

Jean Weinberg, national coordinator for Impact 80, in Iowa City Wednesday.



The Daily Iowan/Drew Zedovitz

Weinberg, Impact 80 work to mobilize abortion activists

By BARBARA DAVIDSON Staff Writer

Combine an all-American faith in democracy, the political moxy of a union organizer and strong support for a woman's right to choose an abortion, and you have Jean Weinberg.

Weinberg is the national coordinator for Impact 80, the National Abortion Rights Action League program to mobilize voters in the 1980 election. She was in Iowa City Wednesday and Thursday to assist in local organizing by NARAL's Iowa branch.

She explains the goals of Impact 80 in this way: "Nationwide, to turn silent pro-choice non-voters into vocal pro-choice activists."

"In 1973, the Supreme Court affirms the right of a woman to choose an abortion. In 1973, the people go home. In the mid-1970s we saw both sides lobbying, educating."

BUT THE situation changed. "Anti-choice groups became more political. We were still lobbying."

And lobbying wasn't enough; state laws and local ordinances were passed restricting access to abortion, and Congress made funding cuts. "So we need to turn people into activists. That's the goal of Impact 80."

Weinberg was appointed Impact 80 director this year following her work in the development of the Massachusetts program, the model for the national program.

She outlined the Impact 80 grassroots organization. "We are the majority. But a majority is only respected when it's a voting majority. Winning in the opinion polls is not enough—we have to win at the polls."

"We gather the names of potential activists—any pro-choice person is a potential activist. We hold house meetings, identical to candidate coffee, to build skills that are identical to campaign skills."

"We inform, we alarm, we activate," she said, focusing on four "challenges"—"funding, constitutional, harassment, and electoral challenges."

TO MEET those challenges, individuals attending house meetings are asked to fill out referral sheets, listing three to five other interested individuals. They are asked to take one concrete task—helping with mailing, calling voters, writing letters.

Cold winter predicted for Midwest

WASHINGTON (UPI)—The National Weather Service Wednesday predicted a cold winter for the Midwest, South and southern Great Plains, but said most of the West should enjoy milder temperatures than usual.

In its annual winter forecast, the service said most of the East Coast and much of the northern Great Plains will have unpredictable weather. Temperatures milder than normal, however, were forecast for eastern New England.

Donald L. Gilman, head of the service's Climate Analysis Center which makes the annual forecast, said the areas which likely will get colder temperatures will not necessarily have winters as severe as the last three years.

HE SAID the predictions could only be made for colder or warmer than usual temperatures, but he could not gauge the intensity of the cold.

The area stretching from Rapid City, S.D., and Denver to northern California and the Pacific Northwest will enjoy milder than usual temperatures. So will the area from Tucson, Ariz. to San Francisco.

Kennedy

be more than made up by a large number of volunteers expected to sign up at the event.

For instance, he said, the Kennedy campaign left a Grinnell talk Nov. 13 with "hundreds" of names of volunteers who had signed up.

Bob Miller, organizer of Dick Clark's 1976 campaign who came to the Kennedy campaign with Clark and is now operating out of Des Moines, said that on a state-wide basis, Tramontina's assertion that Kennedy will finish second

"would be a fair prediction at this point."

Miller said that he believes Kennedy does not have to win here, but that Carter does—because it was here that he first gained credibility in 1976 and because of his organization, generally considered strong.

MILLER NOTED a straw poll taken at a Jefferson-Jackson Day Dinner, Carter buried Kennedy by a 3-1 margin in the poll.

"That was an organizational test, and

we had no organization," Miller said. He also said that the Kennedy office in Iowa has been open for only about two weeks.

Romjue said any indication that the Kennedy campaign has been active in Iowa for just two weeks is "so much bull. They've made the contacts for months and months and months ahead of time," he said, asserting that the draft-Kennedy movement here—headed by Des Moines attorney Matt Wanning, now with the Kennedy organization—spent \$50,000 in the state prior to Kennedy's announcement.

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F-518

Willow Creek watershed. It was also proposed that the DOT build an interchange at Melrose Avenue that would not be opened until a date agreed on by the city and the state.

"There was nothing worked out," Riegler said. "We told our staff to look at the possibility of moving the alignment farther west, and they decided it was not feasible."

RIGLER SAID that to go back to an intermediate F-518 alignment "would delay the bypass for years and years."

In determining that moving the proposed F-518 alignment farther west

was not feasible, the DOT staff said the state's proposed route is the preferred alignment because it will require fewer relocations, take less farmland out of production, provide the best angular alignment with the proposed Highway 1 interchange and offer the best traffic service to the city.

On March 22 Ian MacGillivray, the DOT's director of planning and research, said, "As a result, the recommendation of the DOT's staff was that we could not find a feasible justification for going ahead and developing full environmental assessments and the

associated impact statements and instead recommended that the previously approved alignment" be proposed.

