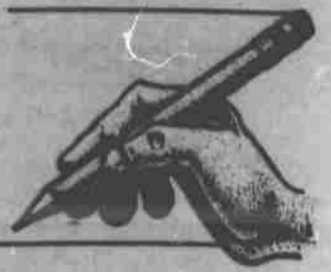


opinion



Election Day:

The time between terms to be optimistic

It's over. The day which was the reason for but could be nothing but an anticlimax to the goings on of the last year is in the past

Nov. 2 was the calm after the storm. For at least several months Americans have been bombarded by pleas, threats and advice about their actions on election day, and it was the voters' turn to have their say.

Countless churches, old folks' homes and schools became for a day "The Polls", where neighbors and strangers gathered—only a few trying to underplay their exuberance.

For the past six years we've listened to the doomsayers and we've wagged our heads along with the rest. And during the next four years, no matter who is president or senator or regent, we will not agree with them always, but for the election day at least, we who go to the polls have confidence and express our belief that the future is worth caring about, that our votes do count. (If they don't, what were the millions of dollars in campaign expenditures for?) Those who went to the polls have to agree or they wouldn't have been there.

Campaign '76 was a lot of rhetoric, a lot of backslapping, a little backstabbing and a million little (and a few not-so-little) triumphs and tragedies. But also, campaign '76 was election day and the student who came into the polling place with buttons proclaiming his choice before he took his turn in the voting booth and the woman who needed help because she had never voted without using a pencil.



Photo by Ted Kirk



No matter who was elected Tuesday, at least we've got pinball machines

By Jim Williams

I don't know who the next president will be, because what you read here Wednesday I have to write Monday. Whoever won, though I know one thing. It could be worse.

It could be 1942, for instance.

Forget what you've heard or seen in the movies, 1942 was a flop year. It wasn't so much that we were fighting a war with the Nazis and that the Nazis looked like they were winning. It wasn't that gas and tires and sugar and shoes were rationed. It wasn't that dumb ads kept urging you to get with it on the home front and eat less meat, buy more bonds, watch out for spies, take another job, and like it.

ed 1802 machines and busted 671 nickel racketeers the first day.

The machines were somewhat unlike present ones. Some paid off in money instead of games, up to about \$4. They only cost a nickel a game, and they had no flippers, which weren't invented until 1947.

Their reputations were seamy. Benjamin Day, president of a group of bozos called the Society for the Prevention of Crime, praised the purge, saying, "the pinball is stepbrother to the slot machine and has always been a heavy contributor to youthful delinquency. The school-boy who uses his lunch money on a pinball machine frequently steals to make up the deficit."

The mechanized Gomorrah also left New Yorkers defenseless by robbing them of crime-stopping brass buttons. The war had deprived New York police of these traditional uniform buttons, and LaGuardia told radio listeners "one of these illegal gambling machines contains enough brass to make 77 buttons that we need for the protection of our city. It is almost unbelievable."

Like everything and everybody, the electric bodiceors were expected to do their part in the war effort. A batch of machines held in police custody awaiting a higher court ruling on the legality of their seizure was stripped for the scrap drive—before the court ruling.

New York sawed the legs off some machines and made 2000 steel clubs for Civilian Defense patrolmen. At the clubs' presentation, LaGuardia called the machines' makers "gutter tin horns." Police Chief Valentine struck two of the clubs together so the mayor could hear their nice ring. "I'd like to hear them ring on the heads of these tin horns," said the mayor.

By October 17, 4,999 machines had been bashed, some by Mayor LaGuardia, who wielded a sledgehammer for the newsreel cameras. Of all this year's presidential aspirants, only Lester Maddox can top that stunt.

wrench in the works



No, the real horror was that on January 21, 1942, the city of New York banned pinball machines.

That's right, just before noon on that date that will live in ennuui, Magistrate Ambrose Haddock ruled that the gizmos were "gambling devices to defraud the public."

"The use of these machines is a racket and constitutes fraud on the innocent public who are unaware of the insidious evil of the display," said Haddock. Just a few minutes after his ruling, 35 remarkably quick-reacting plainclothes policemen took off in four trucks to seize the machines and issue summonses, both to owners of machines and members of the innocent public caught using them.

New York Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia had been planning the crackdown for months. His virtue-seekers captur-

letters

Dishonesty encouraged

I am a new resident in this area and there are so many things I like about Nebraska—Lincoln and the University of Nebraska, in particular.

But two things disturb me, and I want you to be among those who know about my feelings:

1. Something is *wrong* about the way student football tickets are handled. It encourages dishonesty.
2. The Young Vic Co.'s vulgarity in the *Taming of the Shrew* was insulting. Too bad such a talented, well prepared troupe had to stoop to those tactics.

I wonder if there is anything a concerned citizen could do to remedy these situations.

Yours truly,
Jo Anderson

MOM

Another Christmas season—the time of year we most enjoy being with family and friends—is rapidly approaching. However, for many thousands of our fellow Americans this will be a very lonely Christmas; they cannot be with their families because they are stationed overseas with the United States Armed Forces. For a large number of these young men and women this will be the first Christmas away from home.

Your readers can help make this holiday season a little less lonely for many of these young people by joining in the collection of Christmas mail sponsored by Military Overseas Mail. This is an ideal project for school classes, clubs, scouts, and other groups or organizations as well as individuals and families. For more information, please send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to MOM, Box 4428, Arlington, VA. 22204. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Lee Spencer

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 nonreturnable 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.