

Exon right for times

We agree with State Sen. Ernest Chambers, one of the Nebraska gubernatorial contenders, that the major issues in the race are the three candidates.

Their backgrounds range from barbering to business to teaching. Their campaign proposals are equally as diverse and as interesting.

Chambers, the independent candidate, projects the image of the thoughtful, well-meaning idealist. The programs he advocates not only are thought-provoking, but also excite a person as to the prospects for humanity to survive and better its lot in the coming decades.

Chambers' programs depend on a virtually unlimited amount of state funds in an inflation-troubled economy. One such program is his proposal for penal reform.

Such a program would no doubt foster an improved penitentiary with a better chance of rehabilitating the inmates it houses. But the program's cost would be high, if not astronomical.

The Chambers' campaign without a doubt, has been a real blessing for the state. His candidacy would be significant if merely because it is the first time a black has filed and run for the office of governor in the state's 107-year history.

And we think several of his ideas should be seriously considered by the next governor, including elimination of the state sales tax in favor of a tax on intangibles and increasing urban-rural cooperation.

State Sen. Richard Marvel, the Republican candidate proposes some fundamental changes in government structure and priorities, if he is elected. He has drawn up a plan to divide state government departments into four areas—human resources, natural resources, community affairs and administrative affairs. According to Marvel, his experience as chairman of the Legislature Appropriations Committee has given him the

chance to evaluate the performance of state departments. The inefficiencies his staff has discovered in the departments indicates the need for a change in the present structure.

Marvel proposes to individually evaluate state department directors—an act that may cut down the amount of inefficiency and waste which runs rampant in government bureaucracy. But such action is a very slow weeding out process. Nebraskans are paying an arm and a leg for prices of food and other items. They need direct action from the governor, aimed at reducing inflation as on the household level.

It is unfortunate that in this election, such idealistic and potentially worthy proposals made by both Chambers and Marvel must take a back seat to what we believe is the major issue facing the nation and the state at this time—inflation.

And it is on the issue of inflation, particularly, that the programs advocated by incumbent Gov. J. James Exon merit his re-election.

Exon has made a career of "pocketbook" issues. He has conceded exercising his veto on legislative appropriations more than any governor in the state's history.

One example is his refusal to issue bonds for highway construction, which is advocated by both Chambers and Marvel. Yet, under the Exon administration, Nebraska last month became the first state to complete its interstate system, which is financed by matching federal and state funds.

If Exon takes credit for lowering the state income tax rates, rather than simply saying he has "held the line on taxes," it should be remembered he initially opposed lowering the rate from 15% to 13% and opposed the recent reduction to 11%.

But this is just another example of financial conservatism. Exon opposed lowering the tax rate until it was certain there would be enough funds in the state general fund to pay for state programs. And a pay-as-you-go, balancing-the-budget financial conservatism is one way to fight inflation.

Exon has criticized the 260 per cent growth in Legislature expenses, which this year totaled over \$3 million. The administrative belt-tightening he recommends is encouraging to Nebraskans, who are carrying their share of the inflationary burden.

Exon has an attitude that is right for the times. And, although we hope for more innovative programs in his second term, we believe he deserves student support and the votes of people throughout the state in his bid for re-election.

Randy Gordon
Lynn Silhasek

Don't know—don't vote

Most Americans have been told that voting is important, that it is a part of their obligation as U.S. citizens. So is not voting.

Each election year, Americans enter voting booths and mark their choices for office. Sometimes those choices involve much forethought. Other times, they are based on little more than whimsy.

Too often voters will vote for candidates they have never heard of, running for offices they did not even realize were vacant. They might vote for a candidate on the basis of sex or because his or her name appears first on the ballot or because he or she has a last name of a particular ethnic origin.

The only valid reason for selecting a certain candidate is his or her qualifications and ideology. Voters must inform themselves about political races by using campaign literature, news sources and, if possible, personal contact with the candidates.

If voters know nothing about the contenders, they have no business voting in that particular race. Information must be the basis for giving a candidate a vote. If it is not, the American political system will continue to produce inept representatives, chosen by the same voters who later complain about sluggish government.

Jane Owens

Nebraska has chance to stir up stagnant politics

Editor's note: Joseph Dressen is a UNL sophomore majoring in political science.

Watching the televised debate between the Nebraska gubernatorial candidates Wednesday night, audiences once again had a chance to witness the mediocrity which prevades Nebraska politics.

guest opinion

There seem to be no real differences between Exon and Marvel.

On the other hand, State Sen. Ernie Chambers differs greatly from the other two candidates.

Chambers is by no means mediocre. The mediocrity mentioned before is reflected in the fact that Chambers simply will not win the governorship.

During the debate, he came across as being the most capable candidate of the three. In his cool and articulate manner, he talked of much needed tax reform and antitrust action. His statements simply may be campaigned rhetoric, but at least Chambers suggested the need for such things—something Exon or Marvel did not.

So why won't Chambers be elected?

He is a black man—a black man rash enough to suggest a need for change in this state—and the word "change" seems to suggest something evil and sinister to Nebraskans.

They insist on re-electing men like Sen. Roman Hruska and Carl Curtis, paragons of mediocrity.

They elect representatives like Charles Thone, who claims he has done wonderful things for his constituents. He has given them the Federal Building, watersheds and all kinds of nice tangible objects.

He has voted against unnecessary and inflationary spending.

What Thone does not mention are the

intangibles—his support of G. Bradford Cook (former director of the Security and Exchange Commission) and Richard Nixon, or the fact that he has voted against inflationary measures concerning such things as welfare, education or various other social programs but, when it comes to Military appropriations and Defense spending, (needless waste in many cases), Thone votes "aye."

Probably the best chance of denting his wall of mediocrity surrounding us, lies in the success of Thone's opponent.

Hess Dyas, Democratic candidate for the 1st District congressional seat, is like a

breath of fresh air for Nebraska. His is a likeable, effective campaigner, who has risen from the underdog position to a point where he has Thone fighting for his political life. He is bringing his cause to the people, hearing them out on the issues, seemingly sincere in his wish for better and more effective representation.

While Nebraskans cannot be expected to elect Kennedys or Fulbrights, we do have a chance this year—in Hess Dyas and Ernie Chambers—to at least stir up the stagnant state of affairs Nebraska politics have fallen into. It's your choice, a clear cut choice at that.

