Tucson Citizen via Microfilm from U of A

Women call McCain sexist for rape 'joke'

By NORMA COLE
Citizen Political Writer

U.S. Rep. John McCain, R-Ariz., said through a press aide that he "does not recall" telling a rape "joke" that has led the Arizona Women's Political Caucus and the Arizona chapter of the National Organization for Women to condemn him as "insensitive, cruel and sexist."

McCain, a two-term congressman from Mesa, is running for the U.S. Senate against Democrat Richard Kimball. Kimball, former chairman of the Arizona Corporation Commission, has been endorsed by the caucus.

"It's pretty obvious to us that this is a politically motivated sideshow by Richard Kimball," asserted Torie Clarke, McCain's spokeswoman, of separate press releases issued Friday by the caucus and NOW.

The two organizations, in statements 11 days before the Nov. 4 election, blasted McCain for reportedly telling this "joke" to a conference of the National League of Cities and Towns in Washington, D.C., apparently in March:

"Did you hear the one about the woman who is attacked on the street by a gorilla, beaten senseless, raped repeatedly and left to die? When she finally regains consciousness and tries to speak, her doctor leans over to hear her sigh contently and to feebly ask, 'Where is that marvelous ape?'"

A spokeswoman for NOW in Arizona, whose full name is Baker, said, "We are incensed by his cruel and sexist remark, an indicator of McCain's insensitivity toward women. That McCain considers a story about a woman being beaten and raped to be funny explains why he can't represent our interests."

Added Carol Zimmerman, state chairperson of AWPC, in a separate statement, "John McCain has consistently voted against women and children. His votes, his words and his tasteless jokes show a callous disregard for the fundamental concerns of thousands of women in Arizona."

But McCain press aide Clarke countered, "John does not recollect telling that joke. . . . And he has a very good record on women's issues."

Clarke said she has never heard McCain tell the "joke" in three years of listening to "literally thousands" of his speeches.

She said McCain did not offer any comment on his attitude toward the content of the "joke," as relayed in the women's group's press releases.

Baker and Zimmerman maintained that McCain personally was heard to make the "rape" remarks by several Arizonans, including Bruce Wright, a former aide to Rep. Morris K. Udall, D-Ariz., who now is a private consultant in Tucson to several Democratic candidates, and Leigh Larson, a Nogales lawyer.

Neither Wright nor Larson could be reached this weekend in several attempts for comment, but Baker said she was authorized to use their names. Zimmerman also cited Wright and Larson as sources who heard McCain.

Baker said the remarks reportedly were made by McCain "right around March 15," but that NOW members only recently learned of them.

AWPC referred to the "joke" in its October newsletter to coincide with last week's Domestic Violence Week and repeated its criticism of McCain in a press release received Friday. The group relayed a slightly different version, without the word "gorilla" in the first sentence, than did NOW.

Charged Baker, "McCain not only puts down women in his words, but he votes against our needs in Congress." She said he voted against "pay equity, the Equal Rights Amendment and family planning," voted "to cut nutrition programs for poor single mothers and their children," and "has failed to promote day-care programs."

Zimmerman said the National Women's Political Caucus gave McCain a score of 13 out of a possible 100 on congressional votes it deemed important to women and children.

The AWPC has endorsed Kimball, meanwhile, because as a former member of the Arizona Senate he co-sponsored the ERA, promoted pay equity and day care, and is a supporter of funds for family planning, Zimmerman added.

But McCain's press aide countered that McCain voted to fund family planning, secured release of funds for the Women, Infants and Children program, and secured a "commodities supplemental food program" to provide food for 3,500 women and children.

Clarke added that McCain's top three campaign staff members, and three of four of his highest-paid congressional staff members, are women.

McCain sparked a controversy early in his Senate campaign with another "joke," when he referred to the retirement community of Leisure World as "Seizure World." He is leading Kimball in independent polls.

Legislator, educator vie for public education post

By MARK THOMAS SWENSON
Citizen Staff Writer

Campaign 86

Who is better qualified to be state superintendent of public instruction — a legislator or an educator?

That is the choice Arizona voters have to make when choosing a successor to Carolyn Warner, who is running for governor on the Democratic ticket.

The positions of both candidates on educational issues are similar, leaving their backgrounds the only area of real debate on who makes a better superintendent.

"I think it's important to have someone who has had training and experience in the classroom as superintendent," said C. Diane Bishop, a Tucson Democrat who has been a teacher for 20 years.

The 42-year-old Bishop also has there is somebody who knows and understands the issues and has had to deal with them personally," she said.

"I've had dropouts. I've had students on drugs in my classroom. I've had to deal with students who could not read," she said.

Her opponent, Sen. Anne Lindeman, R-Phoenix, disagrees.

"It is not a teaching post, it is not an education post . . . it is an administrative, managerial position and one that oversees a billion-dollar-plus budget," she said.

Lindeman said educational concerns are dealt with by the Board of

she was vice chairwoman of the Education Committee, and then for 10 years in the Senate, where she was chairwoman of the Education Committee for five years.

Serving on those committees has given her an understanding of the educational issues facing the state, she said.

Also, serving on the appropriations committee for 12 years has given her "knowledge in budgeting large sums of money," she said.

Lindeman said that having been a legislator, "I know how to get things done."

Bishop said her experience on the Board of Education and service on many state and national committees dealing with education has given her the necessary leadership skills for the job of superintendent.

Both candidates say the increas-

Anne Lindeman Tucson Citizen

C. Diane Bishop Tucson Citizen

students survive high school.

In the short term, both favor developing alternative programs to fit the needs of students who are dropping out.

Both candidates oppose merit pay. Bishop said she opposed merit pay because it creates competition between teachers, rather than co-

promoted.

Both favor scrapping the current system of annual standardized tests for children in grades one through 12, and instead would test them in benchmark years — third, eighth and 11th grades.

They also agree that special attention will have to be paid to the needs

State gets first shot at law

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the ballot, rejects the notion that the initiative favors incumbents.

"If it favors incumbents, I wonder why just about every incumbent in the state opposes it," he said. "They are the ones getting the big contributions. Incumbents are good investments if you're trying to buy influence. Nine out of 10 of them win."

John Anderson, director of Common Cause of Arizona, regularly monitors campaign-finance records. He noted that legislators running unopposed frequently receive large donations from political action committees.

"Legislators would recoil from the suggestion that their votes are for sale," said Anderson. "But what is for sale is influence, the gratitude