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THE VOTER

Vol. 5, No. 1

The League of Women Voters of Maine

October, 1987

LWV-US REJECTS LWV-ME REQUEST FOR SUPPORT ON CLOSING MAINE YANKEE

Dear Members of LWV-ME:

"...our Natural Resources committee was last spring given permission to pursue a national inquiry in an effort to begin work which might lead to a national position which was broader and less cumbersome."

"...we welcome Maine's effort. Aging, mismanaged nuclear power plants are with us for some time to come and people turn to the League more than other groups, believing that we will handle this technologically difficult and emotional topic in a responsible, credible manner. To do that, however, we believe that the national position needs to be improved."
--Pat Lane, NR Chair, Baltimore City LWV.

This letter came to me in response to the LWV-ME's request to support the closing of Maine Yankee. As you know by now that request was denied. I'm writing now for three reasons. First, to tell you the LWV-ME has raised awareness of the limits of the national position as it relates to nuclear power. Second, why permission was not given. Third, to encourage your continued commitment to work at educating League members on the importance of this issue. I also encourage you to meet with Maine Yankee management to share the information gathered on the health and safety concerns particularly relating to the evacuation plans.

The LWV-ME's presentation focused attention on the health and safety risks of

(continued on page 2)

MDI LWV RESPONDS

As president of the local League which initiated the request for permission to call for the closing of Maine Yankee, I would like to reply to Penny Harris' letter of 12 October. Naturally, we are all disappointed with National's denial of our request; however, we are encouraged to read "LWV-ME has raised awareness of the limits of the national position as it relates to nuclear power". We sincerely hope this to be the case.

I am deeply disturbed by the interpretation of our request as one which would have required a change in the national League position. We very carefully followed guidelines listed on page 29 of Impact on Issues, 1986-88, which states, "State and local Leagues may call for the closing of operating nuclear power plants because of specific nongeneric health and safety problems, but only with prior permission from the national board". While believing whole-heartedly that the national position needs to be changed, we feel strongly that the existent position clearly gives us the opportunity to act.

Specifically to comply with the stated national position, we concentrated on the problem of evacuation from the area around Maine Yankee. A geographic situation is, by definition, specific and non-generic. Residents of the many nearby islands and peninsulae would have to travel closer to the power plant in order to evacuate the danger zone. The tremendous influx of summer visitors, many of whom are totally unaware of the existence of Maine Yankee, let alone its evacuation plan, complicates the picture. If this

(continued on page 3)

Dear Members (cont'd)

having a nuclear power plant in your state. Carol Fritz and Julie Howison presented Maine's request. Their request was detailed and they were able to point out the tremendous problems in developing an evacuation plan at a site as unique as Maine Yankee. Carol and Julie supplemented their presentation with maps and written reports. They answered all questions. They were friendly, professional, and patient. The Maine Yankee request was given 1 1/2 hours on Monday at the advocacy committee meeting and about 45 minutes at the board meeting on Tuesday and Wednesday. I hope you will feel that even though the immediate result wasn't what you had hoped for the investment of time, effort and money can impact League activity on this issue in the long term.

The National Board's agreement for action on closing Maine Yankee had to be based on the national energy position which currently accepts nuclear power as part of the energy mix. But, the position allows existing nuclear power plants unless there is specific nongeneric health and safety reasons to close it. The position stresses the League's role will be one of problem solving. A national position impacts all Leagues in the country. The agreement the LWV-ME was asking for would have required changing the position. This kind of change can only be accomplished by concurrence or consensus of League members across the country.

Board members also focused on another area of concern. The LWV-ME had no history of working or talking with Maine Yankee management. The question was raised as to whether LWV-ME had testified at public hearings during the development of the evacuation plans or had discussions with them on decommissioning efforts or ask for information on replacement power. The position dictates the League's approach to nuclear issues is one of problem solving and to work constructively for the maximum protection of

public health and safety and the environment and for citizen participation in the decision-making process at all levels of government.

The LWV-ME has a wealth of information on nuclear power. Please stay involved at the state and national level.

--Why not meet with Maine Yankee people to discuss your concerns and to decide how the League can be effective.

--Why not contact other State Leagues to get ideas on how the national position can better reflect the needs for action.

--National convention in Denver in June will provide the forum for setting national program.

--First, get involved at your local League's national planning meeting this winter to bring a focus to the national board on the importance of this issue.

To Julie and Carol, thank you for all the work and time you have given to this issue. I realize you had a short time to do a tremendous amount of work. I recognize the incredible disappointment you feel now. When the disappointment fades I hope to see you re-energized to continue this important work.

