

NRA spokesman says coalition ineffective

Organization calls for end to handgun violence

By Mary Louise Knapp

In an effort to control handguns and end violence of all types in the United States, the National Coalition to Ban Handguns has designated this week as National End Handgun Violence Week.

The week has three basic purposes, said Don Laackman, a legislative intern working for the coalition.

"First, we want to organize a grass-roots consensus from the country that people are in favor of handgun control and the control of all types of violence," Laackman said.

The second purpose of the week is to educate people about handgun violence and control, he said.

"Third, we want to raise money to combat the NRA (National Rifle Association) and the other gun nuts," he said.

Churches, college students and various community groups across the nation are participating in the week's activities, Laackman said.

"There have been quite a few events," he said. "In Minneapolis-St. Paul, at the University of Minnesota, they are sponsoring a marathon, Run Against Hand-

guns, on the 31st. In Chicago, a group sponsored a 10-kilometer walk against handguns."

Laackman said community groups in Chicago are introducing resolutions to the city government asking for stricter controls on handguns.

The coalition has submitted a resolution to Congress urging that the week of October 25 through 31 be designated as National End Handgun Violence Week.

The coalition is also asking President Ronald Reagan to issue a proclamation acknowledging National End Handgun Violence

Week.

"I don't anticipate him (Reagan) doing it, but it would generate more publicity," Laackman said.

Singer's suggestion

Musician Harry Nilsson, a personal friend of the late John Lennon, brought the idea of the National End Handgun Violence Week to the coalition, Laackman said.

Paul Stone, media coordinator for the National Rifle Association, said the coalition to ban handguns, in sponsoring this week's activities, is not trying to end handgun violence but is at-

tempting to "completely eliminate the legal ownership of handguns."

"I find it intriguing that this group, which is opposed to any kind of ownership (of handguns) is now backtracking and focusing simply on criminal violence," Stone said.

Andrew Kendzie, a spokesman for the NRA, said the NRA is not planning any activities this week to counteract the coalition.

"We think what they are trying to do is a misnomer," he said.

"We do not think that their political motives will curtail criminal violence."

Kendzie said the NRA endorses legislation that would enforce stiffer penalties for crimes committed with handguns, a standpoint not shared by the coalition.

"Many people don't understand our reasoning behind this," he said. "In the average profile of a murderer, 70 percent of them have a prior arrest record. It averages out to six crimes apiece, three of them violent crimes."

Recidivism — the same criminals returning to jail for various crimes — is the main problem in dealing with crime, Kendzie said.

"The only way to handle this is to keep the criminals off the streets," he said.

Multi-faceted problem

Kendzie said violence in America is a complex problem and cannot be dealt with merely by banning handguns.

"It is so easy just to point at the handgun as the cause of the problem," he said. "Violence is such a multi-faceted problem — it's not just handguns, it's not just prison reform, it's not just differing values."

Kendzie said those who advocate banning handguns are "trying to treat the symptoms and not the disease" of violence.

Laackman, in response, said the position of the coalition has always been completely opposed to the sale, ownership, possession, manufacture and importing handguns.

"However, we must differentiate between the stated purpose of the coalition and the purpose of this week," he said.

Entries taken for competition

Entries are being accepted for the Miss Lincoln Area Pageant, which will be Jan. 16 at O'Donnell Auditorium, Nebraska Wesleyan University. The pageant is an official preliminary for the Miss America Pageant.

Three finalists will be selected to compete for the Miss Nebraska title in Fremont next June.

Contestants must be between the ages of 17 and 26 on Labor Day, 1982.

Interested individuals should contact Jane Sommeland, entries chairperson, at 475-7219. The deadline is Nov. 2.

