

## Saved lives justify keeping lower speed limit

If anything good resulted from the energy crisis last winter, it was the reduction in speed limits enacted by an energy-conscious Congress at the request of former President Nixon.

For a little over twelve months now, American motorists have had to fight the almost hereditary desire to send their cars winging down the Interstate at 75 miles an hour with all the concern of lemmings throwing themselves off a cliff and into the sea. The adjustment was a hard one to make.

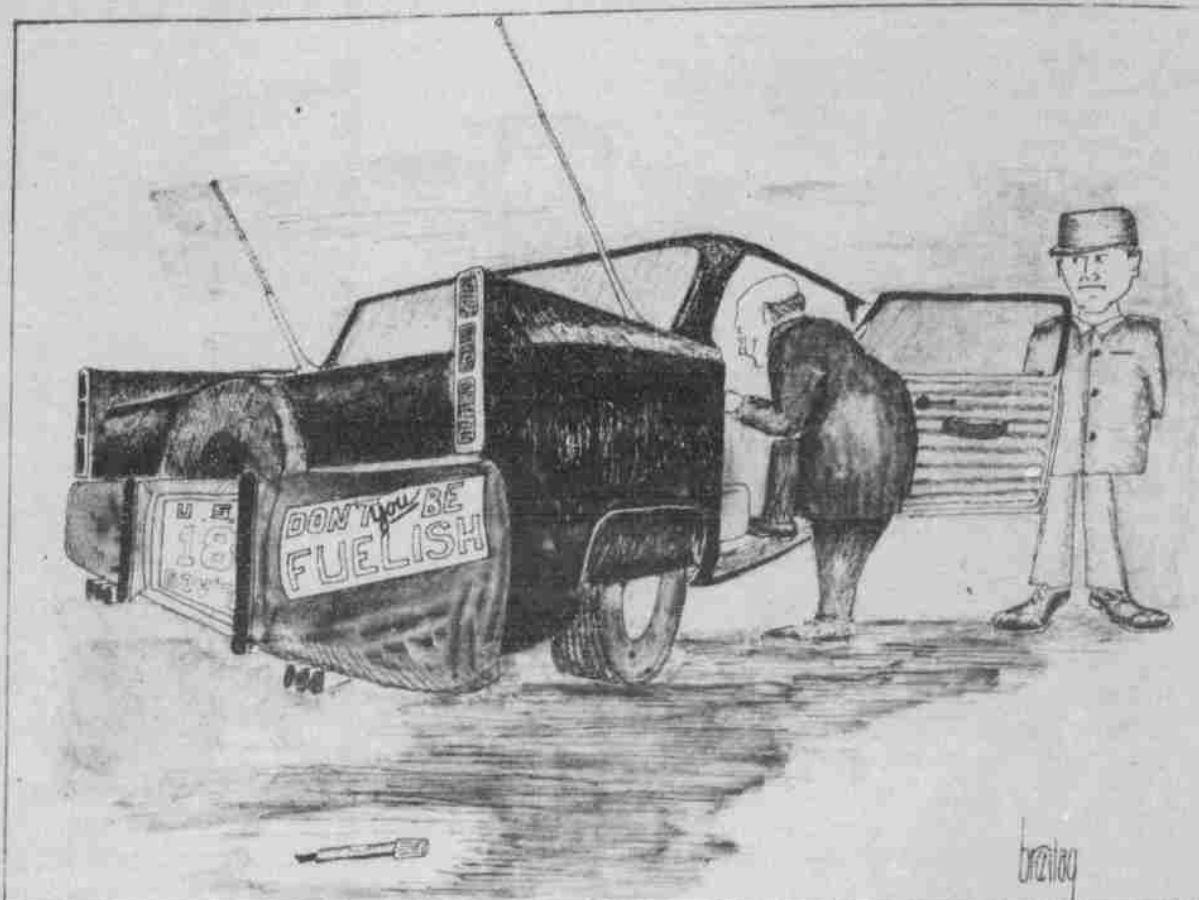
An even harder adjustment to make will be accepting a permanent 55 mile an hour speed limit. The Legislature's Public Works Committee last week sent a bill (LB381) to the floor which would in effect make the 55 mile an hour speed limit permanent by making it impossible to raise the speed limit without an act of the Legislature. The 55 mile an hour speed limit is set to expire June 30.

The movement for a permanent reduction does not come unexpectedly (the odds were better than ever after the Department of Roads sent chills down motorists' spines by replacing the temporary signs with permanent ones), and it is not unjustified.

It didn't take long for Americans to realize that lowering the speed limit lowered traffic deaths as well as the consumption of gas. There are still those who apparently would rather be dead than have to leave a few minutes early for work. But, either they are in the minority or some vote-conscious senators have misjudged their constituents.

The only disadvantage (besides making cars with speedometers that measure up to 120 miles an hour seem even more ridiculous) is that it makes the world seem larger. It takes longer to get places. But isn't that a small price if your chances of getting there are better?

