



Election picks may spur congressional reform

This week's national election results hold some promise of much-needed reform in the 94th Congress.

Americans have debated the merits of Congress' internal organization since the two houses were established, but change rarely has followed. Congressional effectiveness still is hindered by such practices as the seniority system.

Important bills, such as the one this year which would have created a consumer protection agency, have been waylaid by filibuster tactics. Other pieces of legislation often are bottled up in a committee if the chairman opposes them.

This year the issue of congressional reform—which once would have drawn only blank stares from voters—became a major issue in many races across the country.

For several reasons, the time seems right

for such reforms:

—The wave of 61 retiring congressmen—nine senators and 52 representatives—means that a majority in both houses of the new Congress will consist of members elected in only the last six years. This represents the most sweeping turnover since just after World War II.

—The loss of so much congressional seniority is likely to produce gains for the political reform movement. The retirements swept away a substantial bloc of anti-reform votes and could propel certain reform issues over the top.

For example, only seven votes in the House of Representatives kept the much-touted campaign reform of nationwide postcard voter registration from becoming law earlier this year. The vote was 204 to 197, with 28 of those "no" votes cast by members

who will not return to the new Congress.

Likewise, only nine votes prevented the Senate last year from opening all committee meetings to the public unless closed by a majority committee vote. Six of the "no" votes—enough to reverse the outcome, if switched—came from senators not returning.

—Reform momentum should be quickened by voter disenchantment over recent political scandals—from Watergate to "milk fund" campaign contributions—and the growing influence of public-interest lobbies such as Common Cause and Ralph Nader's organization.

The first test of the new congressional reformism will come when Democrats, still the ruling party, caucus in December to organize the House. Hopefully, they will prod a sluggish government by enacting long-thwarted congressional reforms.

Jane Owens

Campus male exhibitionists and assailants 'destroy a woman mentally and emotionally'

Last Sunday night, a girl was walking from Harper-Schramm-Smith Halls to Neihardt Residential Center. When she got to Nebraska Hall, a man came walking out of the parking lot.

With what she described as a "sickening smile" he said, "Hey lady, look at me" and exposed himself. She was so scared that she was momentarily unable to do anything but stand there, while he talked on.

She began to run away, but he followed her. When she started waving at passing cars, he turned and walked back towards the parking lot.

Two weeks ago, a woman was attacked on campus near Love Library by three boys, all about twelve years old. They tore at her clothes while using obscene language.

When she managed to break away from them, she immediately called the Campus Police. They told her

The fact that I heard all three stories within a week or so was even more disturbing when I considered that I heard these only because the women involved were friends of mine. How many similar things have been happening on campus?

Some people look at these events as unimportant and relatively minor because no one was physically hurt, or, in two of the three incidents, even had physical contact with the men.

But the emotional effects on the three women were severe. The girl who had the experience with the custodian said, "I'll never take a night class. And I'll let my husband take the car from now on. I'll just stay at home."

Only men can inflict this kind of intimidation upon women. We are powerless to do the same. How many men would be frightened of a woman walking out of a parking lot with no shirt on? It would be, instead, a big joke.

Some people have mentioned to me that they think the media has run the subject of rape into the ground recently.

But rape is only one of the crimes which force women to define their activities and lifestyles in terms of what risks are involved. An exhibitionist may not be a physically violent person, a man following a girl around may not be a criminal, but both are capable of mentally and emotionally destroying a woman.

I was pleased to hear how the three stories turned out. The three 12-year-olds were caught and went to court the next day with their parents.

The girl who encountered the man in the parking lot reported it to the Campus Police the next day. And the third woman is going to make sure that custodian won't be around Oldfather Hall at nights to bother anyone else.

That's important. That's action.

daily nebraskan

to the editor

Dear Editor,

On Nov. 1, the Daily Nebraskan reported that 26 out of 34 legislature candidates favored higher tuition rates for nonresidents. This is a fine argument, because this school is supported by state taxes.

Today I read about the decreases in college enrollment, specifically at UNL. Why doesn't someone sit down and figure out what enrollment might be if rates were equalized?

Let's give Nebraskans priority, but let's fill the school too. Universities are a competitive business. Wake up, Nebraska, and brush off some of those hayseeds.

Mark Buckley

Friday, november 8, 1974

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they had received a similar report ten minutes earlier.

Wednesday night, a friend of mine was waiting in Oldfather Hall for her husband, who was taking a night class. While she walked around the building, she noticed a custodian following her.

She was virtually alone when she ventured away from her husband's classroom to use the telephone. The custodian kept appearing around corners, so she went back to the area around the classroom. He stood at short distance down the hall staring at her.

When she realized he was masturbating while he watched her, she told him she would call the Campus Police. He looked surprised, and walked away.