

Monday, September 28, 1981

From a Voice of Reason

A challenge for the New Right

By Sherry Kahan staff writer

"There is danger in America today," declared Lynne Silverberg in her keynote address at the recent Action Alert seminar at Oakland Community College's Orchard Ridge Campus in Farmington. "We are gathered here because we can feel it."

In her role as national president of the newly formed Voice of Reason, Mrs. Silverberg then went on to attack the causes of this danger.

She lambasted the Moral Majority, book banners and burners, creationists, the Family Protection Act and the Human Life Amendment.

"Challenging the New Right" was the topic selected by this Huntington Woods resident. She is a child therapist and an education specialist for children with learning disabilities.

"It was appropriate to the theme of the conference which was intended to inform the public of the impact of budget cuts of the Reagan administration," sponsors said.

It was planned by the political action committee of the Women's Center of OCC and supported by members' centers at Schoolcraft, Henry Ford Community and Wayne County Community colleges.

"Our concern was to discuss, in an educational forum setting, the Reagan administration's economic policies for the '80s as they relate, not only to women but also to society at large," said Mary White, director of the OCC

center. Other environmental and women's groups also lent their support.

The Voice of Reason, its leader said, was created to respond to what she called a challenge to the U.S. Constitution by religious conservatives. Mrs. Silverberg advised her listeners to join the organization and get politically involved. There are chapters in 22 states and 15 Michigan cities, she added.

"AT BEST, DEMOCRACY is tenuous," she said in an interview. "If we don't guard our civil liberties as citizens, we will lose them."

Warming up to her subject, she called the Family Protection Act "an abomination," and quoted a radio minister saying that you can't be good Christian and believe in evolution. She said that legislation coming up in Congress is "anti-woman."

She feared that the passage of Human Life Amendment, which, she said, defines life as starting at conception, could possibly result in "a miscarriage carrying a charge of murder."

She added that certain birth control pills and an intrauterine device control conception by a spontaneous abortion after conception. As a result she believed they might be banned under the act's definition of the beginning of life.

"They are intruding into our bedrooms and our bodies in punitive ways," she asserted. "They want their particular religious beliefs imposed on all Americans." She then told her audience that "the Moral Majority rules in Iran."

MRS. SILVERBERG said "science allows for no supernatural explanation. It allows constant testing and changing as new evidence comes along. But for creationists, creation must be accepted without question."

"That is faith, not science. Faith is important. But it does not belong in a science curriculum."

She said Voice of Reason entered a recent lawsuit in Arkansas as a friend of the court. The case involved a challenge to an Arkansas law giving creationism equal time with science in schools.

She indicated that several communities in southwest Michigan have been targeted for similar legislation. "Bel-laire recently defeated such a move," she said. "But a suburb of Flint just put creation into its science curriculum."

Mrs. Silverberg blistered the new righters in Oregon, who made a list of 148 books they regarded as pornographic, and then demanded that the local library give them "the names of people who took out the books on their list."

"In Illinois a bill was narrowly defeated that would mandate jail sentences to teachers and librarians who disseminate the books on this list," she said.

She added that among the books they oppose are the works of Ernest Hemingway, John Steinbeck, Kurt Vonnegut, Anne Frank and Ray Bradbury.

"Is this part of the American life style?" she asked.

ANOTHER ISSUE troubling her involved what she called unfair election tactics on the part of new right.

She cited the case of former state Rep. Jack Mowat of Adrian and an unnamed woman running for office in Muskegon. During the election campaign both received questionnaires asking their opinions on a variety of issues.

"Both received the questionnaires after their answers were printed," reported the speaker. "They got the questions in March 1981, but in December 1980 their answers were printed in a distorted form. When they complained that they hadn't even answered the queries they were told, 'Oh, sorry.'"

"Meanwhile the distortions were out in public. It was too late to stop it."

She suggested such action might be called "interference with the free election procedure in America."

Mrs. Silverberg said those interested in working against such tactics could attend a training session for new members of Voice of Reason. One is planned at 8:30 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 6 in the Macomb Unitarian Universalist Fellowship in Utica, and another will be held all day Saturday, Oct. 10, in the Unitarian-Universalist church at 4605 Cass, Detroit, under sponsorship of the Western Wayne County chapter. The organization can be reached at 476-1670. The leader of the western Wayne County Chapter is Thelma Murray, who can be contacted at 284-1800. Information can also be obtained from Marilyn Rowens of Livonia who is education and program director of the new organization. Her number is 474-4108.