Sincerely,
(signed) Penny
Penny Harris
Director of LWVUS

cc To other State Board Directors

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is a complete and true copy of Ms Harris' letter conveying the information that the LWV-ME request for support from LWV-US for our position on closing Maine Yankee had been refused.

To live a life is not so simple as crossing a field.

--Russian proverb.

* * * * *

MESSAGE FROM MARLEE



Take the lead!

Inform yourself on the Ballot Measures of the November 3 election! The League has taken positions on #10 to preserve Maine land. We also are supporting #2, 3, 6, 9, and 11. People count on us for voter information. Channel 8 and the Republican Party have been calling us. Be ready to explain to friends who ask you!

Become up to date on issues of Arms Control. Penny Harris and I have pulled together community leaders for discussions with Senators George Mitchell and Bill Cohen. Please phone or write them of your individual support for progress on ABM Treaty, Salt II, limits, lowering funding of Star Wars and extending the antisatellite moratorium. (See Ethel Schwalbe's arms control article in this issue of The Voter.)

Consider applying to the State Board to be a State League representative to the LWVUS Leadership Training Conference in February in New Jersey. The future of our Leagues depends on qualified leadership.

Plan to participate in the Quad State (NH, RI, VT, ME) Council next April/May (ask Nancy Freeman re dates!!!!). Bimonthly we meet in Concord NH to share our Leagues' needs and successes. Call Marlee if you would like to join in a meeting there.

Volunteer at the League office in Augusta. Read interesting mail, answer interesting phone calls (anything you don't know, someone else can call back), and be a Presence in the Capitol. Pick three hours per month (Tues - Thurs?) and help keep League in the Lead!

Send your ideas for National program to your local League or directly to the State League. We are planning to support a mini study on a maxi item: Nuclear Power and Waste. This would give LWV Maine and other Leagues a basis for future action. What are YOUR ideas??

MARLEE

* * * * *

MDI LWV (continued from page 1)
is not a specific nongeneric problem,
what is?

National apparently argued that many nuclear power plants have evacuation problems unique to their sites, therefore Maine Yankee's evacuation problems are not unique. Evidently, "unique" is used as a synonym for "specific nongeneric". I can accept this equivalency; however, this is exactly the same as saying, "I have unique financial problems; many women have unique financial problems; therefore, I am not unique".

We are also cited for not talking with the management of Maine Yankee or having a history of working on the evacuation plant. Some problems don't go away with discussion. They require action. Short of the closure of Maine Yankee, the evacuation problem won't go away.

Let's dig into that study of Carol's and Julie's and start saving money to send the two of them to Denver!

(signed) Patty Letcher
President, MDI LWV

INITIATIVE, BOND ISSUES AND CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

To be Voted on

November 3, 1987

1. Do you want to let any power plant like Maine Yankee operate after July 4, 1988, if it makes high level nuclear waste?
2. "Do you favor a \$8,000,000 bond issue for cleaning up and closing solid waste landfills that pose a hazard to public health and to ground water quality?"
3. "Shall a bond issue be authorized in the amount of \$8,300,000 for construction of sewage treatment facilities in communities throughout the State?"
4. "Shall the State create the Maine Job Development Program to be funded with a \$6,000,000 bond issue?"
5. "Do you favor a \$3,100,000 bond issue for pier reconstruction at the Maine Maritime Academy?"
6. "Do you favor a \$3,000,000 bond issue for removal of oil storage tanks and related ground water restoration?"
7. "Do you favor a \$8,000,000 bond issue for capital repairs and improvements to state facilities and the removal of asbestos from state facilities?"
8. "Do you favor a \$5,000,000 bond issue for acquisition of school buses for Maine public schools?"
9. "Do you favor a \$26,500,000 bond issue for highway, bridge and airport improvements and to reduce ground water pollution resulting from the storage of state and municipally-owned highway materials?"
10. "Shall a bond issue for the purchase of public land access for Maine's people in the amount of \$35,000,000, to be issued over a period of 4 years be approved?"
11. "Do you favor a \$6,000,000 bond issue for detection and removal of asbestos hazards in state facilities and public schools?"
12. "Shall the Constitution of Maine be amended to clarify the rights of citizens to keep and bear arms?"
13. "Shall the Constitution of Maine be amended to require a candidate for State Representative or State Senator to be a resident in the district which the candidate seeks to represent at the time he is nominated to be placed on any election ballot?"

ACTION ALERT

The state board of the League of Women Voters of Maine has voted to support the bond issue for purchase of land in the state for public use. The question is #10 on the ballot of referendum questions to be voted on November 3. (See list on page 4).

