

bart
becker
gnostic
turpitude

A request and plea for help was aired recently in the letters column of one of the local dailies. Members of the eighth grade history class had decided Nebraska needed a state fish because Oregon had one "and we're a better state than Oregon."

Anyway, they were soliciting suggestions for the fish to wear the laurels of the "Beef State." Fish laureate, I suppose the finned beast would be called.

I assume the kids in the class don't have the power to officially crown one of our ichthyic friends, but one never quite knows the structure of government.

At any rate, the choice of a state fish is one that should be approached carefully, keeping in mind the contributions and benefits our modern Nebraska and American society have reaped from the colorful fish heritage.

For instance, the show business world owes a debt to fish that will probably last forever.

Walter Brennan sustained his image for years by reciting stories about sagacious old fish who Walter could never catch. The 45 r.p.m. record version sold like fishcakes back in the 50s. The public appeal, of course, was that Walter was a little too stupid to ever catch a carp, and, of course, every American could identify with that.

Trout history, we've owed much of the impact of much of our literary epics to the presence of fish as central characters. For instance, bulls are fine, but Hemingway would have had a hell of an allegory on his hands if he'd tried to get the old man in the boat to hook a bull in the middle of the ocean and then tow it in. The tale was so unfathomable anyway that the only hint of reality was the huge fish, with which anybody could identify.

And our neighbors under the sea have also added to our colorful American tradition of slang. For instance, in the mid-19th century the phrase, "to drink like a fish," was coined. This necessitated the invention of fermentation and the alcoholic beverage in order that the phrase could be put into use outside the realm of academia.

As a result, the United States entered into and floundered out of Prohibition, one of the most exciting eras of American life, particularly in the late 1950s and early 1960s when it was glorified in a grade B television series.

The program also involved an inordinate amount of

gunplay, and from that action came the phrase, "as easy as shooting fish in a barrel." Fish themselves, however, have refrained from using the phrase as they were consistently denied entry into barrels until after World War II.

Individual members of the fish breed have also gained fame and/or notoriety. Religiosos have often been known to go into mystically induced trances and utter, "Holy Mackerel."

So keep all that and more in mind when you send in your suggestion for a state fish. After all, it's not any scaled creature that can assume a spot with our other state honoraries, the Cottonwood (recently elected), the Goldenrod, and the Meadowlark. They'll be waiting with baited breath, (ha, ha) I'm sure.

A bunch of stuff is coming up to keep you from preparing for finals this weekend. The Union Weekend Film folks are presenting a bunch of films starting Monday. *I Love You*, *Alice B. Toklas*, *Viva Max*, and *Paint Your Wagon* will show May 1, 3 and 4 respectively. On Monday, the 8th, a free showing of Charlie Chaplin, W.C. Fields and Abbot and Costello shorts will accompany *The Reivers*.

The live *Trash of the Thirties* is on tap Saturday night in the Union Ballroom.

And better yet, *The Concert for Bangladesh* is showing downtown. It's probably worth seeing although Ralph J. Gleason, in *Rolling Stone*, said that it didn't quite live up to expectations.



The liberal news media and Democrats of all casts, ranging from George Wallace to George McGovern, are now taking to the streets in a no-holds-barred assault on the President of the United States and the Republican Party. Their aims are to completely discredit the administration and prepare for a Democratic takeover in November. It now appears, however, that both of these goals will fail miserably, simply because the record shows how patently false and hypocritical their vehement attacks are. Here are some of the major issues in the campaign:

Charge- The economy is sluggish, economic indicators are down, unemployment and inflation are raging, and the pay board favors big business and special interests at the expense of the working man and the housewife.

Fact- The coming months will see continued expansion, accelerated growth, and a general, broad-based recovery of the nation's economy. The gain in the gross national product (GNP) for the first quarter of 1972 was 11.8 per cent, compared to 7.6 per cent for the fourth quarter of 1971 and 5.2 per cent for the third quarter of the same year. Unemployment is dropping and all experts expect it to be below 5 per cent at the end of the year; a record 81,200,000 people are at work compared with 79,500,000 last August, according to the current issue of *U.S. News & World Report* magazine. Total retail sales, a good index of whether or not people are spending their money, are up 6.6 per cent to \$432 billion, and auto sales are up 3.4 per cent since before the freeze to \$10.3 billion. Building construction is up 15 per cent to \$120.3 billion.

Furthermore, the cost of living, since controls, has gone up at an annual rate of 2.8 per cent, the lowest increase since 1966 and well within the goal set by the Price Commission. The Labor Department recently reported that the cost of living for March rose a mere two-tenths of one per cent. Seasonally adjusted (discounting increases that normally come during the month) the Consumer Price Index remained unchanged for the month—the first time this has happened since November, 1966. At the same time, average earnings of workers recorded the biggest March increase in seven years.

Additionally, there are simply no grounds for the repeated charge by organized labor that wages have been held down while prices have disproportionately risen. In fact, the opposite is true. The average worker in a non-farm industry now earning \$131.73 a week, \$2.70 more than his pre-freeze rate, and translating into an actual purchasing power rise of \$1.88 a week since August, when controls were first imposed. Farmers have a weekly purchasing power gain of \$9.19, and civil service employees an increase of \$7.09 a week. In short, if

people vote their pocketbooks in 1972, it will be the President who stands to gain.

Charge- The administration is insensitive to minority needs.
Fact- The Nixon Administration has done more for minority groups than any other past administration. The new fiscal 1973 budget for the Office of Minority Enterprise is over \$100 million represents a 263 per cent increase over the 1969 funding level. During the 1970-71 academic year, the nation's 112 predominantly black colleges received \$125 million in federal aid, a 16 per cent increase over the previous year.

The budget for the Health Services Administration for Indian Programs increased \$19 million to \$163.7 million for fiscal 1972. Six out of 11 Bureau of Indian Affairs Area directors are Indians, as opposed to only one when the President took office.

There is now a Cabinet-level Committee on Opportunities for the Spanish Speaking. Mexican-Americans holding high federal appointments include Román Banuelos, the treasurer of the United States, and Phillip Sanchez, director of the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO).

And for a group that is not a minority but has been treated like one, the President has appointed more women to high-level positions in Government (GS-16 and up) than were appointed by both previous Democratic administrations combined—Nixon: 75 women in three years; Johnson: 27 women in five years, two months; and Kennedy: 18 women in two years and 10 months.

Charge- Despite Nixon's promise in 1968, the high rise in crime continues unchecked, and the Administration is doing little to curb the drug epidemic.

Fact- Significant progress is being made in the war against street crime, organized crime, and drugs. New FBI statistics reveal that the crime rate is down to its smallest increases since 1966. In 1969, the crime rate was up 12 per cent, in 1970, 11 per cent and in 1972 just 6 per cent—half what it was during Nixon's first year.

Moreover, serious crime actually decreased in 52 of the 156 major U.S. cities with populations exceeding 100,000, including Omaha. With regard to drugs, the budget of the Bureau of Narcotics and Dangerous Drugs has been increased to \$55 million for fiscal 1972, and the amount of confiscated illegal drugs has risen nearly 500% in the past three years. On the international front, the U.S. government has signed treaty agreements with several nations, including France, Mexico, and Turkey, to limit illicit global drug traffic.

A close examination of the record shows the drastic and comprehensive measures the Nixon administration is taking towards solving today's most pressing problems. The results show just how much is being accomplished.

john
vihstadt
different
drummer