

Editorial

How do voters spell relief? F-e-w-e-r-p-r-i-m-a-r-i-e-s

Every election year, someone proposes a change in the way we choose our president. And every year, we continue the long, almost comical election process that has made us the laughing stock of the free world.

Maybe it is time we start giving serious consideration to changes in our election system and maybe it is time we allow incumbents to spend more time in the White House and less time out on the campaign trail.

With our current system, presidential candidates place a great deal of emphasis on developing a bandwagon effect by doing well in the early races. As a result, two relatively small states — Iowa and New Hampshire — play a major role in determining who represents the parties in the November general election.

Meanwhile, many states are all but left out of the candidate-selection process. Nebraska's small number of delegates are not important by the time the mid-May primary rolls around. Therefore, the state gets little national media coverage and rarely attracts major candidate appearances.

Even California, which has its primary in early June, usually plays a minor role in selecting the major party candidates. Even though California has more delegates than any other state, most races already are decided by the time it gets around to selecting those

delegates.

What's the solution? The often-proposed system of regional primaries seems to be a workable idea.

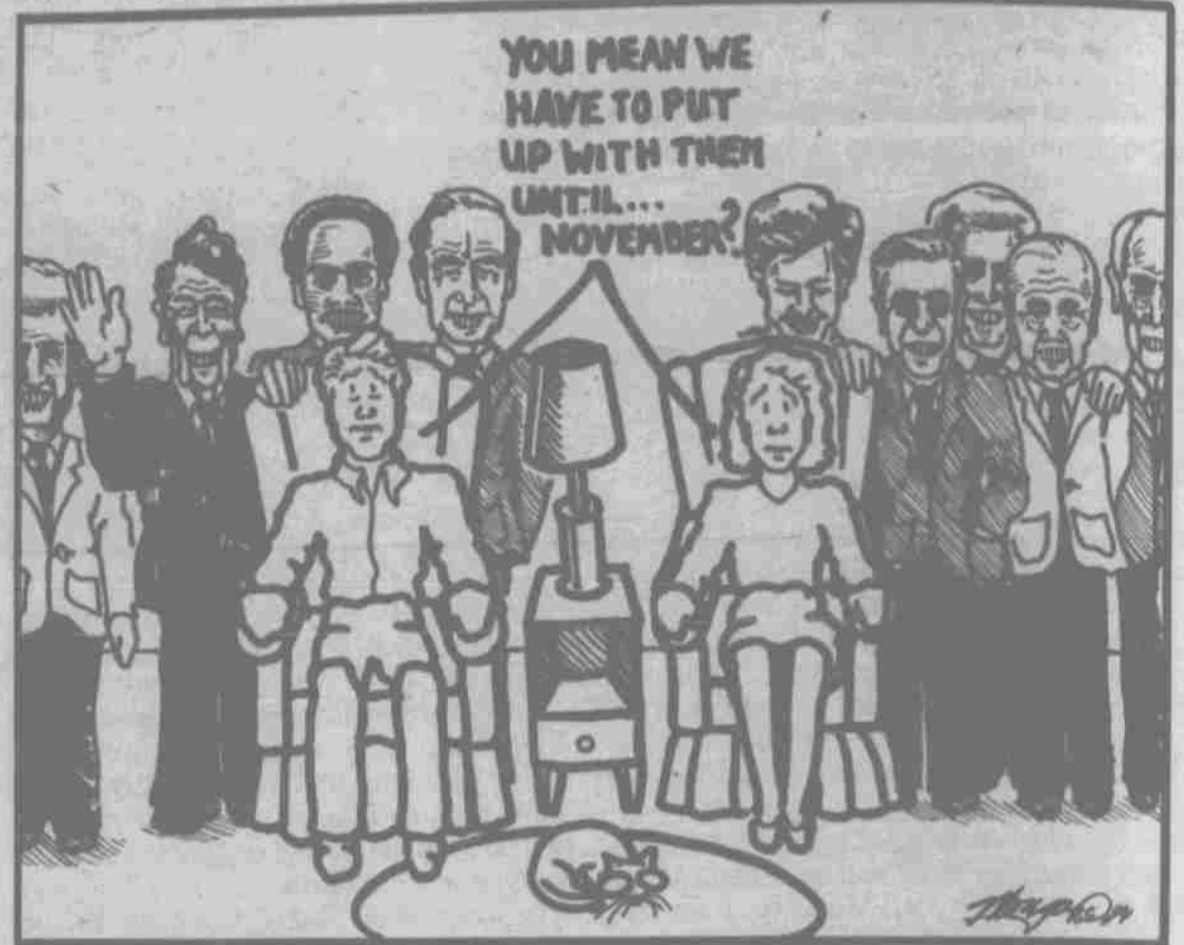
With the plan, the nation would be divided into four to six regions with approximately the same number of states in each. All the states in one region would hold their primaries and caucuses on the same day. States in other regions would follow on consecutive Tuesdays, reducing the primary season to about a month and a half.

With such a system, candidates would be able to concentrate their campaigns within a few states on a week-by-week basis, allowing voters to become more informed about the election and allowing candidates to spend less time flying across the country.

Heavy emphasis still would be placed on the states that have their primaries first, but the order of election could be rotated so that a few small states would not continually play the role that Iowa and New Hampshire now play.

