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THE VOTER

Vol. 5, No. 2

The League of Women Voters of Maine

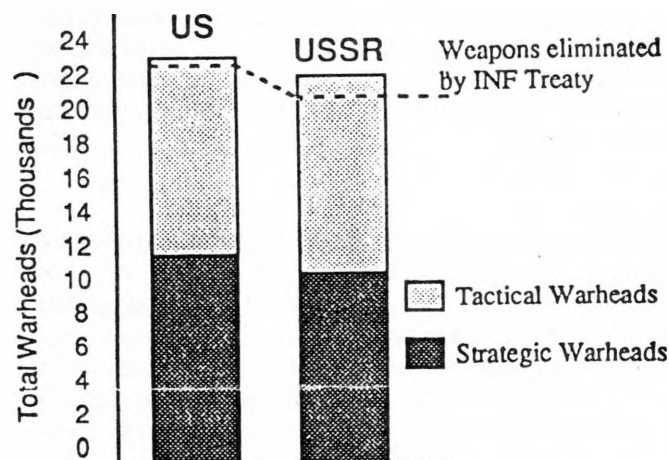
January, 1988

It's Not Finished

Last month President Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev signed an historic agreement reducing the world's nuclear arsenal by approximately 4%, eliminating an entire class of weapons, intermediate range nuclear missiles, from Europe. Of the approximately 1900 weapons being destroyed, 1600 of them are Soviet. For a President who took office nearly eight years ago believing in a "winnable" nuclear war, the INF Treaty is a major step toward arms control and reduction. We have had very little opportunity to praise this administration in the area of arms control; we should do so now with a will.

We should not, however, sit back and congratulate ourselves too long on this small but significant victory. The signing of the INF Treaty is certainly a step toward true national and international security, but it is only a step. We cannot afford to lose momentum now. There are greater challenges ahead.

To begin with, the ratification process is likely to be rough. While ratification requires a two-thirds majority vote of the House and Senate, the process of amendment requires only a simple majority vote. League observers believe Jesse Helms and



possibly other conservative legislators will attempt to attach "killer" amendments to the INF treaty. Our legislators need to hear from us frequently as the ratification process goes forward.

Furthermore, the INF Treaty does not stop the arms race. Several crucial arms control issues are entirely unaddressed by this treaty and must not be eclipsed by this stellar agreement. Existing treaties, the ABM and SALT II, need to be preserved and maintained. Maine's congressional delegation can be commended for supporting the preservation of both these treaties. Reinterpretation, however, is a constant threat we need to monitor. In his speech following the Washington summit, President Reagan emphatically stated, "When it [SDI] is read to deploy, we will do so." Deployment is in clear violation of the ABM treaty!

SDI funding will probably reflect a 10% increase over last year. Anyone who believes SDI is in any way remotely connected to any form of security should read former SDI director Robert Bowman's newsletters. Among other more technical things, he points out how easy it would be just to

(cont'd on page 2)

float a bomb ashore in a bale of marijuana, rather neatly circumventing all the pie in the sky.

In September, the US and USSR agreed to negotiate toward a nuclear test ban. A joint statement issued at that time reads, "The ultimate objective is the complete cessation of nuclear testing as part of an effective disarmament process." Recently, the House passed a bill with the support of both Snowe and Brennan which would have eliminated most nuclear testing. A similar measure failed in the Senate by 62 to 35, Mitchell for, Cohen against.

Opposing any reductions in testing, Roger Batzel, director of Lawrence

(cont'd on page 2)

Livermore National Laboratory, has insisted that testing is necessary to make sure our stockpiles are still in good working order. His views have been strongly echoed by Casper Weinberger, former Secretary of Defense. A new comprehensive study conducted by Ray E. Kidder, physicist at Lawrence Livermore Lab with thirty-one years of experience in the national nuclear weapons program and author of more than 100 reports on weapons designs and effect, refutes Batzel and Weinberger and concludes that nuclear stockpiles do not require testing to prove their effectiveness. University of California Regents, which operates Lawrence Livermore and Los Alamos for the government, concurs with Kidder.

