



Way to heart of food crisis through our stomachs

Articles about food shortages are splattered on front pages so often these days, many Americans are dulled to their grimness.

The fact is that the worldwide food shortage has reached crisis proportions. If nations are to overcome this crisis, world leaders cannot have too much regard for national boundaries or religious differences or the attitudes of people. Feeding the hungry people of the world must be an apolitical situation.

Even the United States, once considered the breadbasket of a hungry world, has succumbed to many of the problems afflicting the less affluent countries. Our nation is suffering from a fertilizer shortage caused by a rise in petroleum prices. Changes in weather patterns have caused droughts in some areas of the country and floods in others.

At last, Americans are beginning to feel the first brush of anxiety that much of the world always has known: "Where is the next meal coming from?"

Yet Americans still spend millions of

dollars each year to lose weight put on by stuffing themselves with excess food.

A World Food Conference began last week in Rome, sponsored by the U.N. Food and Agricultural Organization. The central theme has been that affluent nations had better eat less or face a confrontation with 800 million hungry people.

Conference planners have proposed three main tactics to combat hunger: increase food production in developing countries 35 per cent by 1985; improve distribution of food to ensure a more equal sharing of existing supplies; and establish a system of food reserves as insurance against crop failures and other disasters.

The affluent nations—especially the United States, which has six per cent of the world's population but consumes 35 per cent of the world's resources—must practice food conservation at home.

Eating meat is an especially wasteful way to obtain protein. All protein originally comes from plants. While humans can eat one pound of plant protein directly in the form of grain, between five and 10 pounds of the same grain protein are needed to make

one pound of beef protein.

Agricultural experts point out that cattle can consume silage and forage which are indigestible by humans. The fact remains, however, that the final cattle fattening in a feedlot normally is done with grain—about 10 pounds worth for every pound of weight gained.

This same grain could provide 10 persons with amounts of protein equal to that provided one person by the beef.

Instead of feeling only perplexed and dismayed by the food situation, the individual can do something about it.

Giving up meat at least one day a week would help. So would fasting regularly—even if only for one meal each week.

Attending the Food Conference sponsored by the UNL Hunger Task Force would provide other suggestions for helping combat the food crisis. The conference will be at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday in the Nebraska Union.

The United States is to food what the Arabs are to oil. Only through conservation at home can we hope to combat the catastrophe that is fast coming.

Jane Owens

Apathy wins the election

mark b.
rasmussen
right turn

The election fervor is behind us for another two years. An examination of Tuesday's results leaves me with several thoughts I would like to share with you:

—Once again, the apathy vote outweighed the influence of all others. A **Daily Nebraskan** survey indicated only about one out of three students made the effort to vote.

To say that the student vote is meaningless is to defy reality. Less than one vote per precinct separates Nebraska's 3rd Congressional District hopefuls. Four votes from Scottsbluff students at UNL could have ended the political career of Terry Carpenter, had that been their desire. The student regent amendment still might pass if enough students took the time to vote for it absentee.

Perhaps the saddest thought of all is that most UNL students are so apathetic, lazy and/or stupid they won't go to the polls even to vote for an issue that directly benefits them.

—Ignorance anywhere is undesirable, but ignorance in the voting booth is unexcusable. Before the recent election (or any election for that matter) the voter has opportu-

nities to learn about the issues and candidates through election supplements in local papers and voting guides put out by nonpartisan groups such as the League of Women Voters.

Yet some irresponsible citizens continue to vote by impulses decided only by whims or such flimsy reasoning as the ethnic origin of the candidate's name.

For example, in this year's race for Nebraska State Auditor one candidate the incumbent was a Certified Public Accountant and ran a hard campaign. He won, thank heavens.

The other candidate had no background in accounting, save his two-year term years ago as state treasurer. During his tenure in that office his most difficult challenge was to find someone who would legally bond him.

The rest of the challenger's background included a stint as a construction worker, shop steward and bartender. Many Omahans call him the "Ratpelt King." This, I am told, is because, in an unsuccessful campaign for Omaha's City Council, he advocated ridding the city of rats by trapping them, exporting the pelts and turning Omaha into

the Ratpelt Capitol of the world. Even Gov. J. James Exon wouldn't endorse this man's Democratic challenge to the Republican incumbent.

You know what? Over 175,000 Nebraskans went to the polls and voted for the challenger. Forty-five per cent of the vote cast in that race went to the man whose candidacy should have been a joke.

—Entering 1975, the Democrats control just about everything worth controlling. The presidency and Nebraska state government (except for Exon) are about the only things Republicans held after last Tuesday's debacle.

The makeup of the new Congress holds no promise that President Gerald Ford's economic plans will be enacted in near their original form.

With top-heavy majorities in both houses of Congress, the public will not listen to any complaints of lack of legislative clout.

Either the Democrats will cure the economic ills of our country, or in 1976 the American voters will raise the Republican Phoenix from the ashes in repudiation of 1974's broken promises.