

**EDITORIAL COMMENT**

**Emancipate minors**

Should physicians prescribe contraceptives and treat illegitimate pregnancies for minors without parental knowledge and consent?

This is the question that is now being debated in Nebraska as a result of what is being described as the effects of the "new morality." In the past four years gonorrhea has increased 173 per cent, illegitimate births have risen 32 per cent, one-fourth of the reported venereal disease cases involved a person under 20 and 48 per cent of the illegitimate births during the past year were to mothers under 20.

The help alleviate these problems some physicians and social agencies are treating minors without parental knowledge. However, in doing so they are operating in an ambiguous legal area.

While there is no specific statute prohibiting a doctor from treating a minor without parental consent, there are definite legal restraints against such practice. A physician who treats a minor without parental knowledge is subject to criminal charges of assault and battery or contributing to the delinquency of a minor as well as law suits. As a result most doctors in Nebraska stay clear of sex cases involving minors.

Opponents to withdrawing existing parental consent restrictions argue that liberalizing the existing laws would increase sexual promiscuity and lead to further destruction of family ties. Maybe so.

However, social values are now changing and pre-marital sex is gaining social acceptance. In addition, it is doubtful that eliminating parental consent restrictions would destroy the nuclear family.

Withholding treatment to minors is not going to help eliminate unwanted children, illegitimate births or abortions.

Youths who experience some sexual problem are most reluctant to tell their parents and without parental consent the minors can't be treated. The result is that problems increase instead of diminish. Minors with some advance professional help might be able to avoid many sex-related problems.

There is a mounting effort to pursue the Nebraska legislature to follow the lead of other states which have legalized the treatment of minors without parental consent. It is already legal in Nebraska to treat minors for venereal disease without parental consent.

But more needs to be done. Nebraska should eliminate barriers of age and marital status that restrict the dispensing of birth control information and supplies. Such barriers create more problems than they solve.

**Guilt by association**

Bob Hope's appearance on campus this weekend means different things to people. For some it will be a chance to see one of the world's greatest comedians. For others it will be an opportunity to demonstrate against the Vietnam war and Hope's attitude toward America's involvement in the war.

Students are planning to demonstrate against Hope because of his past efforts to entertain U.S. troops around the world as well as his friendship with Richard Nixon and Spiro Agnew. It seems that Hope is a victim of logical fallacy-guilt by association.

While anti-war adherents have a right to peacefully protest Hope's appearance, it seems ludicrous to do so. Hope is not a policy-maker for the war; he is only a comedian and a businessman. His public relations man who is in Lincoln says the comedian would like to see the U.S. out of Vietnam. The only reason Hope goes to South Vietnam is to entertain the troops, according to the public relations man.

The peace movement has been ebbing recently and it needs increased public support. However, protests such as the ones planned against Hope will do little good for the anti-war effort and probably turn a lot of people off.

Gary Seacrest



Campaign button

**LETTERS to the NEBRASKAN**

Brevity in letters is requested and the Daily Nebraskan reserves the right to condense letters. All letters must be accompanied by writer's true name but may be submitted for publication under a pen name or initials. However, letters will be printed under a pen name or initials at the editor's discretion.

Dear editor,

It seems that the voter registration drive is on its way towards accomplishing its objectives. This is particularly encouraging when you consider the formidable propaganda campaign mounted against massive student registration in Lancaster County by those conservative old guard politicians that have for so long dominated Nebraska's politics.

The question of where to register seems to be surrounded by half-truths; the old guard's major purpose is to scare students into registering where their votes can be diluted, as well as make them less numerous because of the difficulty in voting by absentee ballot.

I am also concerned about the high percentage of independent registrations, which are at the 20 per cent mark in Lancaster County to date. I sympathize with those who feel that neither party is responsive to their needs. I would remind you, however, that your views and opinions will never be represented if you do not represent them yourselves.

I cordially invite all those who would register independent to participate in the Democratic Party primary by registering as Democrats. We offer the only choice there will be in the upcoming

primary races and we have a presidential hopeful for every issue or philosophy. We have traditionally been the party most open and receptive to change. Let us direct this change together.

Dave Newell  
First Vice-President  
Nebraska Young Democrats

Dear editor,

The University of Nebraska Corn Cobs presents "The Bob Hope Show." The band strikes up "Thanks for the Memories" and Bob Hope enters the stage.

Yes, "thanks for the memories;" yes, do you remember Bob Hope, close friend of Richard Nixon and Spiro Agnew. Do you remember Bob Hope, "former" hawk on the war and now a supporter of Vietnamization? Do you remember Bob Hope, the man who entertained thousands of troops in Vietnam, but did not resist the war itself?

The Corn Cobs chose Bob Hope to entertain Big Red supporters. Choosing a funny man who is not aware of the tragedy of his existence is a mistake. If wit and wisdom are not both present in a human being, tragedy lurks.

The Corn Cobs' lack of wisdom in their choice of a witty man is sad indeed. Getting a big crowd and a good



bill smitherman

**The reaction to activism**

Student activism in America is not old. It is only in the past eight or nine years that student activists have raised their voices.

In any new and unpopular cause there is bound to be a reaction and the movement of politically active students follows the pattern. The movement and its opposition to the goals of the older generation involve most activist students in hassles which seem almost systematic.

One student tells of the reaction in his home, a small Nebraska town, when he was a leader of the May, 1970 student strike. After the news reports started coming to the town his parents began to get angry calls from their neighbors.

"My mother defended what I was doing to these people," he said. "But, she didn't like what I was doing and told me so to my face."