If the government seriously believes a nuclear test ban treaty to be "part of an effective disarmament process," the Soviets seem more than willing to agree. The USSR has already agreed to on-site inspection and cortex monitoring (a verification procedure which requires a well to be drilled at each missile site). In June, Mikhail Gorbachev told a meeting of the International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War that the USSR would stop testing "tomorrow" if the US would agree. No doubt this is not a token promise from a country which maintained a 19-month uni-

lateral moratorium on testing while the US conducted 22 nuclear tests.

Another facet of the arms race the League should acquaint itself with is our increased reliance on SLBMs, sea-launched ballistic missiles called Trident II. SLBMs are destabilizing, first-strike weapons of such accuracy that they can destroy Soviet missiles in their silos. According to the Center for Defense Information, the SLBMs are extremely expensive, unnecessary missiles which "transform current US naval weapons from retaliatory forces to war-fighting forces, further increasing the risk of nuclear war." The \$3.5 billion FY 88 request for the Trident II is "the single highest procurement request in the entire military budget" (The Defense Monitor, Vol. XVI, No. 6). The entire SLBM program will cost about \$50 billion.

We can't stop with the INF Treaty. Since Reagan became president, military spending has doubled. Peace through strength has meant military strength; national security has been inevitably linked to military supremacy. The League's Campaign for a Safer World is working for a saner world as well. Let's all accept Ethel Schwalbe's challenge in the October Voter and make a New Year's resolution to each do our best to gain public support for a truly secure world.

--Patty Letcher, President LWV-MDI



Bas/Tachydromos/Athens

CAN WE BE VIGILANT FOR 10,000 YEARS?

Just as we have completed the absorption of lessons learned from Chernobyl in the handling of atomic materials by people presumably skilled in their employment comes an even more frightening example of the consequences which can ensue when people ignorant of atomic materials lay hands upon them.

From an abandoned medical clinic in Goiania, Brazil, two young scavengers last year removed a gallon-sized steel cylinder from a cancer therapy machine which had been left behind. A scrap dealer bought the cylinder. One of his employees pried open the lid to reveal an interesting, glowing, blue salt-like substance. He found it so pleasing that he took it home, exhibited it on his mantel and shared it with some friends.

The substance was 1400 curies of cesium-137.

Within a short time 244 people were contaminated. Four died, two remain in guarded condition and 15 are still hospitalized. The toll would have been greater had not one of the victims gone to a public health clinic a week later where an alert employee suspected radiation illness and sounded the alarm. No one can yet guess the eventual effects in terms of cancer and genetic aberrations on survivors and progeny.

Spreading from one small house, a two-thousand square meter area has been contaminated. Some buildings have been razed, others are still dangerously radio-active and may have to be destroyed. Contaminated furniture, cars, buses, money and domestic animals have all been identified while tons of contaminated soil are being packed into concrete lined drums.

Something akin to public panic set in. Fear that the water supply was contaminated caused a public outcry when victims were buried in a local cemetery even though encased in 1200-pound lead coffins. Food products grown in that part of Brazil were being refused in other markets. However slightly contaminated, anyone so found was socially ostracized. Finally, Brazil's new nuclear energy program has been called into question.

As in the Chernobyl experience, international help in caring for victims was promptly requested and received. A lively dispute arose as to which administrative agency was to blame for the lack of monitoring which led to the disaster. It is said that indictments are being prepared against various regulatory agencies, each of whom disavows responsibility, and against the owners of the clinic who abandoned the cancer therapy machine in the first place.

One is struck here by the validity of the conclusions drawn by Dr. Wesley Wallace at the "Bombs Away" seminar held last year in Bangor (cf: Implications of Chernobyl, Videotape, LWV-MDI) as applied to this civilian horror story of negligence and administrative confusion.

