

Roskens' idea is good for Johnny

Johnny is having a hard time reading and writing.

But the problems schools are having dealing with Johnny seem to dwarf Johnny's problems in comparison.

After many complaints in recent months, NU President Ronald Roskens Friday proposed a task force to study how to deal with Johnny. The task force idea is a good one.

Actually, the answer to helping Johnny is simple and needs no study: teach him to read and write and add and subtract and . . .

The tough questions are how and at what level? That's where Roskens' idea comes in.

The task force, according to Roskens, will include members of the public and representatives from NU and the state school boards.

There's some question whether corrective measures should be mandated by the university or in the elementary and secondary schools.

The concern at the university level has prompted some other educators to be defensive. They say that there's nothing to worry about—at

least at the university level—and they seem to resent meddling.

We think Roskens' idea of having representatives from several interests is a reasonable answer. Their first task will be to identify what problems there are and what is being done to correct them.

This may mean that some bad practices are discovered and some people may be unhappy.

The next step will be to see if there is anything else that can be done to help solve the problems.

Then again, the task force may find nothing and those who are defensive about being investigated will not need to worry.

If nothing else, the task force may be a step toward improving the state's education. Nothing may be wrong, but is it all right?

We think there are steps that can be taken to improve education. We look forward to the suggestions of the task force.

There's no reason why Nebraska's Johnny's should not read and write better than Johnny's elsewhere—or better than they do now.



editorials

Citizens ignore Carter, interested in themselves

Washington—President Carter campaigned for two gubernatorial candidates this fall. One won and one lost. But Carter probably had small influence on the outcomes.

Professional politicians agree that many people have become indifferent to Carter and more occupied with themselves than their presidential leadership.

Virginia and the Henry Howell candidacy were made to order for Carter. There is an affinity between the two men, each leaning on home, Southern, populist styles.

confidence in the White House.

Fair to poor ratings

An NBC poll, taken in early October, showed 51 percent giving Carter a poor to fair rating. A New York Times-CBS poll, conducted in late October, gave the President 55 percent approval.

A Gallup Poll, taken one month ago, had Carter at 59 percent approval. A follow-up Gallup Poll showed the public placing the President on the conservative side—a sharp move from its perception of him as a liberal one year ago.

popularity until September. Now businessmen, farmers, union members, blacks, Jews, when provoked, complain about him.

Such a condition is endemic to the office of the presidency. Carter only can steel his jaw and let lines deepen around his eyes.

nick thimmesch



Howell is much louder, but Carter hits the "big shots" just as hard. Howell was among Carter's first backers in 1976, and Carter slept in Howell's house during the presidential campaign.

So Carter turned it on for Howell in late September, stumping the state, attacking the utility companies and thumping for an "open" administration.

Carter followed up with broadcast commercials and phone messages of support.

Well, Howell lost in a humiliating landslide in the only Southern state which went for President Ford in 1976. Republicans claim that, at most, Carter support for "Howling" Henry made no difference. "People didn't care that Jimmy Carter came here," one Republican professional told me. "Howell cooked his own goose."

Likewise, it seems Gov. Brendan Byrne's remarkable comeback win in New Jersey was of his own doing, and Carter's day of campaigning was more dutiful than instrumental.

Indeed, a case could be made that Carter hurt Byrne because the President was booed, just as Byrne was, in his campaign stops in New Jersey in early September.

For better or worse, we must also look to the polls for a reading on public attitude.

This past week, a Harris poll showed Carter getting a negative job rating for his first nine months in office, with half of those canvassed also denying that he has inspired

It hardly makes Carter feel good to learn that he is not only losing popularity but that the public is becoming indifferent to his leadership—especially when he has gone out front on his energy and Middle East policies and needs all the support he can muster.

In a sense, Carter is like the news magazines. Many an intelligent reader admits to liking them but holds a lesser opinion of their coverage of his speciality.

Doctors, lawyers, educators, scientists generally like the news magazines, and even confess to being entertained by them. But they think the magazines are often misleading in what they report on medicine, law, education and science.

Variety complaining

Well, Carter had a rather high but vaguely placed

Much of the rest of the public has become inured to the shortcomings of political leadership.

Hopes rise, but when the negative readings come in on elected politicians, people turn away. There is plenty to occupy their time in other areas.

The gutters and downspouts need to be inspected. The leaves must be raked. Football rages across the republic. Brows furrow when rumors pass that the local plant will move, or maybe close down. There is plenty of gasoline and fuel oil. What's on television tonight? Who's coming for Thanksgiving?

The president goes on about the energy program and the Middle East and SALT talks.

The people get up in the morning, go to work and yawn after dinner.

The citizenry is in a conservative mood, generally feels comfortable and doesn't want a president bothering them.

The republic is peopled with more stoics than idealists.

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letters to the editor

The rumors of UNL becoming affiliated with the Big 10 are the best news I've heard since becoming associated with NU or the state of Nebraska.

To be in the company of some of the nation's top institutions of higher learning could do nothing but improve the quality of education offered at UNL and raise the academic criteria by which all programs at the university are judged.

As for Athletic Director Bob Devaney's comment that he did not know "what advantage there would be to such a change," this is yet another example of the narrow-mindedness of a man who thinks that the university is nothing more than an extra-curricular extension of the Nebraska football team, rather than vice versa.

Christopher Allan Knowles (1975 UNL graduate)
Nebraska Department of Water Resources
administrative assistant

Committee disinterest

I would like to express my disappointment with the Union Program Council (UPC) Human Potentials Committee chairperson. I feel I was neglected as fri-

volous and facetious.

About four to six weeks ago the UPC had a survey published in the *Daily Nebraskan*. The purpose was to determine what entertainment areas the students expressed interest in. A space was reserved at the bottom for those students interested in Human Potentials Committee membership.

I marked a definite interest in being on the committee and returned the interest survey in person to the UPC office. I was contacted three days later to set a time to meet with the UPC chairperson, which turned out to be one week after the call.

On the day of the proposed meeting, I was in the UPC office. The chairperson I was to meet was not there and did not show up. A couple of days later the chairperson called to apologize, to save face I suppose, and said she would call back very soon to reset the meeting, as I was not home when she called.

I hope the chairperson's neglect of my interest does not reflect the entire committee's apathy concerning the entertainment of the student body. I hope her affiliation with the bureaucracy at UNL did not cause her to assimilate the bureaucracy's disinterest and quasi-mockery of the students needs and interests!

Gary Stephens