Socialist candidates appear on ballot in 12 states
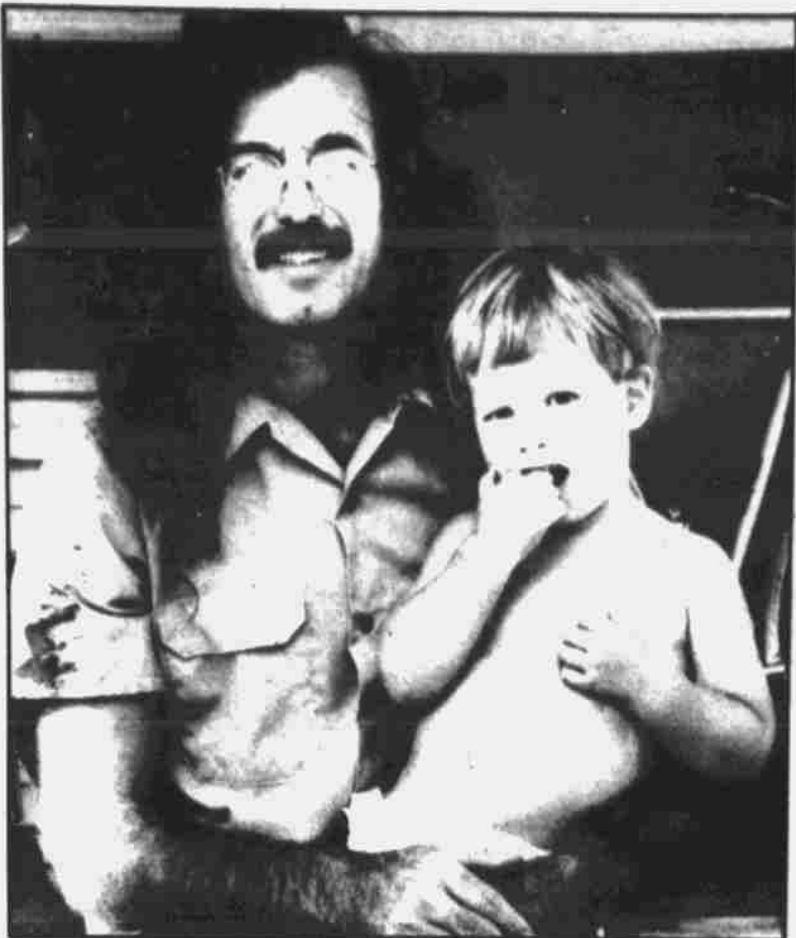
By Bill Graf

Photo by Mitch Hrdlicka

Ron Kurtenbach, socialist party member, said he thinks it is important to educate the public about the issues his party supports. Also pictured is his son, Benjamin.

The Socialist Party U.S.A. has candidates for the presidency and vice presidency of the United States. But they won't appear on the Nebraska ballot.

The socialist candidate for president is David McReynolds. According to literature released by the party, McReynolds, 50, has been active in the party since 1951. He has been arrested several times in labor, civil rights and peace demonstrations. In 1978, he was arrested in the Red Square in Moscow and in 1979 at the White House.

McReynolds was a national organizer of a movement against the Indochina War. His political experience includes a Congressional race in New York in 1968. He is an acknowledged gay and senstitive to women's issues and gay rights. A collection of his essays, "We Have Been Invaded By The 21st Century," was published in 1969.

His running mate, Sister Diane Drufenbrock, 50, is a Catholic nun and a teacher in Milwaukee. She is a community organizer fighting racism and sexism in housing and employment according to the releases. She has been the treasurer of the party since 1977 and represented the party at the Socialist International meeting in Paris in 1978.

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Bill Douglas, a worker of the party headquarters in Milwaukee, said the party expects to be on the ballot in 12 states. McReynolds and Drufenbrock are currently on the ballot in Wisconsin, Alabama, New Jersey, Iowa, Rhode Island and Washington, he said.

Next week, they will file in Minnesota, North Dakota, and Tennessee, he said. In addition, the party's candidates may be on the ballot in Vermont and New Hampshire.

In Nebraska, Ralph Engert, Nebraska's deputy secretary of state, explained that the party failed to submit the petitions required to get their candidates on the ballot. To get a new party on the November ballot, he said, the party needs the signatures of registered voters from 19 counties equaling at least 1 percent of the total votes cast for governor in the last election. This year the party would have needed to submit 4,924 signatures before the Aug. 1 deadline, he said.

One of the Socialist Party's Nebraska electors, Lincolnite Ron Kurtenbach, said he doesn't expect he'll have to go to Washington in November to vote in the electoral college. Nor does he believe the party will pull off any surprising upsets in other elections around the country.

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"Whatever this party does, the key thing is the issues," he said.

Do away with oppression

Kurtnebach said the party's "struggle is to do away with sex oppression, race oppression, and class oppression."

The party shouldn't be confused with the "undemocratic left," he said. The difference is that members of the democratic socialist parties retain the right of descension after pary rules have been made, he said.

Other priorities identified by the Socialist Party U.S.A. are:

-The immediate dismantling of all nuclear weapons;

-Full employment for all Americans seeking work;

-Price controls of necessities such as rent, food, fuel and the slashing of military spending to relieve inflation;

-The closing of all nuclear power plants with an emphasis on solar power as well as the development of other renewable energy sources;

-Decent and adequate medical care for all Americans as a right;

-Unabridged rights for gays;

-Environmental protection and the development of more parks and wilderness areas.