Dr. Wallace concluded that mistakes or errors are bound to happen when dealing with the extraordinarily complex technology of an atomic facility. One might well say the same here when applied to complex societal administrative structures. His other conclusion, that medical science has little to offer in ameliorating a true atomic disaster, receives confirmation.

The reader is encouraged to consult a superb and exhaustive account from which I have taken my facts: Leslie Roberts, "Radiation Accident Grips Goiania," Science, Vol. 238, Nov. 1987, pp. 1028-1031.

--Arthur A. Charpentier

CALENDAR, JANUARY - JUNE, 1988

JANUARY

4, Mon. Fact Sheet, Consensus Questionnaire on Nuclear Power and Nuclear Waste ready for local Leagues
11, Mon. Publication of THE VOTER
26, Wed. Board meeting, State House, Augusta, time and room in agenda
21 26, Tue. 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, Wed. Board meeting, State House, Augusta, 9:30-2:30
21, Mon. Deadline for copy for THE VOTER
Call to Quad State Council

APRIL

1, Fri. Publication of THE VOTER
LAST CALL to Quad State Council
11, Mon. Deadline for Quad State Council Booklet
14, Thur. 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

UPDATE ON KEYS TO THE CAPITOL

We learned at our recent LWVME Board meeting that the governor would not be in Augusta on January 27. So rather than miss out on his presence at the late afternoon Blaine House reception, we've changed the date for our Keys to the Capitol shindig to Tuesday, January 26 (snow day, February 2).

The theme for this year will tie in with the League's national study on Basic Human Needs. We have invited LIBBY MITCHELL, Commissioner on Housing, ROLLIN IVES, Commissioner on Human Services, REP. NEIL ROLDE, legislative committeeman on Human Resources. PAUL HASKELL, Director of York County United Way, ED PERT, Clerk of the House (who, we're told, has a potpourri of stories) to join us and inform us of legislative activities relating to our study.

We will also leave time for individual Leagues to pursue their own interests.

Circle January 26 in your memory, grab a car full of friends, and spend a day basking in the sunshine of camaraderie with people interested in what is happening in our state.
--Margaret Tragard

MESSAGE FROM MARLEE

League presence and action expand like concentric circles in a pond...

- When you call another League member
- When you participate in a meeting
- When your group meets with elected officials
- When you write a letter to the editor
- When you present candidate debates
- When you network with other groups on joint issues.

Recently we have networked with other groups in

- Arms control meetings in Portland
- Small group talks with Senators Mitchell and Cohen
- Radio talks against aid to the Contras
- Televised press conference opposing requirement of parental consent before help can be given needy teenagers
- "Toasting the Summit!" press conference
- Planning legislative priorities in women's issues
- Seeking ways among New England states to make League more effective in times of change.

Coming up is our unique KEYS TO THE CAPITOL, our League day in Augusta, January 26, 1988. With our focus this year on our Human Needs study, we will learn, discuss, invite your legislator to lunch, and visit the Legislature in action. Our finale is a Reception for Legislators and Executive Officials in the Blaine House, with a welcome by Governor Jock McKernan. PLAN TO BRING A FRIEND!!!

Some other opportunities include:

- Work on the U.S. Senatorial Debates with York County League
- Help the State League with our Long Range Planning
- Assist Bangor League in election reporting for ABC
- Participate in study and consensus on Nuclear Energy study
- Join in LWVUS Program Planning
- Make a team of two for fundraising
- Enjoy your fellow League members!
- YOUR OWN CREATIVE IDEAS!

I suggest a personal challenge to you:

- Choose the area of League work that you love and do well
- Tackle something a little harder than you think you can do
- Watch your personal growth and smile of satisfaction!

You are a vital part in League effectiveness! THANK YOU!

