

ACLU 'winning in courts but losing in the streets'

Contrary to the opinion of the man in the street, the American Civil Liberties Union is not a left-wing organization, Howard H. Jewel, Northern California branch chairman, said at Cabrillo College Friday night.

Nor is it right wing, because "everybody who identifies himself as right wing hates us," Jewel told the Santa Cruz chapter members in an address at their eighth annual membership meeting.

"And if the center is thought of as a quiet, peaceful position, occupied by a silent majority of some sort, we aren't that either, because if there is anything the ACLU isn't, it's silent," Jewel declared.

"We are none of these things, and in my opinion we never should be. The ACLU is no place for anybody with a political axe to grind."

Jewel, an Oakland attorney, spoke on the topic, "ACLU: Right, Center or Left?" before approximately 50 persons. He has been a director of the Northern California ACLU since 1965 and its chairman since February 1969.

"The average guy in the street will tell you that the ACLU is left-wing," Jewel acknowledged. "J. Edgar Hoover, the head of the FBI for 46 years, has called the ACLU the 'witting or unwitting handmaiden of communism.'"

"But if you consider communism on the Russian model, if there is anything antithetical to communism, it

must be the ACLU. Ninety per cent of our cases involve the rights of the individual as against the state, and if there is any philosophy not popular in Russia, it must be that."

Jewel pointed out that the ACLU has taken a strong position against the death penalty, strongly favored in Russia and applied against many more offenses than in the United States. He added that the ACLU view of sex and pornography "contrasts at a 180 degree angle with that of the Russians."

"Our emphasis is on the individual versus the state," he summarized.

According to Jewel, the ACLU might be considered a conservative organization, because of its work in behalf of the Bill of Rights, a 200-year-old document. He admitted, however, that it is a "very radical document."

At the time of the adoption of the Bill of Rights, these rights were held in higher esteem in the United States than they ever have been since because of the recent experience of European immigrants with tyrannical governments, Jewel said.

"Since the days of the founding fathers, there has been less and less interest by citizens in the Bill of Rights," he said. "Polls show us doing very poorly today in support of the Bill of Rights."

He attributed the "left-wing" image of the ACLU to the fact that in general, the protesters in America have come from the left,

which includes the poor and dispossessed.

"We defend their rights, so we are identified with the left," he said. "There is no way to avoid it."

Jewel said the ACLU is currently investigating four areas, which may be the civil liberties frontiers of the future. They are:

- The right of an adult human being to use his body as he sees fit, including the right to use drugs;

- The right to be protected against data collection, such as that done by credit agencies;

- The advisability of "positive discrimination" in college admissions, making race a required criterion of admission to counteract the affects of past discrimination; and

- The right of a citizen to be protected against abuses of his environment.

"Civil liberties are not static," Jewel said. "They change with every generation."

Citing the low opinion of civil liberties shown in the polls, Jewel said, "We may be winning the battle in the courts and losing it in the streets."

He added that "one of the major parties" in the recent elections implied that "people who support civil liberties are less patriotic than those who don't."

In Jewel's opinion, the ACLU should have a "higher profile", should express civil libertarian views on local radio and TV

stations, and should take more action against interference with civil liberties by the far left.

He feels that the ACLU has done an excellent job in the legal sphere but has fallen down in the educational sphere.

Before Jewel's talk, ACLU members reelected Stan Stevens of Santa Cruz to a three-year term as representative from the Santa Cruz chapter to the Northern California branch board.

They also elected the following members to the board of directors: Nancy Benjamin, Michael Dailey, Ida Cookie Johnson, Hugh Johnson, John McBain, Elizabeth Moore, Stevens and Egon Winter, Santa Cruz; Al Johnson, Davenport; Eric Nordquist, Aptos; Rudolph Pedulla, Watsonville and Mary Barnett, Felton.

The ACLU meets on the first Thursday of each month at 8 p.m. in the Area Service Center, Seabright and Broadway, Santa Cruz.

Cyclist hurt in Soquel

Edmund Emil Kemper III, 21, of 220-A San Jose Ave., Capitola, was injured Thursday when the motorcycle he was riding was hit by a car driven by Irene Moulton Withrow, 73, of 4300 Soquel Drive, Soquel.

Officers said the accident occurred when Kemper, riding south on Porter St., made a left turn to West Walnut St. in front of the Withrow auto.