

opinion/editorial

Energy conservation proposal deserves consideration

Although it is too soon to judge whether a just-announced proposal to promote energy conservation is workable, a bill which will be introduced in the next Legislative session seems to be a credible and noteworthy start to solving Nebraska's energy problems.

The so-called energy conservation and independence act is the work of a special energy committee chaired by State Sen. John DeCamp of Neligh. DeCamp says the 67-page bill was designed to cover all aspects of

energy conservation.

The bill is thorough—with provisions ranging from monetary conservation incentives to setting energy standards for new or renovated buildings and encourages the construction of alternate energy sources.

The bill, however, is not only comprehensive, it also is amazingly liberal and far-sighted—characteristics rarely found in Nebraska legislation. Most refreshing is the realization on the part of its authors that voluntary conservation, without

incentive, doesn't work. The bill addresses that problem by providing loans of up to \$3,000 for homeowners, tenants and businessmen for energy conservation projects.

However, DeCamp, a sharp reader of the public mind, says the bill is unlikely to please anyone and he predicts that getting the bill through the Legislature will be a difficult problem.

Unfortunately, he probably is right.

A state that is unlikely to support

more than a 7 percent increase for a financially crippled university is just as unlikely to support the predicted \$200 million cost of implementing energy provisions.

But it is high time that Nebraskans take steps to encourage conservation—the cleanest, safest and most reliable source of energy. It also is the least expensive alternative to the current crunch. If Nebraskans will look past the immediate costs to consider long-term benefits, they will realize that the bill, at the very least, deserves serious consideration.

letters

Had Ms. Tiehen attended the talk I presented at the UNL Law College on Nov. 13th, her letter (Nov. 19th) may have been written in a different vein and with more depth. She would have received enlightenment regarding the legislative process and constitutional restrictions on it. She would have heard the complex issue of abortion dealt with in a non-simplistic fashion and could have joined in the lively discussion.

Clearly, she has no understanding of the legislative history of that monstrosity known as LB 316. People who speak without knowledge are like people who shoot without aiming: they woefully miss the mark. A review of the transcript of legislative debate will give her an education in the law-making process and clear clouds of ignorance from her mind.

Rather than consume time and space repeating information which she can obtain through a bit of reading, I much prefer to ask Ms. Tiehen how much effort she and her "pro-life" colleagues put into helping children who are ALREADY in this world. Or does their interest in "human life" end with birth?

Where are they when the Legislature grapples with bills related to financial assistance for poor children? Or adequate medical services? Or meaningful education?

America is much given to short-hand thinking or sloganeering. I detected that in Ms. Tiehen's letter.

I shall appear on the UNL campus again, and I invite her and all others to confront me publicly and develop their point of view as I do mine.

Ernie Chambers
State Senator

1)One side of issue . . .

My letter is in response to two letters in the Tuesday, Nov. 27th Daily Nebraskan. The content of both letters, penned by Iranian students here at UNL, asked how America could be so "racially" discriminating to Iranians in violation of their visas. Indeed Behrang even alludes to the "McCarthy era" and warns that it's not over yet.

In the same illogical manner by which the threat to American military retaliation in the event of the hostages' deaths has been twisted and termed "American Imperialism," or "aggression," many Iranian students fail to recognize some simple and basic facts. First, the special scrutiny to which Iranians' visas are being subjected to is based *not* upon their *race*, as they would prefer to construe it, but upon their *nationality*. That is a result of the fact that *Iran*, and not the homelands of other students at UNL and throughout the U.S., has taken American citizens hostage and threatened them with death. The leader of *Iran* and the mobs of *Iranian* citizens outside the embassy are the ones who empty garbage on our flag and enthusiastically chant "Crush America" and "Death to Carter." We see the Ayatollah, leader of Islam, call for the violent opposition to and, supposedly, the termination of a nation of "imperialistic, pagan infidels;" not the leader of France, or Germany, or Korea, or Egypt, etc., etc.

Thus, are we to continue to welcome with open arms the student guests of a country that so apparently hates and detests us? Are we to look upon Iranian nationals no differently than students from countries which we receive no threats of death, no blackmail, no chants of anti-Americanism? Clearly, the treatment and resentment of Iranians in this country is not based upon racial grounds, but upon a normal and logical reaction to the current events in Iran. I do not support the notion of deportation of all Iranian students, because I'm well aware of the fact that not all support Khomeini in his dead-end position, but I hope that this might, to some extent, explain to the Iranians who feel persecuted why they feel these injustices.

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HELLO... YOOHOO... ANYBODY HERE ORDER A PEPPERONI AND CHEESE?

Civil rights aided by whites

WASHINGTON—As long as blacks are a political minority in America, Vernon Jordan told the Capital Press Club last week, it will be necessary for them to form coalitions with other groups.

The Urban League's executive director may have been responding to criticism of his recent remarks regarding the meeting between some black leaders and officials of the Palestine Liberation Organization.

william raspberry

No matter. It was a useful reminder that blacks, however appealing they find the notion of political ease, need allies if they are to translate their goals into public policy.

That is simply a matter of political fact. But there is another fact that black leaders would do well to address: that blacks will continue to be unequal partners in whatever coalitions they join so long as they leave it to someone else to pay their bills.

The sad truth is that hardly any black civil rights organization is independent of white financial support.

It needn't be so. The National Urban League's annual budget is approximately \$6 million, but only \$228,000 of that money comes from individual contributors, and probably less than half of that from black contributors. Most of the League's budget comes from industry, foundation and government sources.

OF THE NAACP'S budget, also about \$6 million annually, some \$3.5 million comes from branch assessments and dues. Most of the rest is from tax-free contributions from foundations, corporations and large individual donations—which is to say white sources—and may not be used for advocacy purposes.

Even so, both the Urban League and the NAACP, the two largest and most influential civil rights organizations, insist that they are woefully underfunded.

But suppose blacks were serious about supporting

their own organizations. There are some 7.8 million black American families. If each of these families contributed \$2 per year, it would more than cover the total operating budget of both groups. Five dollars per family per year would produce revenues of nearly \$39 million annually. The sacrifice of one pair of shoes per family per year would raise well over \$100 million.

There are approximately 13 million black adults in America. If each of them gave just \$5 per year for civil rights purposes, it would come to some \$65 million—roughly ten times the annual budget of the Urban League or the NAACP.

The point isn't that the organizations should reject money from any legitimate source, including nonblacks and corporations in need of tax write-offs. The point is that substantial black support—at negligible cost to individuals—would make the organizations financially independent, which would greatly enhance their political independence.

MUCH OF THE effort of the civil rights groups has gone to support legislation and litigation, to get laws passed and enforced. The effort has been remarkably successful.

But most of the problems that confront blacks these days do not involve laws and court suits. They involve education and housing and employment.

What black Americans principally need, it seems to me, is the independence and opportunity for progress that comes from business ownership, from producing goods and services for general consumption: from being necessary.

Recent statistics indicate that blacks are rising to middle-class status in unprecedented numbers. But the numbers are deceiving. A huge proportion of the better-paid jobs blacks are entering are in the public sector: government jobs that produce no product, jobs that are plainly vulnerable to an epidemic of Proposition 13 fever.

That sort of independence would do more for black progress than any coalition, any legislation, any court suit or any courting or Arab oil money ever could.

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