

## Keep on truckin' George McGovern

They said it couldn't be done. But apparently he is doing it and doing it well.

From a dark-horse candidacy built on a peace in Southeast Asia platform, he may be personally responsible for narrowing the field of Democratic presidential contenders to three or less. Among those left in serious contention for the nomination, he now holds an undeniable lead.

The meek-mannered history and political science professor named George McGovern is dead set on becoming the next President of the United States. Hailing from the midwestern prairies of South Dakota, the 49-year-old senator sets forth a strong brand of rhetoric not typical of those actively seeking the highest governmental spot in this country.

The most recent tabulation of Democratic National Convention delegates committed to McGovern is impressive. United Press International predicts McGovern now has 235½ delegate votes, with second running Sen. Edmund Muskie polling only 138½. A final tally of 1,509 out of a possible 3,616 delegate votes are needed to win the party nomination.

editorial

In a most unfashionable way, McGovern was the first national figure to oppose U.S. involvement in Southeast Asia—six months after he was elected to the Senate, in 1963. Another example of his political foresight dealt with United States relations with Communist China. As a professor at Dakota Wesleyan from 1949-1953, he advocated the establishment of diplomatic recognition of that country.

Among the many pieces of significant legislation McGovern has supported and sponsored, many are bills dealing with civil rights. He co-sponsored every piece of civil rights legislation enacted during the past decade.

When declaring his candidacy in early 1971, McGovern said, "I believe the people of this country are tired of the old rhetoric, the unmet promise, the image makers and the practitioners of the expedient. The people are not centrist or liberal or conservative. Rather, they seek a way out of the wilderness."

George McGovern offers the people of the United States their only hope of creatively emerging from the wilderness.

Barry Pilger



The era of the one-room schoolhouse is still with us. An October 1971 study revealed that there are a total of 103 one-teacher rural schools in Nebraska. These schools enroll five or less pupils each.

There are 1,294 school districts in Nebraska, the state with the greatest number. Texas follows with 1,167, Illinois with 1,146, and California with 1,117. Midwest states comparable to Nebraska have far fewer districts. Colorado has 181; Iowa, 453; Kansas, 311; South Dakota, 233.

Nebraska has too many school districts. This decreases the quality of education for students in rural areas and increases the cost of education per student in those districts.

Why is Nebraska dragging its feet in reorganizing school districts, an accomplished reform in other midwest states? W.A. Schindler at the statistical services office of the State Department of Education gives two reasons. Even though it costs more to educate each of a small number of students,

most rural communities would be taxed more if they were to consolidate with one or two other schools. This is because more students would be given an education of higher uniform quality. Rural areas are jealous of their independence and do not want to forfeit a measure of local control.

Some consolidation has occurred. In 1968 there were 2,172 districts; in 1949, 6,734. The number of districts, though reduced, is still unworkable. Students are suffering from the resulting inefficiency.

The October study makes it clear that the smaller the school, the greater the chance that the quality of education will be substandard. There are 990 unaccredited school districts, 76 per cent of the total number. They train eight per cent of all students enrolled, or 27,024. The enrollment in these 990 unaccredited schools reflects their small size.

The unaccredited school offers less than a comprehensive educational program, although it is approved and operates legally.

Large schools, conversely, often receive the highest "AA accredited" rating. Of the 26 school districts so designated, 24 are school systems with over 1,000 enrollments.

The lack of a standardized, accreditable high school education throughout Nebraska has a distinguishable effect on the quality of education at the University of Nebraska.

A survey of 181 high schools that sent students to the University last fall showed that 102 schools had graduating classes of 75 or less. Students from these schools comprised over 20 per cent of the University enrollments.

There has been only limited success in educational innovation at the University of Nebraska. Student response to unstructured learning situations such as Centennial College and the independent study course has been qualified. Undoubtedly, the ability of University students to respond to such educational settings is influenced by their previous educational experience.

The high school student with a narrow range of educational experience is likely to find the unstructured learning situation confusing and stagnating. Educational reform at the University depends, first and foremost, on student initiative and responsiveness.

If there is to be educational reform at the university level, there must first be reform of education in primary and secondary schools. Rural Nebraska's public schools should consolidate to make the secondary education of uniformly high quality.

This would be of significant value to the University and its currently stunted educational growth. School district reorganization is the indispensable next step in statewide educational reform.

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