

opinion/editorial

SRED deserves praise for efforts

A student organization formed last semester, Students for Responsible Energy Decisions, deserves a round of applause for its members' efforts to present information to students concerning one of the most important issues of the next 50 years.

This semester, the group will bring at least eight speakers to campus, show a film on Three Mile Island and work to expand its activities with the aim of further energy education.

Representatives from the Lincoln Electric System and the Nebraska Legislature have volunteered to speak to the group, and speakers on solar energy and energy alternatives on the state's small farms also have appeared.

Scheduled are speakers on city and state energy planning and civil defense, as it relates to evacuation in the event of a nuclear reactor emergency.

As a group, SRED does not favor use of nuclear reactors and is in favor of promoting available alternatives. Whether students agree or disagree with the group's positions, it is rare that a student organization receiving no student fees is so active.

SRED's activity is encouraging on a couple of counts.

First, it shows that students do care about relevant issues and the future. Secondly, it is impressive that an ad hoc student group has been able to achieve what this group has. That fact demonstrates the ability of concerned students to organize and manage their own affairs—a skill seemingly overlooked too often at UNL.

Most importantly, while everybody in the country has an opinion on energy and realizes our present situation demands knowledgeable action, SRED is making an effort to educate students and voice its opinions, an act that must be taken up at a grass-roots level if policy makers are to move toward a resolution of our problems.

Citizens (that includes students) must educate themselves about energy alternatives, about present world energy reserves and must yell loud enough in enough numbers until they are heard in state capitols and in Washington.

Efforts like that being made by SRED are the beginning of such a movement, and it is hoped others, whatever their views, would make a similar effort to become educated and active.

letters to the editor

Milton and Rose Friedman, in their book *Free To Choose*, have proposed that the Sixteenth Amendment which now reads:

"The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes on incomes, from whatever source derived, without apportionment among the several States, and without regard to any census or enumeration," should be repealed and replaced with a new amendment that would read something like:

The Congress shall have power to lay and collect taxes on incomes of persons, from whatever sources derived, without apportionment among the several States, and without regard to any census or enumeration, provided that the same tax rate is applied to all income in excess of occupational and business expenses and a personal allow-

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Sexual harassment is hard to distinguish

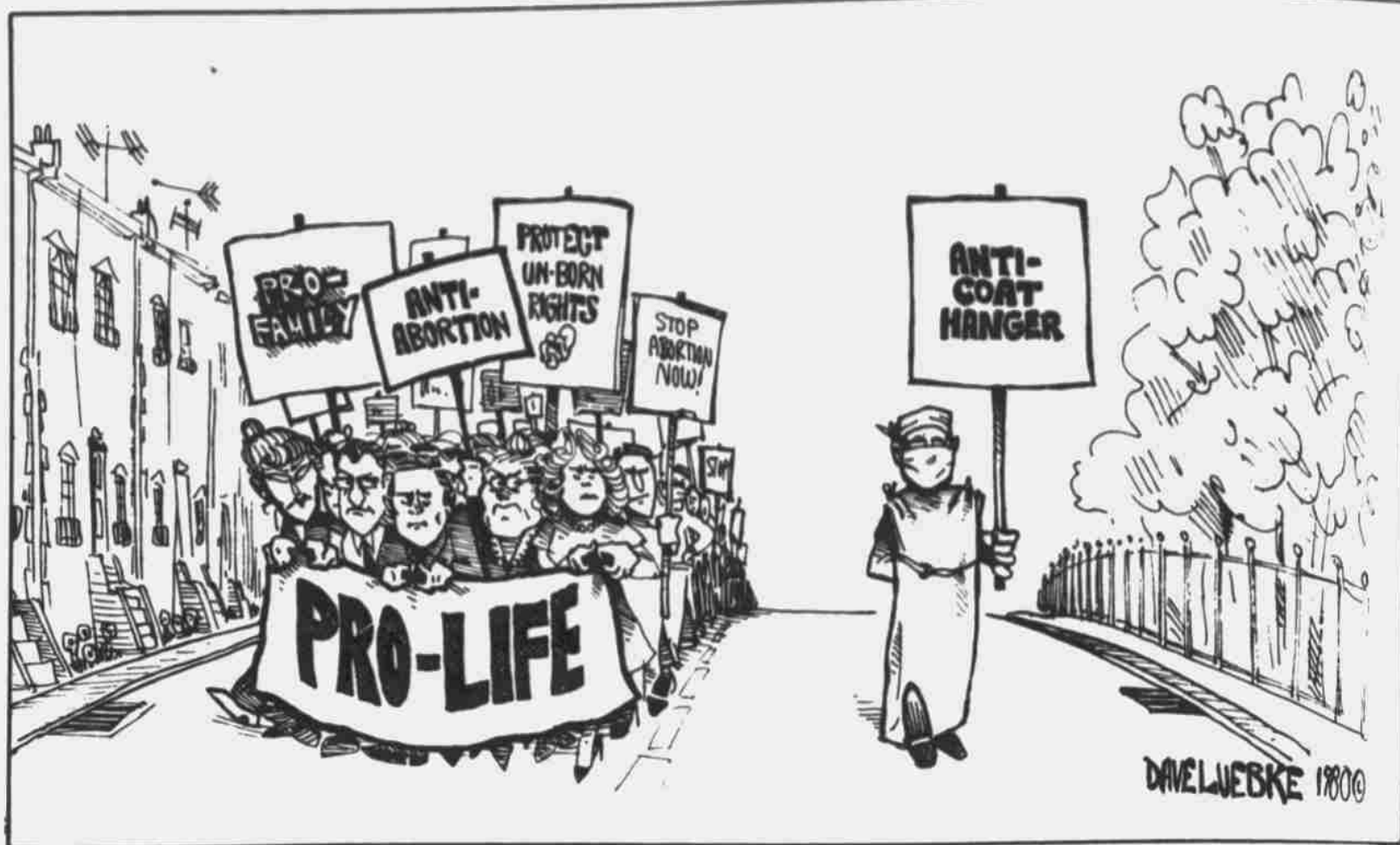
WASHINGTON—I've got a problem with sexual harassment.

