

# Silence . . .

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ance should be expressed as a conflict of individual rights, and that every conflict should be adjudicated.

The ACLU's bullying litigation is designed not to protect the plaintiff (a student) but to compel others to behave as the plaintiff prefers. A lawyer for New Jersey's legislature argues that the law is constitutional because it is "neutral with respect to any religious content." The legislator who sponsored it says: "All we did was provide the opportunity for contemplation," and regarding the possibility that someone might silently pray, he says: "Who has the right, in this day and age, to determine that any thoughts someone has could violate the Constitution?"

An ACLU lawyer says New Jersey must "prove that nowhere among the purposes of the law is the opportunity for prayer." Opportunity? Perhaps the ACLU will soon say that a state "establishes" religion unless its schools make contemplation impossible for even a minute.

The authors of the "establishment" clause wanted to guarantee that government action would be impartial among religions. They did not intend to require that it be neutral between religion and secularism. Still less did they intend what the Supreme Court has mandated — that any law must have "a secular legislative purpose and a primary effect that neither advances nor inhibits religion."

Such confusions and insincerities are produced by result-oriented judges who labor to wring particular social policies from broad constitutional language, and who produce rococo rationalizations. The ACLU is a political organization pursuing its agenda primarily through litigation rather than legislation — often an authoritarian shortcut around the democratic process. It construes the Constitution the way a few religious extremists construe scripture. It is impatient with ambiguity, and defends as a merely literal reading of the document various policies, that bear no discernible relation to the intention of the authors.

I oppose "voluntary" school prayer for two reasons: The collective speaking of words cannot be truly voluntary, and if the words are to be inoffensively ecumenical, they must be mere mush. But the ACLU is fanatical when it finds silence a menace to constitutional values.

Heaven (if the ACLU's thought-police will pardon the word) forbid, but perhaps the ACLU's real worry is this: Getting adolescents quiet for even 60 seconds is a miracle, and miracles can arouse religious sentiments. There are precedents.

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Letters will be selected for publication on the basis of clarity, originality, timeliness and space available in the newspaper.

Letters sent to the newspaper for publication become the property of the Daily Nebraskan and cannot be returned.

The Daily Nebraskan reserves the right to edit and condense all letters submitted.

Anonymous submissions will not be considered for publication, and requests to withhold names will be granted only in exceptional circumstances.


Submit all material to the Daily Nebraskan, Room 34, Nebraska Union, 1400 R St., Lincoln, Neb. 68588.

### ANSWER TO PREVIOUS PUZZLE

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LADD DRAM STEAM
ALOU POZO TELLA
WOODY WOODPECKER
BENDA BEE THEEL
EYRE ALIA
UNS OPS STROKLE
ALLA HON DWELL
REUP CREAM ERSE
BARON WHO DRIP
BETVANS ROS VEV
RUSE DREDO
IMBROIALI ANBAR
DEPTIOWER ENAGE
QUINTI BEE SKIT
ALTOI ESTI YEDLI
    
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1. Mona, I've finally decided where I'd like to make my career: State Farm!



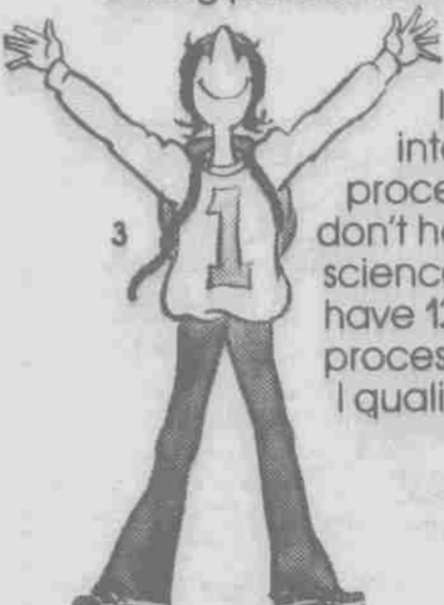
2. State Farm? Great Plowshares! You're going to be a soil tiller. Living an agrarian lifestyle!

3. Come on now! State Farm is an insurance company.


4. Virgil, you're going to be a salesman? How could you? Even if they'd have you...



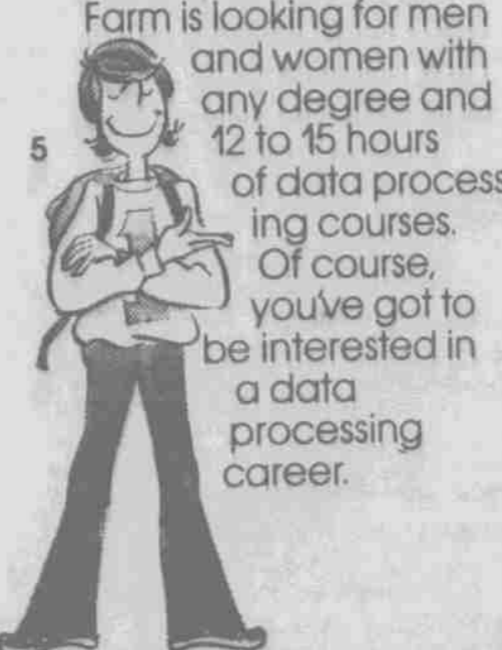
3. Mona, there's more to insurance than selling policies. Insurance is opportunity. State Farm is looking for people interested in a data processing career. I don't have a computer science degree but I do have 12 hours of data processing courses. So I qualify!



4. Virgil, you're putting me on.



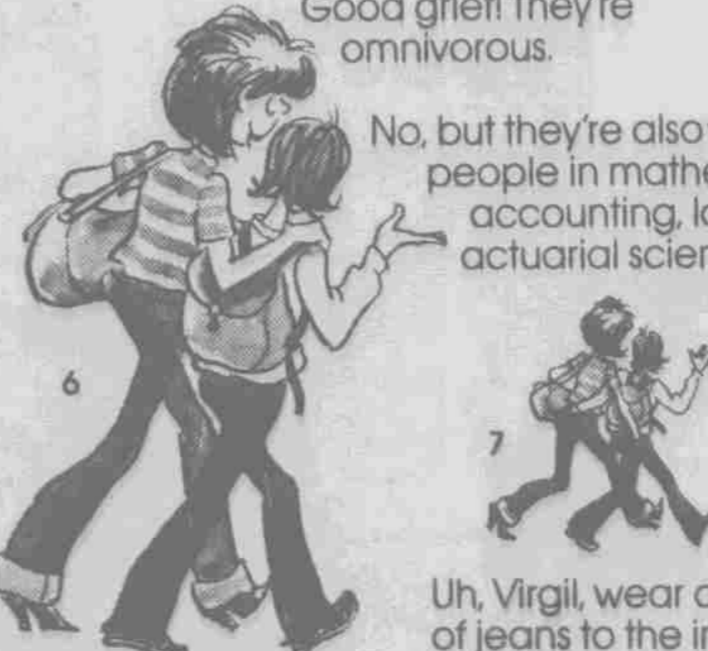
5. No way, Mona. State Farm is looking for men and women with any degree and 12 to 15 hours of data processing courses. Of course, you've got to be interested in a data processing career.




6. Good grief! They're omnivorous.

7. No, but they're also interested in people in mathematics, accounting, law and actuarial sciences.

8. Uh, Virgil, wear a clean pair of jeans to the interview.





For information on career opportunities at State Farm write Ron Prewitt, Assistant Director, Home Office Personnel Relations, One State Farm Plaza, Bloomington, Illinois 61701, or contact your Campus Placement Director, or visit the State Farm Recruiter on campus February 3, 1983.  
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