NUCLEAR ISSUES

-PORTFOLIO UPDATES-PORTFOLIO UPDAT

TO: LOCAL LEAGUE PRESIDENTS / ENERGY CONTACT PEOPLE

FROM: JULIE HOWISON / 262 CAPRIC ST. / PORTLAND, MAINE 04102 (772-1197)
CAROL FRITZ / 9 HUNT CLUB WOODS / CAPE ELIZABETH, ME (767-3737)
04/10/87

RE: STATEWIDE CONSENSUS ON NUCLEAR ISSUES
ENERGY COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES - UPDATE
NATIONAL CONVENTION '88' DENVER

I. RESULTS OF ACTION MOTIONS FROM STATE CONVENTION (87):

- (A) Action Motion to call for closing of Mc. Yankee - denied Oct. 87
see letters from Marilyn Reeves (LWV, U.S.). Carol & Julie are responding.
- (*) Letters from Penny Harris (who did not support us or understand the position in our opinion) and Patty Letcher are in the last issue of The Voter.
- (B) ACTION MOTION ON PRICE ANDERSON LEGISLATION - Not allowed to send to our Congresspeople because LWV, U.S. doesn't have an advocacy agenda.

II. OTHER ACTIVITIES:

- Questionnaire on Nuclear Power sent to all state Presidents & Energy Chairs
- Letters to all local Leagues near Nuclear Power Plants regarding National Program Planning and explaining our strategy for Convention 88.

III. STATE CONSENSUS TIME SCHEDULE

December / January ----- Develop consensus questions + fact sheets
February ----- Mail out consensus questions + fact sheets
March 1 → April 22 ----- Statewide Consensus Meetings

Portland Area League / York League	Julie + Carol (2 meetings)
Brunswick / MIDCOAST LEAGUES	Marianne Haughwout Carol or Julie
MDI / Ellsworth	Patty Letcher Blaine Kenniston

Bangor League	Judy Harrison Carol or Julie	suggested dates: March 5, 12, 19, 26
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April - Tally Results of Consensus by April 29th (pick one plus snow date)
Seek Board Approval for Consensus
May - Prepare for National Convention (Quad state meeting)

June 11-15 NATIONAL CONVENTION - DENVER

Please work on dates for your local league's meeting(s) so that Carol & Julie may help out. Julie will be on vacation Feb. 16 → March 8 and Carol " " " " April 1 - 15

IV. ENCLOSED IS UPDATED COPY OF OUR SCOPE OF STUDY

PORTFOLIO UPDATES-PORTFOLIO UPDATE

NATURAL RESOURCES

Clean Air has been waiting for Congressional action for six long years! According to E.P.A., between 14 and 45 air toxics are causing at least 2000 cases of cancer annually and we are now experiencing a public health crisis. It is no longer a threat to only lakes and forests, but is also affecting an estimated 115 million people with such chronic diseases as asthma, bronchitis, emphysema, and heart trouble.

On October 22, the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee, by a vote of 14 to 2, approved comprehensive legislation designed to strengthen and revitalize the nation's air pollution laws. The Senate bill addresses the major issues of air pollution: 1) zone (smog) pollution and nonattainment deadlines; 2) toxic pollutants; 3) acid rain. This bill sets goals to reduce national emissions of sulfur dioxide by 12 million tons by the year 2000. This reduction is to be achieved in three stages: 5 million tons by 1993, 5 million tons by 1998, and 2 million more tons by 2000. This bill is number S1894.

Both Representatives Brennan and Snowe have joined 169 other representatives in signing a letter written by Representatives Vento (D-MN) and Green (R-N.Y.) to leaders of the House Committee on Energy and Commerce asking for prompt approval of a strong clean air bill. There appears to be a deadlock in the Subcommittee on Health and Environment so that a bill may not reach the floor!

The Murtha amendment supporting as long nonattainment extension was defeated by a vote of 257 to 162. The League supports the Conte amendment and urges that you call or write your representative at once and ask him or her to support a strong clean air bill.

The Honorable Joseph Brennan
1428 Longworth Office Building
Washington, D. C. 20515
(202)225-6116
Portland - 780-3382

The Honorable Olympia Snowe
2464 Rayburn Office Building
Washington, D. C. 20515
(202)225-6306
Auburn - 786-2451
Bangor - 945-0432.

