

Editorial

Only strong Hart can conquer dangerous Reagan

America took a giant step backward Tuesday when Walter Mondale cleaned up on Gary Hart in the New York primary.

Hart seems hopelessly behind in the race for the Democratic presidential nomination. A contest between President Reagan and Mondale seems imminent. If you can call it a contest. Envision a Mondale-Reagan campaign.

Mondale would be destined to lose in November because he plays straight party politics. He has relatively no appeal to independent or moderate Republican voters. He reeks of the old school, Democratic campaigners . . . no innovation, tired issues, and a death wish connection with big unions.

Mondale won't capture cross-over votes. He won't appeal to broad interests that Gary Hart and Jesse Jackson could bring to the polls. Reagan will play to America. Mondale will just play to the Democrats.

Add to that the fact that the country seems to be completely buffaloed by the Reagan propaganda machine, and Americans seem trapped by another four years of reactionary leadership.

What harm could another four years of Reagan administrated policy do?

United States Supreme Court justices recently commercialized Christmas and allowed Christianity into everyone's public life by allowing creches on public property. This is the last in a long line of progressively conservative court decisions which could undermine all the civil rights advances this country has made in the past 25 years.

All of this with a court that is considered relatively moderate. However, the only liberal elements in the court are not in good health and are due to be replaced in the next four years.

Presidents appoint justices and history shows that they appoint justices that they agree with politically. Reagan appointed a conservative lackey in 1981 when he put Sandra O'Connor on the bench. We can only assume that he'll do the same if and when presented with the opportunity.

Reactionary justices, then, will not feel obligated to retain voters' rights, women's rights and the separation of church and state and thus throw the country back to the 1940's.

At best they can only retain present decisions and not make necessary advancements in human and civil rights. Without these advancements, the country could slip into social stratification which would make the 1960s look tame.

On the domestic side, then, Ronald Reagan is too dangerous to have a weakling like Walter Mondale running against him. The Democratic party needs someone who can attract independent and cross-over voters.

— Jeff Browne



Douglas ordeal discloses white collar crime

The Commonwealth bank failure and Nebraska attorney general Paul Douglas's related impeachment trial have at least temporarily interrupted business as usual in this state. And it's hard to think of anything which would have more graphically illustrated the sorry state of business (and politics)



Eric Peterson

as usual than the implication of Nebraska's top law enforcer in sleazy deals with a bank which stole depositors' money.

All this stench and public outcry come as the greatest surprise to Douglas's friends. Jerry Fennell, an Omaha attorney quoted in a *Lincoln Journal* story by Kathleen Rutledge, is still hard put to explain it all. "I think he had a friend get him in trouble. I'm sick about the whole thing — I just adore the guy." It appears that Douglas has been less lovable to law-breakers. Fennell noted that Douglas has been a strong supporter of the death penalty and believed in people paying for their offenses. "He

was as hardnosed on the Parole Board as I think any member's ever been."

The irony at work here, to which Fennell apparently is oblivious, is that the man on top of Nebraska's entire law system is now suspected of financial misdealing and abuse of power on a much more serious scale than many of the people he's sent to jail. Omaha state Sen. Ernie Chambers, a savvy and brilliant man who was treated as a maverick and a joke when he ran against Douglas two years ago, has insisted on pointing out the injustice inherent in a legal system which puts one person in jail for two years for stealing a refrigerator, and lets another off with a moderate fine for bid-rigging construction contracts. White collar crime is business as usual for many people at the intersection between big business and government and, for a lot of prosecutors and judges, white collar crime is too pale, smooth, and clean to be discerned. For Edwin Meese, there is nothing incongruous in attacking welfare mothers for filling up on the free soup at private charity soup kitchens while making very sure that he continues to get his own good thing from Uncle Sam.

The impeachment charges brought by the Nebraska Legislature are misrepresentation and lying, insider borrowing from Commonwealth, failure to investigate the Commonwealth situation after being warned of it by the FBI, failure to disqualify himself from a later investigation in which he had a conflict of interest, and failing to avoid the appearance of impropriety. This is as much an indictment of his conduct in the office of attorney general as it is a revelation of his own personal financial machinations. Prosecutor Richard Kopf of Lexington stated the irresponsibility of it perfectly: "Now at the time Mr. Douglas was sitting as the chief law enforcement officer of the state, Mr. Douglas never disclosed to anyone the intensity, the complexity or the depth of his involvement with Commonwealth."

Douglas's story is not the sad tale of a man led astray by a false friend. It's hard to forget the name of the bank on a \$371,814 check, as Douglas said he did. Even if the special proceedings of the state supreme court do not result in Douglas's removal from office, he has been discredited. State senators could not overlook Douglas's indiscretions. Whether the case will result in a change in banking law, or business as usual, is of course a different thing.

Aged are just more experienced

"Generation gap closing" read the headline, or something to that effect.

The article, which appeared in the *Duluth News-Tribune and Herald*, said that, based on the 10 years of interviews, university students now share more political, social and moral values with their parents than in the past. The article suggested that



Kema Soderberg

parents are no longer "square" and their children are no longer "crazed, radical, reactionaries." The article insinuated that generations are becoming closer-knit. I have my doubts.

Maybe students are parroting their parents' values. Maybe students just aren't as politically vocal as they were in the late 1960s. Or, maybe the generation gap still exists — but in a broader sense than the article put forth.

Instead of a gap between students and their parents, we have a gap between students and their grandparents and the middle-aged and graying Americans.

Growing old is considered a dirty trick. It is nature's trump card, a card we can't accept.

Gray hair is dyed its "natural" color. Wrinkles have become symbols of senility rather than wisdom. We are afraid to grow old, and because of that, we are afraid to associate with older Americans. We won-

der what we could possibly have in common with our grandparents.

I was shocked, over spring break, to discover that my grandparents are "cool people." I didn't like to visit them when I was younger. There was nothing to do. They lived in a small town. No one between the ages of 15 and 25 lived there. I felt stranded, locked in with people who wouldn't understand me.

Grandma dealt the first blow to my misconceptions last week. She told me about growing up. About an impermissible trip to a neighboring city with some boys she barely knew and coming home at 3 a.m. to a worried mother. I realized that growing up in the '20s was similar, in some ways, to growing up in the '70s or '80s.

I began to see my grandparents as ageless. They were no longer older than me, just more experienced. I also realized that they weren't stagnant, but still were growing and experiencing.

No one else seemed to notice. Waitresses appeared rude. Salespeople openly showed their exasperation over miscommunication. No one else seemed to notice that medical expenses increase with age, cost of living increases regardless of age and income decreases with age.

As the United States continues to gray, the young must learn to accept the idea of aging. They must see senior citizens as people. They are people who have needs that the younger generation can fulfill by providing monetary and emotional support.

"Growing old is not easy," a teacher told me the other day. "But the alternative is death."

Daily Nebraskan

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The Daily Nebraskan (USPS 144-080) is published by the UNL Publications Board Monday through Friday in the fall and spring semesters and Tuesdays and Fridays in the summer sessions, except during vacations.

Readers are encouraged to submit story ideas and comments to the Daily Nebraskan by phoning 472-2588 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. The public also has access to the Publications Board. For information, call Carla Johnson, 477-5703.

Postmaster: Send address changes to the Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St., Lincoln, Neb. 68588-0448.

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