The money will be expended over a four-year period -- \$5 million during the first year, \$10 million yearly for three years thereafter. The funds will be administered by a nine-member board made up of four private citizens and the commissioners of the Department of Conservation, Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, Agriculture, and Transportation plus the director of the State Planning Office. The lands to be selected for purchase will be judged according to three criteria: their recreational potential or scenic significance; their importance as habitat for species that are considered rare, threatened, or endangered; and whether they provide public access to recreational opportunities or outstanding natural resources.

The issue is urgent and the problems a "yes" vote will help to solve are basic to the future of Maine people.

Land speculators are buying up large tracts in the state for subdivision, often several hundred acres at a time. If the trend continues, a day may come when lands traditionally open to public access are closed off by private development. In 1983 the Department of Environmental Protection processed 608 development applications; in 1986, 1332 applications.

Pressures are increasing on state-owned lands. Day use of Maine state parks increased from 1.5 million people in 1976 to 2.7 million in 1986. Hikers in Baxter State Park increased from 51,873 in 1983 to 63,425 in 1986. Nonresident tourist visits to Maine were 3.1 million in 1973; in 1985, 6.3 million. Maine ranks 47th among the 50 states for the amount of public park land it has per 1000 people. More land accessible to the public would ease some of these pressures and help to safeguard recreational areas against overuse.

Local Leagues can make a difference by publicizing the need for a "yes" vote on Referendum Question #10.

--Submitted by LaRue Spiker

* * * * *

RUTH FOSTER, a representative in Augusta, will speak at the Meadowview Complex in Ellsworth at 11:00 a.m., Saturday, October 31, on issues to be voted on in the November 3 election, including 10 bond issues, 2 constitutional issues, and the initiative on nuclear power. Under the umbrella of national and state positions, the League supports referenda #2, 3, 6, 9, 10, and 11, all recommended by the governor's subcommittee on groundwater control.

--Submitted by Pat Cyphers

CALENDAR FOR 1987-1988

NOVEMBER

3 ELECTION DAY

DECEMBER

2, Wed. Board meeting, State House, Augusta, 9:30-2:30
15, Tue. Deadline for copy for THE VOTER. NO COPY RECEIVED AFTER THIS DATE
WILL BE PUBLISHED. NO COPY WILL BE PUBLISHED THAT IS UNDATED OR
SUBMITTED WITHOUT SENDER IDENTIFICATION.

JANUARY

4, Mon. Fact Sheet, Consensus Questionnaire on Nuclear Power and Nuclear
Waste ready for local Leagues
11, Mon. Publication of THE VOTER
20, Wed. Board meeting, State House, Augusta, 9:30-2:30
27, Wed. KEYS TO THE CAPITOL and Blaine House Reception
Input on National Program due

FEBRUARY

Local Leagues hold consensus meetings on Nuclear Power and Nuclear
Waste and public meetings wherever possible

MARCH

2 Board meeting, State House, Augusta, 9:30-2:30
21 Deadline for copy for THE VOTER. See Dec. 15
Call to Quad State Council

APRIL

1 Publication of THE VOTER
LAST CALL To Quad State Council
11 Deadline for Quad State Council Booklet
14 Board meeting, State House, Augusta, 9:30-2:30
Consensus on Nuclear Power

APRIL 29, 30, MAY 1 - Quad State Council, Kennebunkport, Maine

JUNE 11-15 National Convention, LWVUS, Denver, Colorado

ACTION AGENDA

In addition to ongoing Voter Education programs, the LWV-ME will act on issues relating to the following agenda:

--AIR/WATER/PESTICIDES--Promote the wise use of and prevent degradation of water and air resources in Maine;
--NUCLEAR ISSUES--Reconsider current State and National positions on nuclear power and nuclear waste;
--NATIONAL SECURITY--Support meaningful and verifiable arms control and reduction efforts; oppose funding for SDI and other systems which have first-strike implications;
--LAND USE MANAGEMENT--Support comprehensive land use planning with emphasis on cumulative effects of development;
--BASIC HUMAN NEEDS--Evaluate public and private responsibilities for providing food, shelter, a basic income level, and access to health care;
--CAMPAIGN FINANCE--Work to correct the inadequacies of the present campaign finance laws;
--REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS--Protect the right of an individual to make personal decisions on reproductive choices.

PORTFOLIO UPDATE

RECONSIDER CURRENT STATE AND NATIONAL POSITIONS ON NUCLEAR POWER AND NUCLEAR WASTE

GOALS:

- to study specific aspects of defense and commercial nuclear facilities and waste management issues
- to update, re-evaluate, clarify and consider new aspects of nuclear issues
- to reach a state consensus by April 1988
- to seek National concurrence via Convention '88
- to gain greater emphasis on nuclear issues at the National level.

