

'... at 50 m.p.h.'

"We're going to hell in a handbasket and being told to do it at 50 m.p.h."—H.L. Stevenson, UPI editor-in-chief

When it comes to the gasoline shortage, it seems that President Nixon is a man of good intentions. His proposals, however, are reminiscent of many of his other remedies for the nation's ills: It's inadequate.

In his Sunday night energy speech, the President urged voluntary compliance with 50 m.p.h. speed limits until legislation can be implemented which will make the limit mandatory. He proposed a 55 m.p.h. limit for long-distance buses and trucks. He also called for halting Sunday gasoline sales.

At least part of the reasoning behind this proposal is sound. Government energy experts say research has proven that many types of cars can get as many as four more miles to the gallon if they are driven at about 50 m.p.h. Lower speed limits and the longer travel time needed for one to reach a destination will curb much non essential weekend and holiday traffic.

While a cutback in weekend driving will cool the economy, the brief recession that might grow out of it probably will be mild compared to the economic problems which more likely might develop if we continue to waste energy resources.

But, to quote W.C. Fields, "the road is fraught with imminent peril." Halting gasoline sales on Sunday and slicing speed limits are questionable approaches to a grave problem.

Not allowing the sale of gasoline on Sundays does not guarantee consumption will be curtailed as much as necessary.

The lower speed limits, however, pose an even greater danger. Gov. J.J. Exon was right when he called Nixon's proposal "preposterous...unworkable...and ridiculous." The lower speed limits for cars than for buses and trucks will contribute to highway accidents, a fact that even truckers admit.

The lower speed limits, while providing some gasoline savings, are not necessarily right for all vehicles. Late-model trucks and some cars are geared for greatest gasoline savings at higher speeds.

Enforcement of these federal speed limits also might prove difficult. If other governors agree with Exon, it is possible that state law enforcement authorities might not be urged to enforce the measure wholeheartedly.

Perhaps a better plan would be gasoline rationing. Nixon cohorts have estimated that it will take an army of 10,000 persons to administer a rationing program, a program which might cost as much as \$10 million.

Perhaps the public might resent rationing, as Nixon has said, but not half as much as they would resent the possible depression which could grow out of a critical gasoline shortage. Also, creating jobs for 10,000 more persons might be wise when one considers that business leaders, men who usually are optimistic about the economy, have predicted as much as eight per cent unemployment next year due to energy shortages. The \$10 million cost of the program could be financed through government savings on fuel which it could not obtain so easily.

All in all, the Nixon effort is well intentioned, but the gasoline program is inadequate. Rationing would be a better step.

Michael (O.J.) Nelson



Regent Robert J. Prokop

Down memory lane

Editor's note: When Regent Robert J. Prokop was an NU graduate student he wrote a column for the Daily Nebraskan. Entitled Porcupines, the column contained his philosophies and reflections on life at what is now the UNL campus. One of those columns, dated Mar. 10, 1959, is reprinted below. By Robert J. Prokop

By Robert J. Prokop

It's too bad our Legislature, regents and factions of our administration still do not realize that some of their horse and buggy ideas are being lost in changing times.

Society demands that our rules and regulations be modernized. The first of these demands is social drinking.

Modern business and state have diverted from the old idea of enterprise being accomplished over the desk to the present method of selling at cocktail parties and social gatherings.

Regulations at school have hindered this side of education. In essence, we all know present drinking regulations and can sympathize with our administrative enforcement since their hands are tied.

But I cannot sympathize with our rule-making bodies and our governor who now seems to be more interested in cutting his throat in national politics. Since they are so old-fashioned, it hurts us education-wise.



Nebraska University for the last four years has been turning out intellects which are by no means educated in the fields of modern day social graces. In the past, the word alcohol has not been taboo. Today, however, fraternity, sorority and independent parties are not able to mix drinks for people so inclined.

What are the arguments and amendments which would alleviate the above problem?

First, it is interesting to note that since 1954, the year of the big crackdown on University drinking, student arrests by the local city police have gone up percentage-wise. The reason is quite obvious: the rigorous enforcement of rules on campus has caused people to go outside of the University control.

Controls by campus personnel would better regulate this University problem. Basically, overindulgence would not be a problem, for a person is more likely to have one brew than one case.

Secondly, our Legislature should re-examine their present position as compared to our neighbors, Kansas and Colorado. There is no doubt that our adjacent states have had tremendous success with 3.2 beer for 18-year-olds. Universities at Kansas, Kansas State, Missouri and Colorado have not had the problems Nebraska has had in the field of drinking.

Of course, as long as our misinformed legislators and our governor continue to listen to the minority whose major object is to distort facts about alcohol, we won't get anyplace. Religious convictions which have been misconstrued by the opposition also give our rule-making bodies a wrong impression of the true view.

Logically, anyone could take anything and construe it to appear evil.

Third, we must face the problem: are students able to think for themselves?

Controlling a student's social actions by rigid unjust rules prevents the individual from acquiring reasoning power from within.

What are some of the answers?

First, a forum or meeting of the regents, governor—if he isn't too busy keynoting Harry Truman's visits—and the chancellor should sit down with a few individuals on campus and see what solutions could be brought out. This columnist would love to see this problem brought to light and reasons for decisions be made explicit to the general student body.

Second, let's stamp out minority rule in our Legislature with majority rule. Maybe mother's little boy isn't so after all. It's time Carrie Nation was axed but good.

Third, let's not blame Dean Colbert, Dean Halgren or the so-called "campus gestapo" for carrying out policies they are required to enforce. These gentlemen are doing a fine job in their capacity.

Last, let's have a little better communication between students and administration.

Let's all get together and straighten out this misconstrued problem. With the regents, chancellor, governor and proper student representation, a better solution of social drinking could be brought about.

He who represents the people must share the ideas of the people.