

Editorial

Panel's proposal vindicates fundamentalists

Gov. Bob Kerrey's Christian School issue Panel made a valid attempt at defusing Nebraska's teachers certification crisis, but its proposal is impractical and amounts to little more than the state giving into the fundamentalists who refuse to follow the law.

Thursday, the four-member panel issued a recommendation which would eliminate requirements such as teacher certification and minimum curriculum for Christian schools. Currently, these requirements apply to all Nebraska public and private schools.

Parents who chose this option would be required to state that their religious beliefs dictated their choice. They also would be required to consent to a test-

ing procedure for their children and to regularly supply the state with evidence that their children are meeting attendance requirements and are receiving a structured program of education which satisfactorily covers the basic areas of study included in curriculum standards.

Christian school students would be required to reach the average level of achievement of public school students on the tests. Still, the basis of the whole proposal is a shifting of educational responsibility from the state to parents.

Considering the people involved — specifically, the parents of children enrolled at Faith Christian School in Louisville — such a shift seems unwise. Remember that these are the same

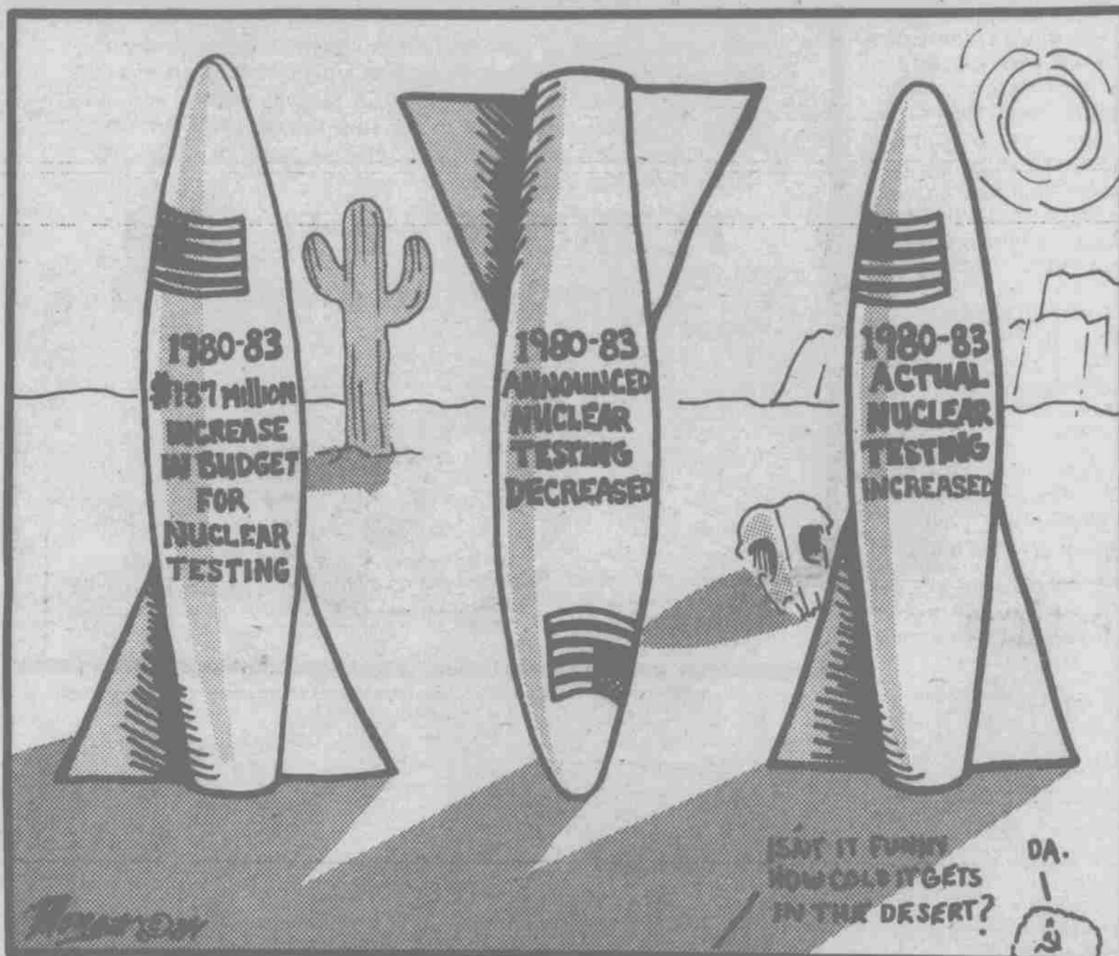
parents who, by example, are telling their children that the best way to get a law changed is to break it. And remember that these are the same parents who are entrusting the education of their children to a man who, in recent months, has declared "war" on the state and publicly called for God to punish various state and local officials.

The state would be making a serious error in handing the responsibility of educating our youth to people like this. The panel also came to the conclusion that Nebraska's current teacher certification law violates the guarantee of religious freedom in the U.S. Constitution. Although two members of the panel are lawyers, such legal questions should be answered by the courts, not

committees appointed by the governor.