How much do you know about your drinking water? The LWVUS is undertaking a three-year study in an effort to educate citizens in the management and regulation of drinking water. If your local League is interested in participating in this study, please contact me or

Beth Reichheld, LWV Education Fund
1730 M Street N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20036.

SAFETY ON TAP, A Citizens' Drinking Water Handbook is available at the same address and offers excellent background material.

--Pat Cyphers, Natural Resources Chair, LWV-ME
Box 176, Hancock Point
Hancock, Me. 04640.

LWV-ME LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

ON LAND USE, 1987-1988

1. Statewide comprehensive plan: one of the state's major environmental organizations is recommending that the state mandate local comprehensive plans to be reviewed and approved under state criteria. The League of Women Voters of Maine supports this concept and believes that the state should undertake the same planning tool for itself.

2. The state should develop criteria for evaluating the cumulative impact of development in the towns and establish guidelines regulating what, where, and when is enough development in a neighborhood or community. The towns should be mandated under their health, safety, and welfare powers to refuse an application if a new development will have a deleterious effect on the neighborhood where the siting is planned.

3. Consultants on development applications should be selected by and be responsible to the town; stipends to be paid by the developer.

4. The state should develop more precise and definitive information on groundwater.

5. The regulations should require a sample well for developments that will depend on a private water supply. The well should be evaluated by a qualified hydrogeologist as to quality and quantity, and (s)he should evaluate the quantity that will be needed by the development in relation to other demands on the aquifer.

6. Eliminate the 40-acre maximum for state evaluation of subdivisions and lower the minimum to ten acres.

7. Town planning and issuing of permits should be handled by separate town agencies. At present many planning boards are so busy with development applications that they do not have time for planning. Means for coordinating these two closely related responsibilities should be sought.

8. Consideration should be given to imposing a capital gains tax on developments with the funds going into a trust fund to be used for the development/purchase of housing for lower middle-income people.

9. The towns need more technical and planning assistance from the state.

10. Decrease minimum size of freshwater wetlands subject to regulation from ten acres to five acres.

--LaRue Spiker

* * * * *

Civilised man was nearly always able to become master of his environment temporarily. His chief troubles came from his delusions that his temporary mastership was permanent. He thought of himself as "master of the world," while failing to understand fully the laws of nature.

Tom Dale and Vernon Gill Carter: TOPSOIL AND CIVILISATION

WLAC PLANS AGENDA

The Women's Legislative Agenda Coalition will hold a press conference at 11 a.m. Monday, January 11, in the State House to announce its agenda. The final agenda will be set at a 6 p.m. meeting Tuesday, January 5, at the Maine Commission for Women's office in Augusta.

The Coalition's theme for this Legislative session will be "The Family." Bills most likely to be included in the group's agenda are:

- An Act to Provide for Child Care and Child Development Training for Student Parents;
- An Act to Establish Child Care Availability for Individuals in the Substance Abuse Treatment System;
- An Act to Ensure Family Leave in the State of Maine;
- An Act to Correct Inequities in the Maine State Retirement System;
- An Act to Improve the Standard of Living for Maine's Low-Income Children (10% AFDC Increase);
- An Act to Make Health Care More Accessible to Low-Income Elderly and Disabled Individuals, Pregnant Women and Children;
- An Act to Make the Language of the Constitution Gender-Neutral;
- An Act to Increase the Minimum Wage;
- A groups of bills concerning child care services and
- Bills held over from the last Legislative session concerning AFDC Indexing, AFDC Dental Care, and Spousal Impoverishment.

The LWV-ME is one of 26 state-wide organizations belonging to WLAC. Over the past four years approximately 85% of the bills WLAC has supported have been enacted into law by the Legislature. Judy Harrison is the League's representative to WLAC. For more information on the organization and its agenda, call her at 942-1545. --Judy Harrison

SHIRLEY CHISHOLM TO SPEAK AT WOMEN WINNING CONFERENCE

Former U.S. Rep. Shirley Chisholm will be the keynote speaker at the "Women Winning: The Time is Now" Conference. The day-long program, sponsored by the Maine Commission for Women, will be held from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Saturday, January 16, at Bates College in Lewiston.

