

# Patterson gains Murphy's support

BY PAT MURPHY

STAFF WRITER

The staff of the Oakland County Executive is bloated and in need of streamlining, according to the Democrat Betty Howe. She said if elected she will trim at least six positions plus a portion of a reorganization.

"Every time somebody was no longer efficient, they hired somebody else," said Howe, whose campaign has assailed what she claims is the old boy network dominating Oakland County government.

Howe, a former director of the Michigan Department of Labor, said she can save \$600,000 by cutting the executive's staff from 17 to 11, and combining functions and responsibilities. She made her comments prior to a press conference scheduled for today in the county auditorium.

Howe is running against former prosecutor L. Brooks Patterson, who earlier in the week picked up a formal endorsement from outgoing county executive Donald M. Murphy.

Murphy, 67 and the county's only executive since 1974, is retiring at the end of the year. He was reportedly missed by rumors that he is not endorsing anyone in the contest to succeed him.

"I am a Republican and Brooks is a Republican," Mur-

phy said Tuesday at a press conference in his office. "I'm doing my duty as a Republican. Brooks knows the system, he knows Oakland County and he knows how to get things done. Brooks Patterson has my full support in his bid to become the next Oakland County executive."

Howe's comments about Murphy's allegedly bloated staff is the closest she has come to criticizing the outgoing executive — somebody she has described as honest and kindly, but not aggressive enough to initiated needed change.

Howe cited county figures showing that Murphy and a staff of 17, including appointees, costs more than \$1.7 million in salary and fringe benefits in 1992.

Howe said she would immediately trim six positions immediately — including the two deputy positions — and reorganize the entire staff. One move calls for eliminating the positions of cultural affairs and public information and combining them into the office of citizens' ombudsman.

"Functions of the ombudsman's office would include reaching out to citizens," Howe said. "That office would help people get what they need from county government."

BY RALPH R. ECHINAWA  
STAFF WRITER

If political liberalism is as hard to sell these days as Lenin statues in Moscow, then author Louis "Studs" Terkel is an expert salesman.

Just before a speech Monday at Oakland University, Terkel said he hoped to "aggravate" the students in the audience, but charmed them instead with the folksy, human, common-man approach that typifies his books and illustrates his political stance.

Wearing a red-and-white shirt, red vest, red socks, "Spencer Tracy" hat and three red rubber bands around his right wrist, the 80-year-old author ran a comb through his thinning white hair a few minutes before the speech and said, "I want to look distinguished."

Having heard that students these days are best described by the words "torpor and apathy," Terkel thought he might shake them up a bit and get them to thinking about, for example, why the old War Department is now called the Defense Department. ("Because you can challenge war, but you can't challenge defense.")

However, with an approachable

style that belies his Pulitzer Prize-winning fame (in 1985 for "The Good War"), Terkel impressed the assembled 250 students, staff and faculty with effortful humor and unpretentious humanity.

"He was delightful," said West Bloomfield resident Kathy Kauppinen. "He's not that funny. He's real human."

In his unscripted hourlong talk, plus a question-and-answer session, Terkel decried the state of the nation and said he's voting for Arkansas Gov. Bill Clinton for president, but with reservations that he compared to preferring tuberculosis to terminal cancer.

Terkel said none of the three main candidates are talking about "real cuts" in the military budget, which he believes should be about 50 percent.

"A cut of 50 percent would solve every (social) problem we're talking about. (But) the welfare bums in the Pentagon live on (military spending)."

Terkel said the 1983 invasion of Grenada was a good example of the military mentality and an attempt to make up for the shame

of losing the Vietnam War.

"By God, we beat Grenada," he said. "That's like Muhammad Ali in his prime knocking out Woody Ali."

In the same vein, Terkel:

"I wondered why riots in Los Angeles drew our attention, but 9,000 people applying for 1,000 jobs in Chicago does not."

He said big American corporations are "owned by people who don't have the slightest idea who you are and don't give a damn what you are."

Terkel said that "a woman belongs in the home. Of course she does. So does a man, too."

He called peace through strength "a phony phrase if there ever was one."

And just for laughs said, "I can't drive a car, I can't drive a bike. I fall down when I dance."

"(Terkel) is a throwback to the '60s," said Bob Thomas, OU's

placement office director. "He

touches the humanity in all of us."

Rochester Hills resident Susie Kerekes said, "I like the way he talked about the sense of community and working together."

Freshman journalism student Jill Allan admitted that her presence in Terkel's presence was a class assignment, but said, "I feel more on level with him than I would with Larry King."

Maybe it's the nickname. When queried about its origin, Terkel said, "Everybody asks me that," then added, "I wish it were what you think it was, but it wasn't."

He acquired the sobriquet as a young man because he was named of a book entitled "Studs Lonigan."

Much later, a publisher suggested the nickname be used on one of Terkel's books in lieu of Louis because it sounded so much better.

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