So far, the state's teacher certification requirement has withstood all legal challenges. The Nebraska Supreme Court has upheld it and, in 1981, the U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear an appeal of a lawsuit involving the closing of Faith Christian School on the basis that it lacked a "substantial federal question."

That's not to say the courts won't overturn the certification requirement later on. But as it stands now, the state should consider its education requirements legal. The task force's legal conclusion should not be taken into consideration when the Legislature and Gov. Kerrey takes steps to solve the controversy.



Bill and Beth 'reach out and touch'

Right after I graduated from high school I had a friend named Beth. This was about three years ago.

At the time she was going through a separation from her husband and trying to evaluate herself and her goals. At the time I was heading for college and trying to evaluate myself and my goals.

Beth and I were drawn to each other as people who are searching for things usually are. My memories of her include some candid and soul-searching



Bill Allen

conversations. There are also fun memories of drinking beer with other friends, helping her move a sofa designed not to fit through any door, and driving to the lake in the middle of the night just to feel the breeze blowing on us through the open car windows.

We weren't lovers. It wasn't a relationship like that. We were friends — Two people with nothing in common who had everything in common.

Then I came to college and lost Beth as I lost many friends.

I remember one time Beth said to me that someday, when I least expected it, out of the blue, she would call me just to see how I was doing. I remember very clearly that she said, "You probably don't believe me now, but just wait a couple of years."

I called Beth a couple of months ago, when she least expected it, out of the blue.

It took a couple of sentences for the shock to wear off and her mind to clear, but then I was talking to Beth.

She is back with her husband and they have another child. I forgot to mention Amy, her little girl. He has a better job and they've worked through a lot of their difficulties, she said.

She sounded serene. I like that word.

She sounded like someone who had made a few decisions and decided to give up searching and accept what she had.

She said I sounded serious, more grown up. I guess that was probably true. Right then I was feeling serious, more grown up.

I liked the fact that we didn't talk about old times very much. Sure, we mentioned a couple of people and where they are now, but for the most part we both seemed to realize that it's where we are now that makes the best phone conversations.

The telephone is for now and where you are. There's nothing permanent about a phone call.

We laughed about how we'd both changed. She, the settled-in mother, satisfied without a few of the things she used to think she needed. I, a little less idealistic.

She said she liked me better when I was young and naive and innocent.

I said so did I.

One of us was only joking.

She said she'd call sometime, but it's been two months now. I'm not surprised. I'm not young and naive and innocent anymore, remember.

When I first called I'm not sure what I expected. Maybe I was looking for a little reassurance that I'm on the right track, or heading in the right direction. Maybe I needed some information to fill some thought I can't remember now. Maybe I simply needed to talk to an old friend.

All I know for sure is that sometimes a piece of the past helps you evaluate the present.

The call cost \$2.30. I wonder what it would have cost then?



Letters

U.S. policy is wrong

Is it good for the American taxpayer to spend over \$1.25 billion a year to save the government of El Salvador from their own people? Is it good sense for the Salvadorans to retain in power the rightists who seem to delight in slaughtering the population at a rate of 1 to 2 percent annually? If our government murdered our fathers and brothers at that rate it would amount to more than 3 million a year. Would you casually sit back and watch?

Is it good sense that we send them billions to save their country while the leaders' bank accounts swell and the peoples' stomachs shrink because they have very little food?

No! You would find a solution, a violent one if you had been hurt bad and long enough. If you need a gun to protect yourself you buy one from anyone who would sell you one. Since we don't sell guns to the leftists, as you and Reagan have called them, then you go to the next best source. Those people are merely searching for freedom from oppression. They hope to find freedom through any avenue possible. They know from direct experience that they will find no comfort from the United States.

Brian Smith
sophomore
chemistry

US ambitious, realistic

It is probably quite rare when someone criticized in an editorial (Daily Nebraskan, Jan. 26) writes to express fundamental agreement. I agree United Students has "issued a solid, but very ambitious platform." I thank Jeff Browne for the kind words on specific platform planks.

And, I agree US doesn't know how to reach all off-campus students. US certainly is open to suggestions. Many projects, including a forum for off-campus students, have been shot down within ASUN due to a lack of interest. However, I disagree that our bi-weekly update sheets form a "Catch-22."

1. We have a distribution network that can reach over 10,000 students, and I feel that merits praise, not criticism.

2. Leafleting is not the only way to disseminate information to off-campus students. US certainly feels that free information racks, posting sheets on bulletin boards, and speaking at organizations also will get news to all students.

3. While US (or ASUN) can not turn a truly apathetic student into an activist, having information available is still a service to the student.

Browne also made several assumptions based on the nature and past performance of ASUN senators. Please don't.

Rather, it will be 35 senators, senate aides, Government Liaison Committee members, and commission members, as well as other students in our "open file of interest."

Maybe Jeff Browne is right. Maybe the US party is in dreamland. Maybe increased credibility is a dream. I feel many more students can be served by ASUN. If it is a dream, it is a dream the US party wants to chase.

Kevin Goldstein
junior
business

US presidential candidate

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