No, not that problem. No female superior has taken indecent liberties with me; no female subordinate has accused me of sexist treatment (quite possibly because I have no subordinate, female or otherwise).

william raspberry

My problem with sexual harassment is that I don't know what it is. Not entirely, anyway.

Suppose a male supervisor tells his female subordinate, by words plainly spoken or by attitudes clearly conveyed, that her prospects for career mobility depend a good deal on her willingness to sleep with him.



Conservatives are out of touch

Conservative doctrine and the candidates who profess it are enjoying renewed popularity in American politics. This is so despite the obsolescence of their world-view and the misdirection of their foreign policy prescriptions. America's right wing continues to embrace the ethnocentric myths of Cold War propaganda, and to address in their policies the world of 30 years ago.

It is a long-standing tenet of conservative dogma that the Soviet Union is, by its very nature, an aggressive revolutionary state and an enemy of the United States. This notion has its roots in the mythology of the Cold War

mark rupert

years, when America had a global leadership role thrust upon her by a violent redistribution of international power. Two world wars had bled the traditional European power white, and produced a bipolar distribution of power in the world system.

The bipolar balance was perceived on both sides as highly delicate; incremental gains in the power of one state were viewed as losses for its rival. Change in the status quo was invariably interpreted as threatening to the global position, and ultimately the national security, of one of the superpowers. Thus the very structure of the international system that emerged after World War II produced competition and tension between the two great powers. America had to adopt an active foreign policy if the global balance was to be maintained.

Yet, the American people had just endured the trauma of a great war and were anxious for a return to more peaceful domestic pursuits. Having destroyed the evils of German/Japanese militarism, Americans could see no reason to retain a global role. They fully expected the superpowers, former wartime allies, to exist together in a peaceful world.

President Truman faced a dilemma: the new world order mandated an active U.S. role, while a resurgence of popular isolationism constrained U.S. foreign policy. To mobilize public support for American involvement in world affairs, the myth of the monolithic communist threat was propagated. Truman presented the public with a foreign devil in order to morally justify our participation in global power politics. Given the bipolar world order, and its propensity for confrontation and crisis, the

U.S.S.R. was easily portrayed as inherently hostile and aggressive.

This myth, born of the Cold War, attributes Soviet behavior to ideological motivations. It is assumed without question that the primary goal of Soviet foreign policy is the promotion of world Marxist revolution. This assumption is in error, as are the conservative positions based upon it.

The Soviet state is motivated, as are all other states, by considerations of national interest. These interests are indeed perceived in Marxist-Leninist terms, but do not necessarily reflect revolutionary goals. The U.S.S.R. views itself as the homeland of world communism; its national survival of the Marxist world vision. Thus, the cause of world communism is best served by policies which protect and enhance the sovereign powers of the Soviet Union. Marxist revolutions are not seen as universally desirable, but are welcomed only when perceived as beneficial to Soviet national interests.

Historically, foreign communist parties have been exploited, abandoned, and betrayed by Moscow whenever it served Russian goals. The Soviets have not hesitated to collaborate with "class enemies" if the U.S.S.R. could benefit thereby. For example, the Soviets have for many years maintained friendly relations with Iraq, despite the brutal suppression of the Iraqi Communist Party by their government. There are many such cases in Soviet diplomatic history. In sum, world revolution will not be purchased at the expense of Soviet national interests.

The tenet of the "revolutionary state" may thus be seen as fallacious. Although this myth may have served a purpose in the bipolar epoch, it is increasingly irrelevant in today's world order. China, Japan, Europe (the EEC) and the resource states of the Third World have emerged as independent centers of power. The international system is now multipolar, and the intensity of superpower competition has therefore diminished. Imbalances in the global distribution of power can now be corrected through shifting relationships among the great powers. Soviet foreign policy is not necessarily threatening to American security; there is room for compromise, in spite of the protestations of conservatives.

American conservatism is out of touch with the realities of the modern international system. Its preoccupation with the "Soviet threat," its reluctance to recognize Peking and its neglect of the terrible problems of Third World poverty all demonstrate the backwardness of American conservative leaders.

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