A member of the Feminist Party of Iceland also will speak. Because Iceland's two major parties hold the same number of seats in Parliament, the smaller Feminist Party was asked to lead the government. Conference organizers invited a representative "to tell American women what it's like to be in power."

Cost for the conference will be \$15 in advance, or \$20 at the door. The cost includes lunch. Child care will be available. For more information contact the Maine Commission for Women, 289-3417. --Judy Harrison

ATTEMPTED END-RUN BY CIFIC

The Committee for Improved Family Communication, formed by Jasper Wyman and Sandra Foucher, asked every state Legislator to sign a card stating his/her position on whether minors should be required to have parental consent before they could have an abortion. The Committee also asked Legislators to return the cards to the Committee so the Committee could publish the names of those Legislators who supported parental consent as well as those who did not. The Committee further requested Legislators not to put the proposed referendum requiring parental consent for abortion on the ballot, but to pass the proposed referendum into law.

The LWV was made aware of the Committee's tactics by Rep. Pat Stevens of Bangor, an LWV member of long-standing. The LWV-ME issued a statement at a press conference held in Portland with other groups which oppose the Committee's tactics.

"By requesting a commitment from Legislators by November 20, before the bill has been printed and before public hearings on the bill can be held, the Committee is attempting to circumvent the democratic process," Marlee Coughlan said. "Although the Legislature has the power to enact a referendum into law, it wisely never has chosen to do so. The 44,000 voters who signed the Committee's petitions did not ask the Legislature to enact a law. They asked the Legislature to allow the citizens of Maine to decide the issue of parental consent.

"Threatening to publicize the names of the Legislators who 'make the pledge' is the kind of political intimidation the League of Women Voters has opposed since its formation in 1920."

In conclusion, Marlee said, "As we celebrate the Bicentennial of the United States Constitution, the League urges Legislators and citizens to oppose the Committee's attempt to circumvent the democratic principles that precious document outlines. The League is confident that once the public is aware of the Committee's action, citizens will not allow this attempt to bypass the democratic process to succeed."

WOMEN IN STATE GOVERNMENT

New Hampshire leads the country in the number of women that make up its Legislature and has 4% more than Maine according to a magazine published by the National Conference of State Legislatures. Women represent 32.5% of New Hampshire's General Court.

Women continue to gain seats throughout the country, with the number of female legislators quadrupling since 1969. Of the seats in state legislatures, 1166, or 15.6%, are held by women. In Maine, women hold 28.5% of the seats in the Legislature; in Vermont, 24.4%.

POLICY ON POLICIES

LWV-ME policies are intended to serve as a guide to all persons connected with the League of Women Voters of Maine. They are to be kept in a loose leaf format so that it will never be considered complete. Suggestions for additions or modifications are encouraged and should be directed to the LWV-ME president.

The LWV-ME president or a designated board member shall review existing policies annually and shall recommend changes or additional policies. Policies may be introduced at any meeting of the board. All policies must be consistent with National policies and positions.

Policies shall be drafted by LWV-ME president or board designee and shall appear on the agenda of a board meeting for first reading. Policies shall have a second reading for adoption at a meeting at least two weeks following the first reading. Policies may be amended at first or second reading and are adopted by majority vote. Once policies are adopted, amendments shall be considered in the same manner as specified for new policies. All newly adopted policies of the LWV-ME shall be published in THE VOTER and distributed to members of the LWV-ME board. --Judy Harrison

OVERVIEW: OCTOBER, DECEMBER STATE BOARD MEETINGS

Margaret Tragard, York League, and Charlotte Wilbur, Portland, were appointed to the Nominating Committee to serve with Bonnie Anderson, chair, Ruth Moss and Ruth Erwin.