Wes Albers



## 1980—last professor quits

March 23, 1980

The *Daily Nebraskan* learned today that James T. Bottomwell, UNL geology professor would resign effective March 30. He was the University's last remaining instructor.

Bottomwell, who came to Nebraska in 1927, gave two reasons for leaving.

First, he was offered more money by Lincoln East High School than he currently receives from the university. Bottomwell's capacity at East will be as an assistant physical education instructor.

His second reason for resigning concerned his workload. According to Bottomwell, "It was too much to bear. I couldn't see standing in front of a class of 20,000 students anymore. It took me 30 days just to correct a quiz."

Bottomwell's resignation has been the last of many such departures in the past five years at UNL. Professors, faced with higher prices and shrinking salaries, have been forced to look elsewhere for work.

Another less obvious reason for the instructor desertions, particularly the later ones, centers on the so-called "Golden Football Controversy."

Last January, the Legislature voted against an increase in teaching salaries just as it has done for the last six years. At the same time, however, at the request of university administrators, the legislators voted to increase the salaries of the football coaching staff.

Head Football Coach Tom Blankwall, because of the legislative bonanza, now receives a salary of \$125,000. The assistant coaches' salaries range from \$30,000 to \$70,000.

Adding insult to injury, in the same session the Legislature voted to construct a new football stadium costing an estimated \$30 million.

The proposed site for the stadium is in an area now bounded by Love Library on the south side and Bessey Hall on the north side. Razing of these buildings has already begun, with the stadium expected to be completed in three months.

Coach Blankwall, speaking in favor of the legislative actions, seems to think the instructors were unjustified in their hasty departures. Blankwall said, "You get a lot of these wire-brained intellectuals with their heads in a book. They don't know what's going on. It's all a matter of priorities."

Since there are no more instructors at UNL,

joe dreesen  
smiling grimly

the question has been raised, primarily by the NU Board of Regents, as to what should be done with the 20,000 students still on campus. A special executive meeting of the board was called with various state officials attending.

The Governor, for one, suggested calling out the National Guard to man the classrooms. This proposal was later dropped, however, because of costs.

The most widely-accepted solution was proposed by Coach Blankwall. He suggested students be put to work building the new stadium. According to Blankwall, "It'd be a great cost-cutter. Besides, these kids need to put some muscles on their bones. It just comes down to a matter of priorities."

## ASUN election rules called too restrictive

Editor's note: The following is the opinion of Robert L. Brehm.

"Since a state official, a University of Nebraska Board of Regents member, will now be chosen through student elections at UNL, the student election process should conform with state laws governing official state and local elections in so far as applicable and practical."

So begins the five-page document governing this year's ASUN elections. The rules, in their final form, were proposed by the ASUN Electoral Commission and approved by ASUN.

The Electoral Commission has added several new restrictions and regulations this year, apparently in reaction to the emergence of the student regent. Many of these regulations are significant departures from previous rules and should be examined carefully by the conscientious student voter.

The most significant and questionable change is that any persons wishing to form a party must obtain 500 signatures of current UNL students supporting their party. Previously, there had never been any requirement to gain party status.

This restriction seems particularly offensive and indefensible in light of several court decisions concerning such restrictions as well as in light of examples to be found in state laws.

ASUN's 500 signature requirement is numerically more than 20 per cent of those who voted in the last ASUN election. Compare this to the state's requirement for forming a state-wide political party. Here the requirement is a mere one per cent of those who voted in the last gubernatorial election. And yet the ASUN Electoral Commission's stated intention is to "conform with state laws governing official state and local elections."

In the 1968 Supreme Court case of *Williams vs. Rhodes* (393 U.S. 23), Ohio's 15 per cent signature requirement was struck down as unreasonable and burdensome. The Court ruled its "enforcement will deprive the right to freely associate for the

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advancement of their political beliefs and debate and otherwise imperish the right of all registered voters to equal opportunities to effectively cast their votes for candidates of their choice." Writing for the court, Justice Hugo Black said that Ohio had "failed to show any 'compelling interest' which justifies imposing... heavy burdens of the right to vote and to associate."

We must ask a similar question: what "compelling interest" does the Electoral Commission have to deny access to the ASUN ballot, to in effect apply restraints on First Amendment freedoms?

ASUN's Electoral Commission is also abridging First Amendment freedoms when it ruled that the signatures of persons who sign two or more party petitions would not be counted. This is an obvious limit on free speech and free association. A similar ruling (1970) was found to be unconstitutional in *socialist workers Party vs. Rockefeller*. That decision was later reaffirmed by the U.S. Supreme Court.

Apart from the illegality of this type of ruling, it also seems strangely inconsistent that one can sign but one ASUN party petition and yet one can sign any number of candidate petitions regardless of party affiliation.

Another change in election procedures this year is the placement of election booths in the UNL residence halls. This discriminates against fraternities, sororities and off-campus students. This is analogous to Republicans placing state election booths in country clubs or Democrats placing them in union halls. This is simply never done. Polling places must be as neutral as practicable to retain any semblance of fairness and equality.

