

d.n. soapbox

ralph by ron wheeler



innocent bystander Liberals facing extinction; may go the way of the dodo

By Arthur Hoppe

Legislation has been introduced in Congress to declare the Liberal an endangered species.

Testimony before the House Subcommittee on Wildlife and Other Forms of Recreation indicated that the Liberal, which once roamed America in vast herds, may soon go the way of the carrier pigeon, the whooping otter and the slack-jawed ant eater.

Dr. Homer T. Pettibone told congressmen that he and his fellow naturalists had been able to discover only a few remaining colonies of Liberals in such widely scattered areas as Beverly Hills, Washington D. C., Georgetown and New York's upper West Side.

He said the Liberal is basically a nocturnal creature which lives on hors d'oeuvres. He said those specimens that survive appear to be suffering from malnutrition because of the drastic dwindling of their food supply.

Dr. Pettibone blamed the dramatic decline of the Liberal population on three factors: (1) overhunting by pundits; (2) political climatological changes; and (3) the Liberal's own inherent physical and psychological defects, including a lemming-like death wish.

"The Liberal was certainly behind the door when survival characteristics were passed out," said Dr. Pettibone. "Take a Liberal's heart. It bleeds."

As a result, he said, bleeding-heart Liberals are unable to stand the sight of suffering. Whenever they see suffering, he said, they throw money at it. Why is unclear.

Dr. Pettibone believes this odd behaviour is indicative of their fuzzy minds.

Even more peculiar, he said, was the Liberal's self-destruction compulsion. The Liberal seemed to have an unerring instinct, he said, for choosing leaders that would lead the herd into a swamp or over a cliff. Consequently, he said, Liberals have all but run out of leaders. He said this was probably a good thing.

Now constantly under attack with scorn and derision, Liberals are attempting to adopt a new survival mechanism - camouflage.

"They try to disguise themselves as Progressives, Populists or Economically Compassionate Civil Libertarians," he said, shaking his head sadly. "Unfortunately, when one is attacked, it automatically responds with a reflex action of the lower extremities, thus betraying itself as a knee-jerk Liberal."

Dr. Pettibone closed with an impassioned plea for passage of the bill, which would establish Liberal Game Preserves where Liberals could safely pursue their Liberal games while subsisting on white wine and cheese.

"Otherwise," he warned, "the only specimen of these warm, lovable, harmless creatures our children will ever see will be a stuffed one in the Smithsonian."

The subcommittee, however, voted unanimously to kill the bill. "You show any compassion for the downtrodden these days," explained one Congressman privately, "and people may think you're a Liberal."

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letters to the editor

Once again the Lincoln City Planning Commission has postponed the McDonald's rezoning hearing scheduled for April 21. This postponement was at the request of McDonald's and was for no apparent reason. This is the second time the company has received a postponement and their motive is clear—to put the hearing off until classes end so that fewer students will be in Lincoln to protest the rezoning.

It seems plain that the City Planning Commission is allowing itself to be manipulated by a giant business concern and it has ceased to be responsive to the citizens it serves.

McDonald's has ignored two opportunities to present its rezoning arguments and it should not be given another.

As residents of Lincoln, and of the University community, UNL students should express their dissatisfaction to the commission, the City Council and the mayor. Not to mention Nebraska Book Store Co., owners of the property in question, either by letter or phone call.

Only through positive, immediate action can students show McDonald's and the city of Lincoln that we are not going to be pushed aside and have our desires ignored.

Tom Diehm

Attitude sinking swimmers

I am a former Nebraska swimmer. I was shocked and disappointed when I saw the article concerning the controversy between UNL swimmers and coach John Reta. I was a walk-on three years ago and was given a fair

chance to prove my abilities. The only reason I quit last year was because I wasn't good enough for a scholarship and I needed money.

Swimming is different from a team sport such as football, in that personal success is more highly regarded. Reta was criticized for having a poor team. However, swimming is 70 per cent hard work and 30 per cent talent. The problem with these unhappy swimmers obviously is one of attitude. These team members are self-defensive and don't want to be looked upon as losers, thus they place the blame on Reta. Coach Reta can't do too much about an athlete who is ineligible because of grades.

As for recruiting, I came to UNL from California and upon seeing the pool I asked Reta, "Where do we hold meets?" The Coliseum pit is the worst pool I have ever competed in.