THE IOWA CITY Council voted 4-3 to file suit in Johnson County District Court in June to halt the construction of F-518 along the DOT's proposed route between Highway 1 and Interstate 80 until the two sides agree to the freeway's alignment and design.

In its suit, the city argues that construction of the highway through southwestern Iowa City residential areas will undermine the city's comprehensive plan for development.

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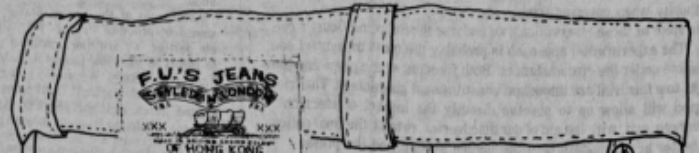
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Pro-choice advocate talks to 'majority'

By MARLENE J. PERRIN
Emphasis Editor

When Jean Weinberg became director of the Massachusetts Abortion Rights Action League, she didn't want to tell anyone—especially her landlord.

"Our whole neighborhood is Catholic. Our town is divided up by parishes. I was afraid of the reaction to my position," she said.

But a year later she found out that the landlord knew all along. He was not only supportive, but his wife volunteered to host a house meeting for MARAL.

"The fear was mine and no one else's," Weinberg said here Wednesday.

She was in Iowa this week to promote Impact 80, a National Abortion Rights Action League project designed to "inform, alarm and activate" those who believe abortion should be a choice available to the individual.

She's directing her message to the "silent majority," like her landlord, who say in opinion polls that they believe abortion should be an individual right but who have not been active politically.

A pleasure of her current job, Weinberg said, is that "I don't have to convince anyone. I no longer have to debate. I just need to reach those who are already pro-choice.



JEAN WEINBERG

"That we really are the majority is hard to understand," she said. "If even one-fourth of the national average of 80 percent who are pro-choice get politically active, it can start to turn the tide."

And she emphasizes that the group is pro-choice, not pro-abortion. "Many of our supporters would never choose abortions themselves, but they see it as an individual choice," she said.

After the 1973 Supreme Court decision allowing abortions, "many of us went home," thinking the problem

was solved, Weinberg said. But when the same court ruled that governmental units could deny payment for abortions to low income women, and when pro-choice candidates were defeated at the polls, NARAL got a new boost.

"The last two years have seen a drastic cut in abortion services," she said. "Abortion is an option that isn't available to all.

"As our rights have eroded, the reaction has been to create an organization to lobby for choice and to educate the public."

And with the defeat of Iowa Senator Dick Clark, among others, "we came to realize that the only response was through political action—to work for candidates, provide money and vote."

Anti-abortion groups worked actively against Clark. He was defeated by Senator Roger Jepsen by 28,000 votes, or about two or three votes per precinct. "We say that's 28,000 reasons to be politically active," Weinberg said.

She does not argue that Clark's defeat was solely because of his position on abortion. But because the anti-abortion forces claimed victory, "the message to Congress was that if you vote pro-choice, you'll get thrown out of office."

Because of apathy on the part of many voters, "any well organized minority has an impact," Weinberg said.

Her mission is to "turn the silent majority into political activists. It might mean holding their hands or giving them the support skills to enter the political arena. It's our job to

fill out a referral sheet listing three to five other names of pro-choice supporters and to volunteer their own homes for other house meetings.

Participants are told how to lobby

"We have to be well-organized and vote. You can't sit at home and not vote and expect it not to influence your life. Besides, political action is kind of fun. You might even enjoy it."

show that what you do CAN make a difference."

She doesn't argue that abortion should be the only issue determining one's political choices. But she does argue that it should be a base-line issue.

"A new right is forming. We have to be well-organized and vote. You can't sit at home and not vote and expect it not to influence your life. Besides, political action is kind of fun. You might even enjoy it."

Ultimately, NARAL would like to see the issue of abortion out of the political arena all together. "We don't believe it's a political issue. It's an individual right."

Basically the techniques used in Impact 80 begin with house meetings. A dozen or so supporters are gathered together in someone's living room, informed about the current situation in regard to abortion rights and encouraged to become politically active. Each participant is asked to

political office holders and are given political skills workshops designed to tell the "nuts and bolts of a campaign."

Supporters are encouraged to volunteer for political campaigns. "But we encourage them to walk into the headquarters, say they are here because of the candidate's stand on abortion and then add that that's the last time they hope to mention the word 'abortion.' Then they just become campaign workers. We don't want abortion to be a red flag."

While many state organizations, like the Iowa Abortion Rights Action League, cannot endorse political candidates and maintain their tax exempt status as a non-profit organization, the national organization does have a political action committee. They can and will endorse candidates, Weinberg said.

"But the amount of money we will contribute is not our power. Who are

we kidding? Our power is only in numbers. We are a majority. And 10 campaign workers is worth more than the money.