Maine League is allowed nine delegates at the LWVUS National Convention which will be held in Denver on June 11-15, 1988.

Julie Howison and Carol Fritz and the Energy Committee were commended for their tireless work on safety and health issues with regard to nuclear waste and siting regulations. We will seek state-wide consensus to present to the National Convention.

LWV-ME is participating in the Arms Control '88 series in Portland, and in Vote Environment '88 in New Hampshire.

We have 44 unaffiliated members-at-large (and still referred to as MALs).

The York League will host a state-wide televised Senatorial Debate in the fall. A motion passed that this be the only League-sponsored debate for the U.S. Senate race so as not to dilute the effort.

Bangor League will coordinate ABC election night reporting, November '88.

Many thanks to Leaguers who have contributed above and beyond their membership dues to our financial well-being; we are still quite pale.

--Charlotte Wilbur, Board Secretary

REPORTS FROM LOCAL LEAGUES

BANGOR-BREWER AREA LWV - JUDY HARRISON REPORTING

League members are working with MPBN on a series of phone-in programs with elected officials. Members have screened calls for Governor John McKernan and Representative Joseph Brennan. In January and February, members will screen calls for Senators William Cohen and George Mitchell. In November, four League members took viewers' questions for a debate on the Nuclear Referendum question. We hope to repay MPBN for letting us be involved in these important public service programs by answering phones for them during their March fund-raising drive.

We celebrated the holidays with a joint program with the Bangor Historical Society at the Society's lovely Thomas Hill House. Attorney Timothy Woodcock spoke to a packed house on "The Iran-Contra Affair: an Insider's View." Tim served as an assistant counsel to the Senate Committee investigating the scandal. Everyone agreed that his insights and information were fascinating.

Member News

JANE SAXL, LWV-ME first vice president, won her election to the Bangor City Council. MARSHALL FRANKEL, Bangor City Council member, was elected to serve as Council Chair. JUDY HARRISON was appointed to the newly formed Eastern Regional Commission for Women.

Fund-raising Tip

Letters of congratulations were sent to candidates who won their elections. We told them we hoped our Candidates' Forums had helped them get their message across and asked for contributions. So far, we have raised \$75.

MOUNT DESERT ISLAND LWV - MARTHA NADEL REPORTING

Kira Bondarenko, who is assistant principal of a school in Moscow, USSR, and was an American Field Service exchange teacher this fall at Orono High School, gave a talk and answered questions Tuesday evening, November 17, in the library of Mount Desert Island High School. She was presented there by the MDI LWV. The event was given page-one coverage in the ELLSWORTH AMERICAN and a feature article in the BAR HARBOR TIMES, both with photographs.

A refreshing sense of humor, along with her affectionate understanding and tolerance of Americans, helped to earn a warm and eager response from her audience. In the Soviet Union, Mrs. Bondarenko is on the staff of Special School #74, which specializes in teaching English to students from 8 to 18 years of age, and is one of more than 50 such English-emphasis schools in

Moscow. A number of other schools feature other languages, but English is by far the most popular foreign language for the young Soviets, she says.

The visitor explained that Soviet students attend school six days a week. "They study very much -- three to four hours every night at home in addition to classwork -- and are very serious about their work," she continued. They are not allowed to take part-time jobs, and their parents are responsible for seeing that they do their schoolwork. Dropouts are rare. "If there is a dropout, it is very bad for the school. We don't need ignorant people in my country."

Textbooks are written by a committee of scholars, and the same texts are used throughout the system, which makes it easier to transfer from one school to another. Basic required subjects include four years of chemistry, four years of biology, five years of physics, and nine years of English or other languages.

Competition is keen for getting into the universities, but those who qualify do not have to pay for their education.

Teachers in the Soviet Union are highly respected, and are paid salaries about equal to physicians, she pointed out, adding: "In the Soviet Union, all students wear similar basic school uniforms. But here in the United States there is such a wide variety of dress. It looks very festive and is probably good."