SCOPE
OF
STUDY:

- transportation and packaging of nuclear material
- decommissioning: methods, responsibility, worker protection, funding
- classification of radioactive waste and mixed waste
- liability issues: utility and contractor responsibility vs. taxpayer responsibility (Price-Anderson)
- evacuation planning and emergency preparedness
- changes in Atomic Energy Act, Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982, and Low Level Waste Policy Act of 1980
- defense facilities: environmental laws
- alternative sources of energy: continued reliance on nuclear power
- siting criteria and methods for waste storage disposal: high and low
- radiation exposure levels: what is really safe?
- food irradiation
- regulation, enforcement, penalties
- generic and nongeneric safety issues.

METHOD:

- develop information fact sheet
- encourage public informational meeting held by local leagues where possible
- develop consensus questionnaire
- hold central meeting with local league contacts to explain and answer questions about consensus
- local league consensus meetings
- State Board approval of consensus - April 1988
- take consensus to National Convention '88 -- aim for Convention approval to send our consensus out to state or local leagues for whole or partial concurrence.

Julie Howison
Carol Fritz



NEXT NATIONAL STUDY: Economic Conversion?

Will "Economic Conversion" become a household word? If one west coast league has its way, "economic conversion" will become at least a League household word. The Monterey Peninsula League is urging leagues across the country to join it in a campaign to make "economic conversion" a two-year national study.

What is economic conversion? It involves the orderly redirection of resources from the military economy to socially useful economic endeavors and civilian growth industries. It is a way to bring about a smooth transition to a peace economy for military-dependent workers and communities. It is a key to providing for the human needs of our citizens.

The LWVUS has long supported the concept that "national security" has many dimensions and "cannot be limited to military policy alone". One of these dimensions is our economic health. Sustained war spending has triggered devastating impacts on our economy and society:

- turned the US into the world's largest trade debtor nation
- neglected the critical human needs of our citizens
- drained talent from the commercial sector to defense industries by high wages and lavish funding, thereby sapping American competitiveness and our position as a leading economic power
- created a "weapons constituency" which backs military spending to forestall layoffs and plant closings, often without regard to the merits of the weapons system to American security
- spawned the view that arms controls threaten economic stability
- led to the decay of America's infrastructure: roads, bridges, waterways, etc.

Many of the League's goals cannot be achieved without a re-ordering of our nation's priorities: economic conversion unlocks our future.

The Monterey League's conviction is that the LWVUS can play a significant role in making economic conversion a logical and responsible bridge to a safer world. Leagues interested in promoting economic conversion, please writer to

Economic Conversion Committee
LWV of Monterey Peninsula
Box 1995
Monterey, CA 93942.

--Sondra Rees
President, LWV MP

PORTFOLIO UPDATE

ARMS CONTROL: SOME THOUGHTS --- AND A CHALLENGE

"Standing alone, unlinked to the other components of arms control, the new INF agreement will be hostage to the outcome of further negotiations, and vulnerable to new military decisions on both sides. It is difficult to imagine an INF agreement surviving the collapse of the ABM treaty and the beginning of SDI competition. This isolation from other points at issue is a major defect of the new agreement."

"Whether in arms control or regional negotiations, a serious American diplomacy will finally have to decide how to define and deal with legitimate Soviet interests, and how to gain public support for a policy that inevitably involves some American concessions to these interests.... The effort to...[control nuclear arms and resolve regional conflicts]...is bound to be protracted and will involve reconciling contradictions and finely tuning tactics and strategy. A policy that requires such a consistent and careful management in a democratic society is not doomed to fail, but it is extraordinarily difficult to carry out. Above all, it will have to command the depth of public support necessary to sustain the policy when challenged in the next crisis."

These quotations are from an article, "Reagan-Gorbachev III," written by William G. Hyland, editor, and published in Foreign Affairs, Fall 1987. Underscoring has been added.

How is public support to be gained and maintained? (I would add, "maintained when challenged in the partisan debate of an election year".) Obviously, we as League members can do our part to help. We took our consensus on the arms control issue; now is the time to follow through and act. I'm suggesting simple, not-very-time-consuming ways. Can every LWV of Maine member write at least two letters a year on this subject to the newspaper serving her/his area? Can at least a few members in each League and among our members-at-large make this an even greater priority and commit themselves to write a letter a month? And to visit editors personally if an editorial is negative or lacks a long-range perspective?

As Leagues, can we make room on our busy agendas for one or more discussion meetings, inviting neighbors or co-workers who are still "afraid of those Russians"?