Citing the recent strikes in Poland, Kurtenbach called Poland's socialist system "so-called socialism" and added that in a true socialist state the workers have complete democratic control over production.

He agreed that the Soviet system has given socialism a bad name. But rather than calling the party by another name, he stressed that "the truth should not be abandoned.

Nebraskans should be educated on what socialism is."

But as for whether Kurtenbach will vote for the socialist candidate, he said he isn't sure which is most important; voting socialist as a symbolic gesture or voting Ronald Reagan.

Citing what he called Reagan's attempt to "rationalize Vietnam as an honorable war," and his unwillingness to consider the rights of the Palestinians, Kurtenbach said, "Reagan has to be stopped. Carter has been extremely disappointing, but Reagan is worse."

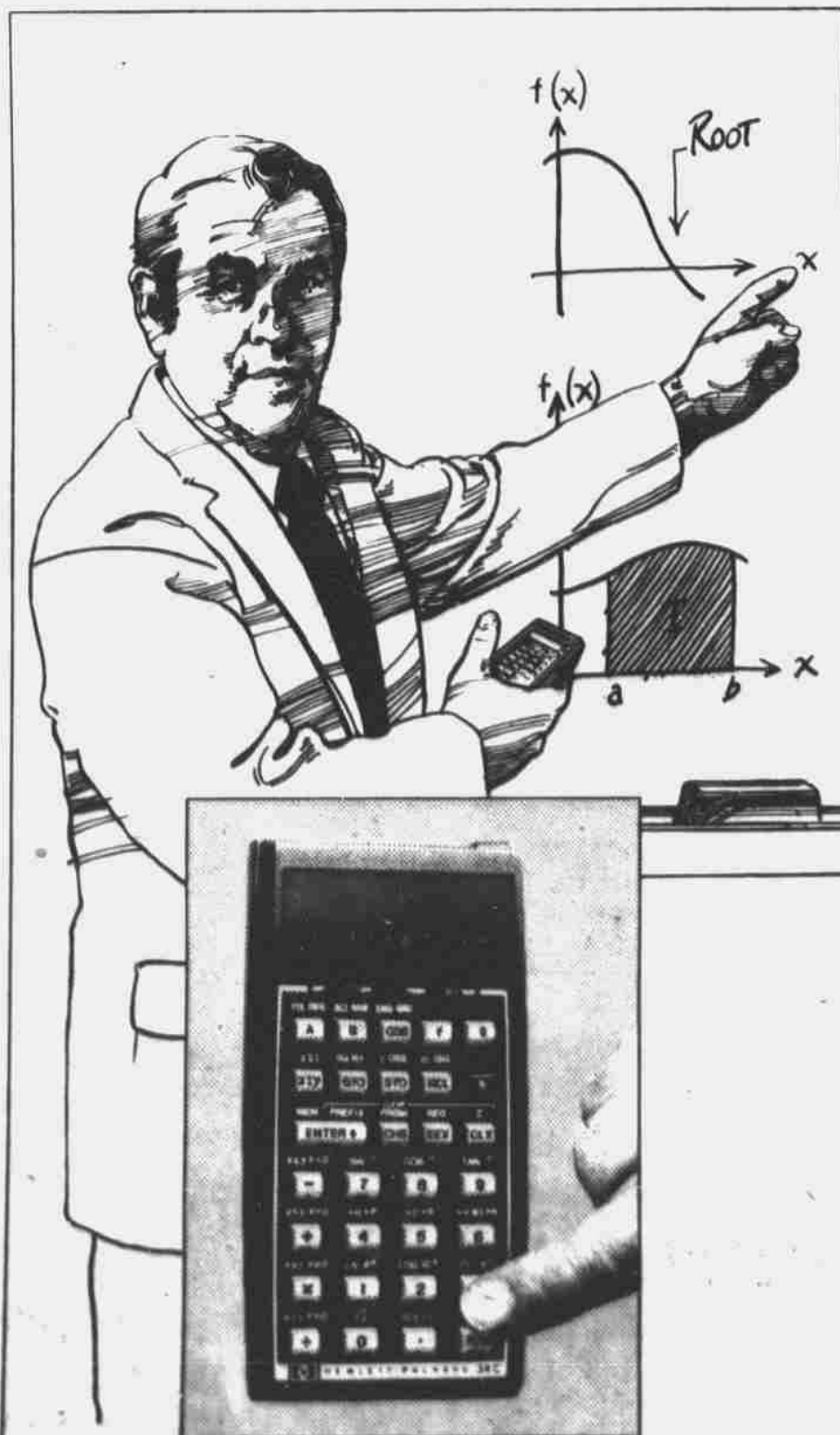## UNL students intern with pipeline company in Beatrice

Two UNL students recently completed a three-month internship with the Natural Gas Pipeline Company of America, the interstate transmission subsidiary of Chicago-based Peoples Energy Corporation.

Nebraska residents Kenneth Rice, Lincoln, and Michael Colgrove, Wymore, worked at Natural's facility in Beatrice. Rice, a senior majoring in electrical engineering, interned in the communications department, while Colgrove, a junior majoring in industrial engineering, worked in the corrosion department.

Natural's annual summer intern program has provided college students with business experience for over 20 years. Forty-three students from 26 colleges participated in the program this summer.

Natural Gas Pipeline Company operates an 11,000-mile pipeline network that supplies gas from producing fields in the south and southwest to 49 customer utilities serving 12 million consumers in the upper Midwest, including major Chicago-area markets.