STUDENT VOTER REGISTRATION PLANNED

The National Association of Secondary School Principals, Division of Student Activities, is planning a nonpartisan student voter registration drive to be held in all public and private high schools nationwide. The project, "Register '88 - Make It A Class Act," is targeted for National Student Leadership Week, April 25-30, 1988. The drive is funded by a grant from the Maurice R. Robinson Foundation of Scholastic Magazine in commemoration of the Bicentennial of the Constitution. It is intended that the drive will be conducted by the student councils with as much student participation as possible - students registering students.

In January, registration kits will be mailed to high school principals. The kits will contain a "generic" guidebook for planning registration drives, posters, updated election laws, concrete ideas for publicity, and incentives to registration. The kits refer the Student Registration Committees to their local LWV, electoral boards and registrars for advice and assistance. We know that the LWV will be of invaluable help to the local schools and we appreciate all you can do to support this project. For further information, contact

--Shirley Olson, member LWV of Fairfax, VA
Coordinator, Division of Student Activities
Nat'l Assoc. of Secondary School Principals
1904 Association Drive, Reston, VA 22091



P.O. Box 15, Hallowell Maine 04347

The MAINE WOMEN'S LOBBY and members of the League of Women Voters have common concerns surrounding women and their families. The Lobby is actively working to address those concerns. It is a grassroots membership organization which depends on membership dues to support the efforts of its lobbyist. The issues on which the Lobby works include, among others, economic equity, childcare, reproductive freedom, rape and domestic violence, and employment and training. This year the Lobby's efforts will also include working to defeat the Parental Consent referendum. In addition to working at the State House, the Lobby also works on involving women in the political process by providing training to make individuals and groups aware of their ability to influence that process.

Basic membership dues to the Lobby are \$15 per year. During the year members are kept up to date on what is happening in Augusta through the Lobby's newsletter which is published frequently during the legislative session. Members can also get involved in a variety of activities from learning to lobby their representatives to recruiting new members and fund-raising. If you are interested in joining or learning more about the Maine Women's Lobby, please write to us c/o P. O. Box 15, Hallowell, ME, 04347, or call KAREN HECK, MWL Chair at 873-4531.

TRAINING WOMEN FOR POLITICAL OFFICE

SUSAN SHAER, a long-time member of the League of Women Voters, is establishing a program at the Institute of Politics, a division of the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, to initiate women into the intricacies of running for political office. Women, who comprise 50.3% of the U.S. population hold only an average of 15.5% of seats in state legislatures.

"Men have been running for office since the first election," she said. "Women have been running in an impressive way only for the past 20 years. That well-established old boys' network has been helpful to male candidates. Women don't have that to rely on."

Shaer, who has just completed a four-year term as president of the Massachusetts League, indicated that women rely on the League, but the League has not been entirely successful "in making women specifically aware of obstacles to women's candidacies."

The program at the Kennedy School would establish a clearing house to provide candidacy information to women. Training would include communication, dealing with the media, and writing and making speeches. The only other similar center in the country is the Center for Women and Politicians at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, N. J., but that center provides aid only to women already holding office.

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HELP WANTED

LWV-ME seeks creative, organized person obsessed with the future to help develop a Long-Range Plan for the state League. JUDY HARRISON, JUNE SAXL and ALVIN MOSS have been appointed to serve as members from the Board. Off-Board members are sought. First meeting will be at noon, February 5, at JUDY HARRISON'S house, 27 Poplar Street, Bangor. To volunteer, call Judy at 942-1545. WHERE ELSE CAN YOU HAVE PIZZA, PLAN LEAGUE'S FUTURE AND HUG A BABY?

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The Maine VOTER is published quarterly by The League of Women Voters of Maine.

Marlee Coughlan, President;

Marie J. Hall, Editor.

Subscriptions with membership in LWV-ME.

Non-member subscriptions, \$7.

League of Women Voters of Maine
335 Water Street
Augusta, ME 04330
207-622-0256

Non-Profit Organization
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Permit No. 43
Brunswick, ME 04011