As for the complaint about Reta ridiculing the swimmers with "you guys swim like a bunch of girls," maybe the women's swim team would be too much for some of them (the women are not that far behind men in swimming.)

I never knew of an incident where Reta spied on the team, but I do know that some members could swim a lot better if they didn't mentally prepare by partying the night before a meet.

I think it would be good to include the "unsuccessful, dissatisfied swimmers" in any team meeting. With the new sports center pool, the look is to the future, and coach Reta should have a chance to prove himself in the new facilities. After all, he did have eight consecutive state championships while coaching at Lincoln Southeast High School.

However a bright future has been darkened. Recruiting that would have been improved by the existence of the new pool will be hurt by the publicity this incident has been given.

"Curly" Culp

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Temperatures cool - for now

The political season has mercifully receded into another year of dormancy.

Now the only hot air on campus is coming from the warmth of the sun, not the mouths of campus politicians.

After a collection of challenges and counter-challenges, the parliamentary brouhaha accompanying the ASUN elections of a month ago has settled down.

The graduate students elected in the re-election have been seated.

The ill-fated Coalition for University Reform has decided to act much as a monarchy in exile—they have elected officers and stated goals, which

consist mostly of watching to see what the "real government", ASUN, is doing.

The Coalition could perform a valuable service as a watchdog for students. In an age when ASUN support from elections never exceeds 20 per cent, and rarely comes close to that, it seems wise to have more than one "voice of the students."

Coalition members would be wise though, to remember that they do not have an election mandate behind them and they should act accordingly—in the interests of the students and not as personal power seekers.

At any rate, the enthusiasm they bring to the role of student government watchdog is enviable; with the attention they have gathered, the Coalition should proceed and not lose any steam over summer vacation.

The ASUN act also seems to be tighter. The Senate is progressing, as all Senates of the past have, with pressing issues of importance, namely dwindling faculty in the College of Business Administration, as well as less vital issues such as setting the "Nebraska-Colorado" game as the football migration trip for next fall.

They also heard a report from a student government representative from Indiana University about sponsoring a computer dating service. Apparently successful at Indiana, such a venture might not seem appropriate for student government. But it might serve as means for erasing debts from the student co-op effort.

Right now, the machine that was used for making co-op cards, still sitting unsold in the ASUN office, must be as welcome there as Richard Nixon is in Washington D.C.

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Another entry for the file "The changing look of education": Within the next five years, the John Birch Society plans to open a four-year liberal arts university in California. A spokesman recently said the university is planning courses of study in medicine, law, engineering and science as well as the liberal arts.

Vince Boucher

The Daily Nebraskan welcomes letters to the editor and guest opinions. Choices of material published will be based on timeliness and originality. Letters must be accompanied by the writer's name, but may be published under a pen name if requested.

Guest opinions should be typed, triple-spaced, on nonerasable paper. They should be accompanied by the author's name, class standing and major, or occupation. All material submitted to these pages is subject to editing and condensation, and cannot be returned to the writer.

Dump Reta

The controversy concerning John Reta as a capable swim coach has been going on now for almost seven years. The problem is not new. I swam for Reta three years ago and at the end of the season the senior swimmer, (the only senior swimmer) also talked to (Athletic Director Bob) Devaney about the ineffectiveness of Reta. At the time the answer was in effect that swimming was not a money-making program and therefore did not merit any attention. If money is the question, then discontinue the swim program here and don't bother completing the new pool. Anything would be better than retaining Reta as coach here.

Reta has long used the old pool as a scapegoat. If Reta has any initiative he would have gotten the Women's Physical Education Bldg. pool, at least for meets. Many Nebraska swimmers have expressed the feeling that they could handle swimming in a bad pool but not with the present coach.

Nebraska has had and will have many great swimmers. Swimming is a rapidly growing sport in Nebraska. There are many age-group feeder programs, especially in Omaha and Lincoln. But this stifling condition here will continue to send Big 8 Conference swimmers to more promising schools. The year I swam, 15 people started the season, while only eight completed it. Coach Reta cannot rest on his championships at Lincoln Southeast High School forever. The only kind of swimmer that could make it here is one that can blank out everything that Reta says and do it all on his own. Reta doesn't help at all and usually hinders the progress of capable swimmers. Dump Reta or dump the program.

B.G.D.