"The difference in an election will not be made in media campaigns, but in organizational work in the field with trained political workers."

Jobs political workers will do may sometimes seem menial. Weinberg said when she began working for political candidates, one of the jobs she said she didn't want was standing in front of the polls carrying a sign for the candidates. "It seemed valueless. But then I found out it was one of the most important jobs. The signs actually swing large numbers of voters. People come to the polls, count the signs and want to vote for a winner." (Iowa law prohibits political signs within a certain distance of the polls. The sign technique is, however, standard practice in Massachusetts, Weinberg said.)

The efforts of NARAL so far, Weinberg said, have been successful. They have strong affiliates in 38 states and "contacts, if not budding organizations," in all the others.

The membership has grown from 7,000 nationally to 70,000 in two years. "It's kind of a back lash to the back lash, you might say.

"The more we talk, the more the majority will feel and act like the majority. And, most important, the more they will vote."

500 vow fight for abortions

BOSTON (UPI) — About 500 pro-choice activists converged on the Statehouse yesterday, lobbying lawmakers and organizing campaign volunteers to mark the seventh anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court's decision legalizing abortion.

Rallying behind the slogan, "We're pro-choice . . . and we vote," members of the National Abortion Rights Action League, mostly women, also held a news conference to announce plans to mobilize NARAL supporters behind pro-choice political candidates in this fall's elections.

"It's become clear to us that abortion has no place in American politics," said NARAL executive director Karen Mulhauser. "But the irony is that we have to become political if we are to take the politics out of abortion."

Ms. Mulhauser and Jean Weinberg, the head of NARAL's Massachusetts affiliate, said pro-choice activists had been using the Bay State as a model for about a year by using house meetings, political skills workshops, post-card campaigns and development of telephone banks in order to identify and gather what they claim is a pro-abortion majority.

"The message that we're giving out now is that if we don't like your vote we might work against you," Ms. Mulhauser said.

She said that NARAL political action committee had raised about \$250,000 nationally and had already begun to make contributions to pro-choice candidates, including \$5,000 to Republican presidential candidate Rep. John Anderson, R-Ill.

Ms. Weinberg said many of the pro-choice people became politically involved following the defeat in 1978 of Sen. Dick Clark, D-Iowa. Anti-abortion activists claimed responsibility for his defeat.

Behind the scenes

Despite the paucity of women elected to top statewide and congressional offices in Massachusetts, the state has produced a wealth of female political strategists, organizers, and fund-raisers. Among those expected to play an important role in 1998 campaigns:

REPUBLICANS



Virginia B. Buckingham

Chief of staff to Acting Governor Paul Cellucci, Buckingham served in the same capacity for former Governor William F. Weld. She also ran Weld's hard-fought but unsuccessful campaign against US Senator John F. Kerry in 1996.



Mary Lee King

King is the chief policy adviser to Cellucci, the same role she played for Weld. She initially worked for Cellucci in 1976. King was the first woman to manage a statewide campaign, Leon Lombardi's 1982 run for lieutenant governor.

DEMOCRATS



Mary Anne Marsh

A former aide to Kerry, she played a major role in his 1996 victory over Weld, overseeing the get-out-the-vote operation that made 2 million phone calls in 10 weeks. She is a

consultant to Shannon O'Brien's campaign for treasurer.



Cheryl Cronin

Attorney and former head of the state's Office of Campaign and Political Finance, Cronin was slated to play a major role in US Representative Joseph P. Kennedy 2d's aborted campaign for governor. Instead, she will be raising funds for O'Brien's campaign and Middlesex District Attorney Thomas F. Reilly's bid for attorney general.



Sheryl Marshall

Vice president at the brokerage house Donaldson, Lufkin & Jenrette, Marshall prefers to wield clout informally. In 1992, she helped raise funds in Massachusetts to elect five Democratic women as US senators. For 1998, she is planning to concentrate her efforts on Patricia McGovern's race for governor and state Senator Lois Pines's race for attorney general.



Regina Villa

A longtime human services

advocate, Villa also is a player in the political world. In 1996, she was campaign manager for US Representative John F. Tierney, a Salem Democrat who ousted Peter G. Torkildsen from his congressional seat. Villa is campaign director for McGovern's campaign.



Jean Weinberg

A behind-the-scenes political activist, Weinberg hires and trains campaign staff and puts together field organizations. Currently managing state Representative David B. Cohen's campaign for Newton mayor, she helped run the campaign that first brought Senate President Thomas F. Birmingham to office in 1990. For 1998, she has signed on as a consultant to McGovern.



Shanti Fry

A director in the corporate finance department of BancBoston Securities, Fry chaired the finance committees of Rosaria Salerno's unsuccessful mayoral run in Boston in 1993 and Cambridge Mayor Alice K. Wolf's successful bid for state representative. She also raised money for New Hampshire Governor Jeanne Shaheen's campaign