Lynne Silverberg told an Oakland Community College seminar that civil liberties must be guarded or they will be lost.

Republican spoken here

By Lorraine McClish staff writer

When you are learning to speak Republican you must learn to use double negatives, such as "I am not unwilling."

Or use the double-speak, such as "I am for equal rights but I don't support ERA because we don't need it."

The suggestions come from Writer's Ink, a group of scribes at Oakland Community College who performed skits and gave readings under the heading of "Learning to Speak Republican." The event was the finale of a morning series of workshops sponsored by Orchard Ridge Womencenter.

"You must learn to serve one master," said Joan Maloney in a reading which referred to Nancy Reagan as "The Nation's Total Woman."

But emulating the nation's role model might be difficult "for anyone who can't hold a smile for more than 30 seconds," Elaine Saumadedd.

Nancy-P-for-Perfect-Reagan was target for a series of barbs from Margharite Peraino. "Her feet with their everlasting pedicure never hurt. Her stomach never rumbles, and she doesn't allow armpit fuzz."

BILLED UNDER the heading humor, Writer's Ink was biting in its satire, but nonetheless keeping with the day's program that led off with a keynote speech called "Challenging the New Right."

Heien Lober read a piece called "The Nuclear Family on a Picnic."

The story told of a family who chose to have their picnic in a nuclear park "where the children could play ball without interference from the trees or being bothered by insects, even though they had not been able to keep food down for a week."

In one reading, called "Here's One for the Gipper," the hero drops out of college to save money to buy weapons, and at the end of the tale is on his way to strip mine his mother's vegetable garden.

In Republican-ese, one's political stance can be described as "a radical fence rider," Writer's Ink said.

Balance of power is defined as "The U.S. in complete control."

A dictatorial was defined as "an editorial that's been dictated."

But, Bob Myers said, "There is no definition for intelligence sources."

IN JUDY Peelle's ABC's of Republican-ese, children will learn G for guns and good old boys, P for parking lots turned into parks and R for ranch and rich.

During a take-off on the Johnny Carson "Tarnak the Magician" skits, one of the answers given was "Every man for himself."

The question was: "What is Reagan's feeling on women's equal employment?"

The performance wound up with a round of limricks that hit everything from jelly beans to the military. Then a rendition of "There's no Interest Like High Interest" to the tune of "There's No Business Like Show Business."

Sandra Sutherland moderated the hour-long program.



Sandra Sutherland, a professor at OCC and director of Writers Ink, moderated the skit session and brought along some jelly beans as a prop.



Joan Maloney donned her "Tarnak the Magician" hat to find an answer in a satirical skit. She came up with "a 19-piece place setting." The question? "What does China signify to the White House?"

Staff photos by Randy Borst

Saving energy need not mean spending big bucks

By Sherry Kahan staff writer

"It is possible to build a house that heats itself for no more money than a conventional home," stated Jack Kobliska, a solar builder, in a talk at the Action Alert seminar at Oakland Community College.

Too much money is being spent on high technology ways to solve the energy crisis, insisted the leader of a workshop on energy and environment that was part of the sessions at the Orchard Ridge campus in Farmington.

Instead, this Lake Orion builder favors making use of renewable energy sources such as sun, wind, geothermal, bio-mass and water power.

Speaking with him was Lanny Lenzotti, a member of the board of directors of Upland Hills Ecological Awareness Center, who reminded the audience that it is possible "to spend a fortune on solar energy if sophisticated equipment is used."

Both Lenzotti, a master plumber who works with solar equipment, and Kobliska think a great deal could be done to save fuel costs in passive ways.

"Using solar panels would be a lot cheaper than building nuclear power plants," Kobliska pointed out.

Lenzotti stressed that each community should have regulations to allow for passive solar buildings. He advised his listeners to present this idea to their Chamber of Commerce or other local groups "on which you have a voice." One of their first



Jack Kobliska talked about building to make best use of solar heat.

methods for saving fuel passively is with insulation. They advise about eight inches of it in the attic. Storm windows is another suggestion along with a solar collector for heating hot water.

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