A group of men in the town posted a reward of \$250 for his hair. But no one tried to collect.

However, reactions of parents and people in the community are only part of the problem encountered by student activists.

Some have lost jobs as their activism became known. Recently a long-time activist, who had been arrested in several demonstrations, was denied car insurance.

The company gave his arrests as the reason for not writing a policy, though the arrests were all political in nature and had nothing to do with traffic.

One of the student's arrests came after he had testified against a prominent man in the city where he was working as a VISTA worker. He claims he was assaulted by the arresting policeman who then planted a knife on him.

The police officer was later convicted for illegal activities, but the arrest still stands on the student's record.

Another student who coordinated a controversial campus conference received several threatening telephone calls and letters.

There is really no way to tell how many students have been under surveillance by police and other officials. But some activists have definitely been watched.

So, we can see there can be many perils, both short and long range, to being a student activist. It takes courage to be involved with the forces of change.

Some of the harassment seems to be built into the system. The conventions of society work against any new and unpopular force. Where the status quo has been threatened men have continually reacted against those who

would create change.

Early labor organizers met many of the same problems students activists are now encountering. Joe Hill, for instance, faced a firing squad in Utah after trying to organize copper miners.

Whether he was guilty of murder or only of bucking the mine owners is hard to say, because the records of his trial mysteriously disappeared. Other labor organizers throughout the country were beaten and sometimes killed by the solid citizens of their communities.

There is a parallel in what has happened. In both movements there was action followed by reaction. Hopefully there will also be a parallel of outcome.

The labor battles were won. After the initial violent reaction people began to listen to the voice of the workingman. His unpopular cause was soon accepted.

The specifics of student activism are different from those of the labor movement, but the basic principles are the same. Justice, human rights and human dignity were and are at stake.

History may repeat itself here and that is to be desired. But only perseverance and time will tell.



tom braden

**What happened to the youth movement?**

WASHINGTON--"Somewhere in your hearts and souls," Sen. Edward Kennedy told a Harvard audience the other day, "the fire is still burning."

He may be right. But if so, the ashes lie heavy on the logs. Politicians throughout the country report that the youth movement seems to have burned out, and the question they are asking themselves is why.

I remember a time in the spring of 1968 when Robert Kennedy made a speech at an outdoor theater in Los Angeles, the benches, the aisles, the hills around were jammed with the young, the smell of pot hung heavy in the air. It was a full-throated crowd and when Kennedy accused President Johnson of appealing to the baser instincts, the roar that went up might have reminded the gods of the Coliseum in its heyday.

Last week George McGovern made a speech at the University of California before a crowd almost as large and just as young. He got full attention; there was no movement on the outskirts. Respect was evident but not lust for action; mind, not soul.

Granted the difference between Kennedy and McGovern. Granted that Kennedy spoke just before an election while McGovern's test is nearly a year away. There remains, nevertheless, a difference between the activism which marked the youth of 1968 and 1969 and the "eerie tranquility," to use the phrase of Yale's president, Kingman Brewster, which defines youth in 1971.

Is it that they no longer fear the draft? In October, 1969, when 250,000 young people descended on Washington for the Moratorium, the Nixon Administration was drafting at an annual rate of 309,000. The comparable figure for 1971 is 98,000. Moreover, the new law removes the anxiety factor. Everybody knows his number, and most numbers are high.

Or is it that they have the vote? Is the difference between the Kennedy and McGovern crowds the difference between response and responsibility?

Or have the young been disillusioned into thinking that nothing they do-no protest they make, no matter how peaceful and well-organized-has any effect on national policy? If so, they have misread their President's quick withdrawal from Cambodia, and the nervous soul-searching at the White House which preceded the decision to withdraw as quickly as possible, and to lower thereafter the profile in Vietnam.

Sen. Kennedy pointed out in his Harvard speech that the war in Indochina cannot justify silence. "We have," he said, "only changed the color of the bodies." He went on to catalogue the sins of Mr. Nixon. "The President fired the only Cabinet member who wanted him to listen to

youth. . . . He sent agents to spy on ecology rallies. . . . His attorney general combatted the lawlessness of May Day with lawlessness. . . . He arrogated to himself the power to listen to telephone conversations of dissenters. . . . He refused to convene a grand jury to investigate the killing of four unarmed students protesting the invasion of Cambodia."

It was as though Kennedy were asking, "What's the matter? Don't you care any more?" All Democratic presidential candidates, except Sen. Jackson, are equally wistful.

Perhaps Edward Kennedy could bring the youth movement to life again. Polls show that the young favor him heavily over anybody else. But the same polls show that they will vote in lesser numbers than anybody would have predicted a year ago, and if you listen now to the voice of youth in the land you listen in vain.

The old theory of interest-group politics holds that if you throw a dog a bone he will quit barking. President Nixon is a firm believer in the old politics; and the new draft law, the war's low profile, the 18-year-old vote are big bones. If the old theory is right, the youth vote will not be as important as Democratic politicians once thought it would be.

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Telephones: editor: 472-2588, news: 472-2589, advertising: 472-2590. Second class postage rates paid at Lincoln, Nebraska.  
Subscription rates are \$5 per semester or \$9 per year. Published Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday during the school year except during vacation and exam periods. Member of the Intercollegiate Press, National Educational Advertising Service.  
The Daily Nebraskan is a student publication, editorially independent of the University of Nebraska's administration, faculty and student government.  
Address: The Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, University of Nebraska, Lincoln, Nebraska 68508.

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