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OPINION

PASADENA STAR-NEWS

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Roundtable leans left

Re "Seniors discuss border issues":

I was one of those "seniors" that attended the so-called immigration roundtable.

For the record it was neither a roundtable nor was it, in my opinion, a debate on immigration. What it was, was one more session lead by Mr. Schachter to promote a "left-sided" interpretation of issues facing us today; and coming from a nation that is known for its left lean, I know it when I see it.

As a frequent participant of these "sham" roundtables, I can state that I am sick and tired of them. Schachter is entitled to his viewpoint and to hold all the meetings showcasing this viewpoint that he wants. However, to do so under the guise of debates and roundtables that showcase all sides is unacceptable.

Geneviève M. Clavreul
PASADENA

Seniors discuss border issues

Immigration focus of panel

BY PATRICIA JIAYI HO
STAFF WRITER

PASADENA — Family reunification, economic forces behind immigration and whether the term “illegal” or “undocumented” should be used were among the talking points at an immigration forum Friday at the Pasadena Senior Center.

About 40 residents participated in a roundtable discussion that featured speakers ranging from religious leaders to immigrant-law experts to a backer of the citizen border-watch group Minuteman Project.

Panel speakers included Ellen Greenstone, a Pasadena attorney who specializes in employment law; Luis Moises Escalante, an education coordinator for the Los Angeles-based Interfaith Coalition for Immigrant Rights; Paul Castro, executive director of the Jewish Family Service; Jerry Blackwell, who described himself as a supporter, not a member, of the Minutemen; and Raul Anorze, executive director of the Institute of Popular Education.

“I’m glad that they were able to have something like this,” said Pasadena resident Monica Mitchell, 46, who traces her ancestry to New Mexico and Mexico. “Many views were expressed.”

Pasadena resident Toby Osos, 86, said she had hoped to hear more ideas about solutions to the immigration conundrum, though discussion mostly revolved around peoples’ attitudes.

“One thing that a speaker brought up was to just briefly think about our history in terms of attitudes toward immigrants and how they changed,” Osos said, referring to the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and attitudes toward Germans after World War I.

Organizer Marvin Schachter said he invited leaders from the Minuteman Project, a citizen group that monitors the U.S.-Mexico border, to participate, but a representative failed to show.

“They were very hard to get to reply,” said Schachter, who chairs the Pasadena-based Senior Advocacy Council. “I sent them about six e-mails to try find out who was coming.”

Schachter estimated that about 90 percent of attendees are over 60, though there were others in attendance as well.

Schachter said the council holds monthly forums on topics that directly affect seniors such as conservatorship and compassionate choice. The group is interested in broader public policy issues such as Friday’s theme, he said.

The Senior Advocacy Council has about 100 members and was founded about 10 years ago, Schachter said. For more information on the group, call the Pasadena Senior Center at (626) 795-4331.

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