As National Security Chair, what can I do to help? Should I send more timely action alerts than can come in the National Voter? Should I send copies of articles that I think would be helpful in developing your letters (articles from Foreign Affairs, Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists, The New York Times)? I don't believe in form letters, but should I provide outlines of points you might want to cover?

A letter is going to local League presidents asking some of these questions, but this request is to individual members:

Please let me know if you are willing to help "gain public support" for meaningful arms control and a viable Soviet-American relationship. Please let me know what assistance I can provide to you in these efforts.

Ethel M. Schwalbe, National Security Chair, Box 137-B, Steuben, ME 04680, 546-7436.

STATE BOARD -- ABBREVIATED MINUTES OF AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER MEETINGS:

AUGUST 5, 1987: Judy Harrison gave the highest recommendation to the July, 1987, National Voter article on leadership. She rates it the best ever and urges all members to read it.

Local League program schedules should go to Nellik Doble, MAL coordinator, so that she can inform Leaguers not in a local League.

Sherry Nemmers was delegate to LWVUS Washington seminar on basic human needs. Marion Holshouser attended a National Security Update seminar.

Jo Bancroft will send fund-raising letter to corporations, foundations and current members.

SEPTEMBER 10, 1987: Action Motion on Maine Yankee: Unanimous vote to pursue approval from National in spite of objection from CT League; to refocus on evacuation, to present educational information to the public; to continue towards consensus for National Convention '88.

Voted to accept minor changes in Position Paper Update, and to have a run of 60 printed.

Coalition Programs: Arms Control '88 series at Westbrook College, Portland, will begin on October 29 with William Colby. Marion Holshouser will represent the League at this meeting.

Quad State Council: April 29 and 30 and May 1, 1988, Village Cove Inn, Kennebunkport.

Wini Mott was commended for publication income, and Nellik Doble was commended for her fine work as MAL coordinator.

All local Leagues are urged to remit dues as generously and as expeditiously as possible.

* * * * *

LOCAL LEAGUE NEWS: YORK COUNTY --

The community study (York County), chaired by Evelyn Scripture, should be completed early in 1988. Voter registration of senior citizens and shut-ins has started, and the ongoing membership drive will continue throughout the year.

Officers for the Provisional Year 1987-88 are: Sarah Ledoux, President; Evelyn Scripture, Vice President and Program Chair; Alysian Hooper, Treasurer/Fundraiser; Alice Gates, Secretary; Betty Williams, Public Relations; Margaret Tragard, Membership; Elizabeth Brewster and Alice Seaward, Social Activities Co-Chairs; Carolyn Blouin and Kathleen Dixon, Bulletin Publication Co-Chairs; Nancy Freeman, Budget; Ruth McKenney, Nominating Committee Chair.

CANDIDATE FORUMS BOOKLET AVAILABLE

The LWV-ME has published a pamphlet to help groups organize and conduct candidate forums during the election season. Entitled "Candidates Forums," the booklet includes advice on how to choose a moderator and set up forum ground rules, as well as useful tips for the successful moderator. It also contains a check list and timetable to make organizing a forum easier. The pamphlet can be helpful also in setting up issue forums. Cost of this publication is .50 or 3/1.00.

OTHER LWV-ME PUBLICATIONS:

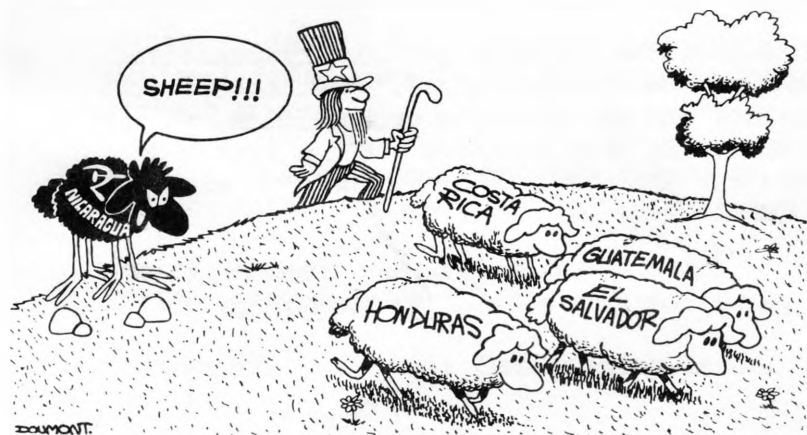
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AS OTHERS SEE US



Doumont/Diario Tiempo/San Pedro Sula, Honduras



"Couldn't we just run up a plain white flag without any design on it?"

Mahood/Daily Mail/London



Tomaschoff/Süddeutsche Zeitung/Munich



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