build together on the many positive experiences from the Anniversary Campaign.

PUBLISHER'S STATEMENT

Statement of ownership, management and circulation of THE MAINE VOTER, published six times a year in July, October, November, January, March, and April by the League of Women Voters of Maine, P. O. Box 151, Orono, Maine.

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Known Bondholders: None

Editor: Mrs. James M. Clark

The following figures are averages for issues printed during the preceding 12 months: printed—825 copies; mail subscriptions—710; free distribution—105; total distribution—815; office use—13, total 825. Single issue nearest filing date—July, 1970.

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Second class postage paid at Bangor, Maine 04401

Editor: Mrs. James M. Clark

President: Mrs. Lowell W. Zabel, P. O. Box 151, Orono 04473

Subscription price 50¢ per year as part of membership dues.

BALLOT PREVIEW

General Election — Tuesday November 3, 1970

REPUBLICAN

For U. S. Senator

Neil S. Bishop (Stockton Springs)

For Governor

James S. Erwin (York)

For Representative to Congress

(First District)

Ronald T. Speers (Winthrop)

(Second District)

Maynard G. Connors (Franklin)

DEMOCRATIC

For U. S. Senator

Edmund S. Muskie (incumbent)

For Governor

Kenneth M. Curtis (incumbent)

For Representative to Congress

(First District)

Peter N. Kyros (incumbent)

(Second District)

William D. Hathaway (incumbent)

(Ballots will also include candidates for offices of State Senator, Representative to the Legislature and County offices).

EXPLANATION OF REFERENDUM QUESTIONS

You will also vote upon 4 Referendum Questions and 3 Proposed Constitutional Amendments, all passed by 2/3 vote of both Houses of the 104th Legislature. Questions as they appear on the ballot are below. An explanation follows each issue.

REFERENDUM QUESTIONS

1. "Shall a bond issue be ratified for the purposes set forth in 'An Act Providing for a Bond Issue in the Amount of Thirty Million Dollars to Reconstruct Route 6,' passed by the 104th Legislature?"

Proceeds from the sale of these bonds would be used to provide a highway across the State from the Canadian border at Vanceboro to the Canadian border north of Jackman. Existing routes would be used as far as is feasible. Communities on the route include Vanceboro, Lincoln, Howland, Milo, Dover, Guilford, Bingham, Carrabassett and Coburn Gore.

A YES vote would permit reconstruction of Route 6.

A NO vote would prevent reconstruction of Route 6.

2. "Shall a bond issue be ratified for the purposes set forth in 'An Act to Authorize Bond Issues in the Amount of \$50,000,000 to Provide Funds for School Building Construction,' passed by the 104th Legislature?"

YES NO
☐ ☐

The purpose of this bond issue is to provide for a cheaper method of financing school construction. At present the State makes payments to local communities in installments after a project is completed. This means that both

the State and the local unit borrow money for the State's share of local school construction and both have to make interest payments. The proceeds from this bond issue would be used to make **lump sum** payments equal to one half the State's share of the cost of a project when the contract is awarded and the balance when the project is completed. Thus the double payment of interest by both state and local units would be eliminated. It would affect 323 cities and towns. The estimated saving during the next seven years is \$38,000,000.

A YES vote would mean a substantial saving of money in the construction of elementary and secondary schools.

A NO vote would mean the State and local units will continue to borrow as before, making double payments of interest necessary.

3. "Shall a bond issue be ratified for the purposes set forth in 'An Act to Authorize General Fund Bond Issue in the Amount of \$4,000,000 for Removal and Abatement of Prohibited Discharges of Oil from Coastal Waters, Lands Adjoining the Seacoast of the State or Waters Draining into the Coastal Waters of the State in the Event of an Oil Pollution Disaster declared by the Governor', passed by the First Special Session of the 104th Legislature?"

YES NO
☐ ☐

Proceeds from the sale of these bonds would provide funds for abatement or removal of prohibited discharges of oil, petroleum products or their by-products from waters and lands of the State and for payment of damages to persons damaged by such discharge if the Governor declares an oil pollution disaster or catastrophe. Proceeds would be paid into the Maine Coastal Protection Fund and expended under the direction of the Environmental Improvement Commission.

A YES vote would provide funds for such abatement of oil discharges and payment of damages.

A NO vote would deny funds for such purposes.

4. "Shall 'An Act Repealing the Interest on Unissued Bonds for Water Pollution Abatement,' as passed by the 104th Legislature in Special Session, be approved?"

YES NO
☐ ☐

Bonds approved by the voters in 1964 have not yet been sold because of the low interest rate. An attempt to sell them in January, 1970, brought no bids.

A YES vote would remove the interest limitation and allow sale of the bonds at an interest rate to be determined by the Treasurer of the State.

(The purpose of the issuance of these bonds was to provide for grants to communities for construction and equipment of pollution abatement facilities.)

A NO vote would mean that the State could not continue these grants for pollution abatement.

PROPOSED CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

1. "Shall the Constitution be amended as proposed by a resolution of the Legislature to Reduce the Voting Age to Twenty Years?"

YES NO
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The present minimum voting age is 21 years.