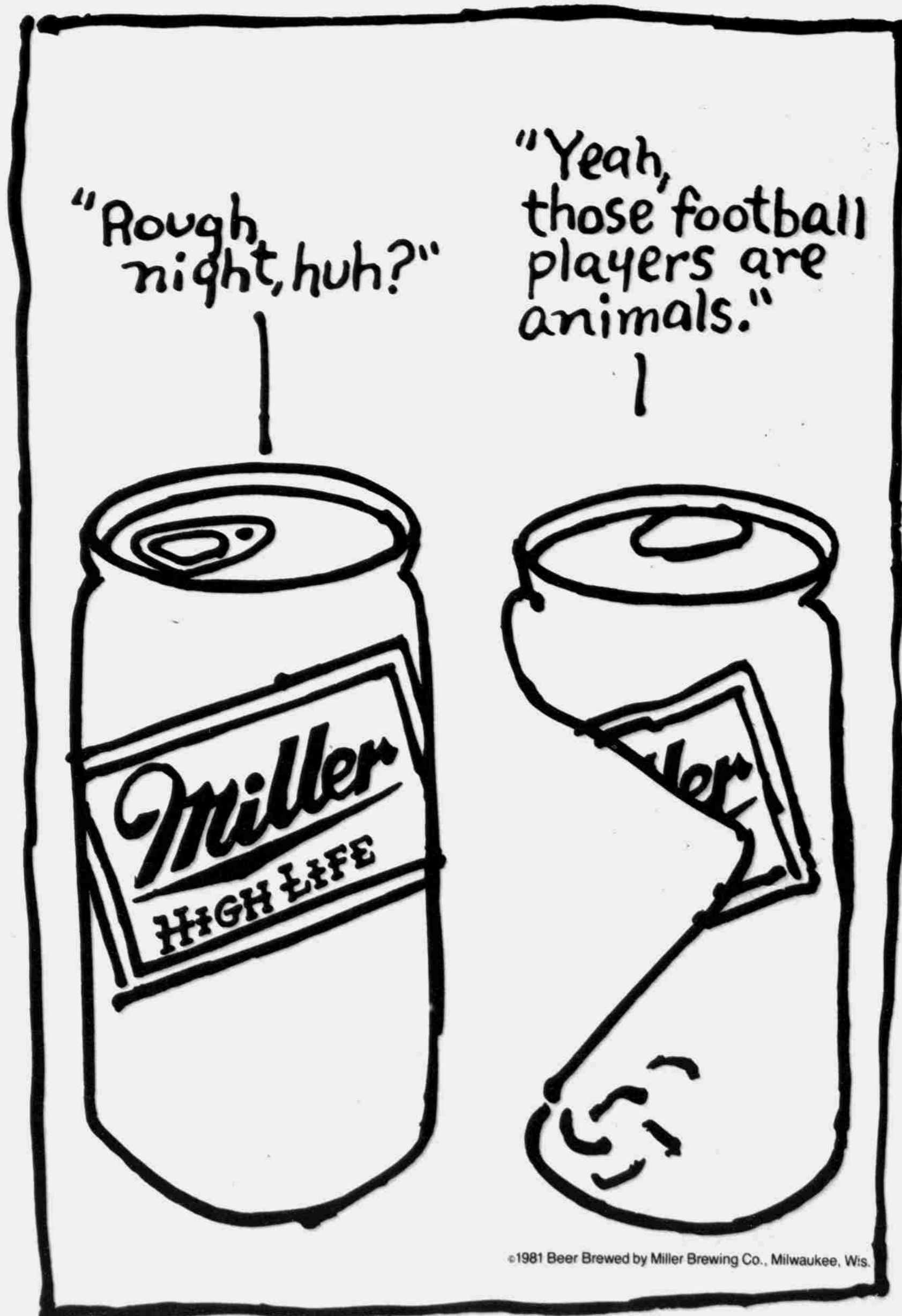
short stuff

Alfred Jarry's play "Ubu Cuckolded" will be presented Nov. 1 at 7:15 p.m. and Nov. 2 at 6:15 p.m. in Westbrook Music Building 119. No admission.

The Non-traditional Student Association will have its weekly luncheon today in the Nebraska Union. Room will be posted.

The Department of Modern Languages & Literatures will present the film "Les Jeux Sont Faits" Nov. 5 at 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. in the Love Library Auditorium. The cost is \$1.

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