At the very least, a shortened primary season would be a welcome relief for the millions of Americans who are tired of the campaign that seems to run from one election to another with no break in between.

That, if nothing else, makes some kind of election reform worth a try.



Democrats full of nonsense

"Oh, my goodness, it's quarter past February," said the Mad Hatter, glancing at his watch. "It's high time I asked a riddle. Tell me, what makes more nonsense than eight Democrats?"

"Would you care for some tea, little girl?" the March Hare inquired politely.

"Oh, I love riddles," said Alice, clap-

Sure enough, the Spaceman's space suit was slowly collapsing and he was deposited on the ground with a thump. While he attempted to struggle to his feet, a gaunt, elderly gentleman wearing a track suit came bounding in, threw himself at Alice's feet and began doing push-ups.

"I should be president," the Trackman said, "because I don't look 69, or do I?"

"No, you don't," agreed Alice. "But I'm sure you did once."

"And besides," said the Trackman, "I'm more against blowing everybody up than anybody else."

This remark brought five more shadowy figures out of the woods. Each was declaiming at the top of his lungs that he was "more against deficits than anybody else" or "more in favor of civil rights than anybody else" or more something.

Of course, each time one shouted that he was more something, the others would yell, "You are not!" The first would then reply, "I am too!" Eventually, they were all dancing around in a circle, taking turns chanting: "Are too!" and "Am not!"

The racket awakened the Dormouse. "Oh," said the Dormouse before hastily falling asleep again, "another Democratic debate."

This cacophony might well have lasted indefinitely had not a Woodchuck waddled past with a load of sticks on its back. "A poll taker!" cried the Frontrunner. And he was off with the others in hot pursuit.

Alice cautiously removed her hands from her ears. "Will they be back?" she asked uneasily.

"Daily," said the Mad Hatter. "Have you solved my riddle?"

Alice frowned. "No. I give up. Tell me, what does make more nonsense than eight Democrats?"

"I haven't the slightest idea," said the Mad Hatter.

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Letters

Women need lounge

I am writing in response to your editorial in regards to the women's lounge petitions (Daily Nebraskan Feb. 3). It was very interesting. It seemed highly emotional. I want you to know my side of the story.

First of all, I left the petition in Room 117 because several notices and a petition disappeared from the lounge. It seemed only fair to allow people to respond to the Union Board's notice. (Which itself kept disappearing until a glass-enclosed bulletin board was brought in). I did not want my petition to disappear also.

Over half of the signatures collected were not collected in the WRC. Susan Kadavy got 65 signatures (in the lounge) of women who used the lounge in one day. I got 39 signatures of classmates and friends on a second petition. And the remaining 75 names were acquired on the petition that I started and left in the WRC. Susan Kadavy and I led the petition drive, not the WRC.

I understand that you have your own office at the Daily Nebraskan. If you were asked to donate that space for computer terminals, would you feel displaced? The women who signed petitions feel the lounge is important to them personally. And they asked that alternative space be considered. We were responding to Sue Hansen's

letter which requested student input. Sue Hansen is chairperson of the Union Board Planning Committee.

Many of the people who use the lounge are quiet people who benefit a great deal from its peaceful, non-threatening atmosphere. I have seen foreign students kneel on their prayer rugs for worship, pregnant women put their feet up, lactating women breast feed their babies, in addition to the more routine activities of resting, studying and visiting. This room is special because of its female-only living room atmosphere. Many of these women are not activists. They are people who need and enjoy time to themselves. I know of no other place on campus beyond the smaller second floor lounge that has these qualities or opportunities.

This issue is not "women against 24-hr. computer access". We only asked that another location be considered.

Because of the limited space at UNL, someone will be displaced by computer terminals. The terminals are needed. But the displaced persons also have needs. Only if you are displaced will you probably care.

Say, how many terminals could we get into your office? Think about it.

Debra L. Swinton
senior

Human Development and
Family Rehabilitation

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Organization transforms potential into action

Editor's Note: This is the final part of a three-part series examining the role of black students at UNL. The trilogy addresses three components of struggle that, in the opinion of the author, can effectively be utilized on campus. Today's column will discuss the organizational aspects of that struggle. The series is being presented in recognition of Black History Month.

Opinion by Matthew Stelly

Organization, as it has been said, involves common purpose, identity and direction. It tells you what to do, who you are, and how you can get where you are going. In sum, an organization is a base of

commitment, a method and an instrument.

I think opting for the creation of alternatives is better than merely seeking to integrate into a system that views us as contradictions, anyhow. I believe that by linking up with progressive elements in the community, we would be rallying potential and real resources that would, in turn, come to our assistance during times of strain and struggle.

A shift in our ethos from freakishness and frolic to serious study and struggle is not that difficult to do. Our priorities — like the priorities of any numerical minority — have, to this point, been somewhat sidetracked because of our roles as students. However, linked to that role should be the issue of mainte-

nance. This means that we need to devise structures that will add to our ranks, not only in terms of numbers but in terms of the consciousness and caliber of people that we bring to campus.

Finally, our organizational base should be one geared toward accepting nothing but the best.

On this campus, in this time, we can make a difference between continued attrition or a situation where we, as a collective, can benefit from the many resources that such an institution has to offer.

But the key changes must come in our attitudes which, in turn, will reshape our actions and enable us to overcome some of the many obstacles that we are bound to face in the remainder of this decade.