Congress recently passed legislation lowering the voting age to 18 years for all elections. If the Supreme Court upholds that law as constitutional, it would take precedence over the proposed constitutional amendment for Maine. The new federal law becomes effective in January, 1971, unless it is declared unconstitutional.

2. "Shall the Constitution be amended as proposed by a resolution of the Legislature Providing for Valuation of Certain Lands at Current Use?"

YES NO
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This proposed amendment would allow the Legislature to provide for taxing the following types of real estate with a valuation based on the current use of the property instead of on the basis of its just market value:

1. Farms and agricultural lands, timberland, and woodlands;
2. Open space lands which are used for recreation or the enjoyment of scenic or natural beauty;
3. Lands used for game management or wildlife sanctuaries.

The Legislature would provide for a penalty for any change to a use higher than those listed above, except when eminent domain is involved. The minimum penalty would be equal to the tax that would have been imposed over the preceding 5 years at the higher use, less taxes already paid.

This would mean that the Legislature could provide for lowering taxes for property owners who hold land (of the types listed above) that could be put to a higher use, and for raising taxes for owners of property who are using their land for a higher valuation purpose. The proposal is the result of the increasing demand for residential, summer, or commercial property adjacent to property of a lower use in assessment value.

Proponents feel that the proposed amendment would give tax relief to some farmers and others who own land that would be more valuable at a higher use. They believe that the penalty provision would discourage the selling of parcels of land to speculators for later development.

Opponents point out that the proposed amendment would mean departing from the generally accepted legal practice of assessment based as uniformly as possible on "just value." They feel that it would mean preferential tax treatment for certain groups, and that it would be difficult to administer. They recommend another method of accomplishing an equitable tax assessment of these properties through land use regulation by zoning laws.

A YES vote would mean changing the basis of valuation for certain properties.

A NO vote would leave the basis of valuation at just market value.

3. "Shall the Constitution be amended as proposed by a resolution of the Legislature Providing for Convening of the Legislature at Such Times as the Legislature Deems Necessary?"

The Constitution now provides that the Legislature shall meet in regular session biennially and in special session when called by the Governor. This amendment would allow the Legislature to be convened at the call of the President of the Senate and Speaker of the House with the consent of a majority of the members of each political party in the Legislature. Members would be polled to determine their wishes.

(At present 32 states prohibit the Legislature from convening itself into session. Of those that allow it, nine require a petition of 2/3 of the members, one requires 3/5, and two require a majority. Thirty-six states limit the length of regular sessions, 20 limit the length of special sessions. Maine limits neither. This proposed amendment does not provide for limiting a session called by the Legislature.)

A YES vote would give the Legislature power to call itself into special session.

A NO vote would leave that power to the Chief Executive.

Prepared by

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Election Night For ABC News

(Continued from page 1)

signed 50 key precincts, 50 reporters will telephone. They will do so promptly. . . ." Since each precinct is selected for a particular reason, we may well know how the labor vote went or which candidates were favored by the suburban communities. Election practices might even precipitate a study of election procedures by a local League. The possibilities are endless.

In 1968 ABC News was the first major network to project Nixon as the winner and **we were there**. In 1970 we are again a team with the outcome yet to be unfolded. If you wish to be a part of this exciting project, contact your League coordinator. My personal thanks to all who have agreed to help on this job. Good luck on election night!

Dolores Vail, State Coordinator

Local League Highlights

The state Board is very interested in encouraging state-local League cooperative activities. Problems of distance, time, or even the facts needed for presentation before a hearing or investigation, may be solved more efficiently and effectively when a local League can lend its support.

When Senator Edmund S. Muskie's Senate Subcommittee came to Machias a few weeks ago, the Mount Desert Island League volunteered to present testimony in the name of the state LWV. The testimony was extremely well-researched and included a specific case study of the possible effects of oil spills on Mount Desert Island. The state League extends to the MDI League its appreciation for the fine presentation by Dr. Marianna Cherry. Since Dr. Cherry is both a member of that League and a member of the state League's environmental resources committee, her testimony was especially welcome.

As we noted in the July VOTER, a hearing was held last April by the State Board of Pesticide Control. A paper was submitted by the state League and included a case study of the effects of pesticides on Mount Desert Island. The case study was prepared by the MDI League, displaying again the effectiveness of state-local League cooperation.

In a related note, the Orono League suggested the possibility of a pesticides "Facts and Issues." This idea was enthusiastically received by the state Board. The actual research and preparation of the publication was by the Orono League, with financial, publication and distribution arrangements completed by the state League.

CONSENSUS TAKING IS YOUR OPPORTUNITY TO INFLUENCE LEAGUE OPINION. IS YOUR VOICE BEING HEARD?

Consensus

- is member agreement on broad principles.
- presupposes total member participation in action.
- prevents action not supported by the broadest body of membership.
- arrives from thoughtful study and thorough discussion.
- expresses the quality as well as the quantity of agreement.
- need not be unanimous but is more than a majority.
- does not exist if violent disagreement occurs.
- is, in the final analysis, the kind of decision that a responsible citizen must make, regardless of expertise.

— from Washington, D. C. Voter