

Editorial

Woman running mate a mere gesture

Jesse Jackson and Gary Hart have yet to admit it. And though he has yet to receive the official blessing of the Democrats at the upcoming convention, Walter Mondale is wasting no time. He is seeking a vice presidential running mate. Not one to ignore the changing times, he has expressed an interest in recruiting a woman as a running mate.

Anything for the sake of appearances, and a few thousand votes.

Sunday's Lincoln Journal-Star reported a Saturday meeting between Mondale and San Francisco's mayor, Diane Feinstein. During their meeting at Mondale's North Oaks, Minn., home, Feinstein was quoted as saying, "It is no longer incomprehensible to think of a woman as chief executive."

I disagree. It is comprehensible, but not necessarily believable.

What has happened is that the male-dominated party system has recognized the power that lies in the hands of women voters. They are trying to humor women. Mondale is toying with the idea of an historical first, in an attempt to rally the vast potential of the female vote.

However, it is mere gesture and not a commitment. If Mondale is elected president, will he be noted in the pages of history as the man who "almost" chose a woman as a vice presidential running mate?

Thanks, but no thanks.

Julie Jordan



Death penalty: Just sentence to all?

Last week, the Supreme Court said it will review a lower court ruling on the use of lethal injections to execute death-row prisoners. A U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals previously had ordered the Food and Drug Administration to investigate drugs used for execution to determine if they are "safe" and "effective". The ruling also ordered the FDA to assure the drugs do not cause unusual pain and suffering to the prisoners.

Liz Burden

Both orders, to me, are asinine and ludicrous. What the court needs to consider is not the constitutionality of the lethal injections, but the constitutionality of the death penalty itself.

The court should consider whether or not the sentences are just, or handed down arbitrarily. Studies and statistics in a late 70s Death Penalty Update show the latter to be true. After the plea-bargaining process — in which other ethnic groups receive lesser sentences not punishable by death —

the majority of those sentenced to die are poor, non-white or both.

Between 1930 and today, blacks accounted for more than 50 percent of all executed criminals, while blacks only make up from 10 to 17 percent of the whole U.S. population.

This is the racist and wealth-oriented justice system at work. Half of the murders in the nation were not committed by blacks. However, non-blacks hired better attorneys, had more sympathy from judges and from prosecuting attorneys who charged them with crimes not punishable by death. Or, they got off by pleading insanity. Blacks, and other non-whites, receive the opposite treatment.

The court is worried about the tools for execution being safe, effective, and humane and usual punishment. This is off the wall. Accounts of the most common form of execution, electrocution, are extremely gory. Capital punishment supporters say that these accounts, coupled with the actual threat of death, prevents future murders. But statistics show it doesn't deter anyone.

However, capital punishment apparently does achieve one goal: The extermination of "unwanted" elements of society.

Saving U.S. money may not help others

Perhaps certain congresspersons hold the truth in such high regard that they do not want it promiscuously displayed. Perhaps. But the attempt to kill in the cradle the National Endowment for Democracy looks like yet another instance of moral posing at the expense of a moral undertaking.

Some conservatives, eager to combine ostentation and frugality, want to be seen saving \$31

George Will

million (a sum spent every two and a half hours on interest on the national debt). Some liberals, eager for heroism without risk or exertion, want to slay this butterfly on the pretext that it is a cleverly disguised dragon. They say NED will be an instrument for U.S. "intervention" in the internal affairs of despotism, and we all know that would be wrong. Don't we?

You might think that persons who are strenuously opposed to the use of force to advance U.S. interests, as with aid to Nicaraguan freedom fighters, and who condemn U.S. collaboration with autocrats, such as Marcos of the Philippines, would welcome NED. It is, after all, an act of creative plagiarism: The Reagan administration took the idea from two liberal Democratic congressmen, Dante Fascell of Florida and Don Fraser, now mayor of Minneapolis.

But a lot of latent hostility to the idea was brought down, like summer lightning, by reports that the AFL-CIO — this nation's most diligent private force for freedom — spent \$20,000 of NED money on behalf of the moderate who won Panama's presidential election. Such assistance to friendly persons in elections may be problematic; certainly it will not be a part of NED's future agenda. NED's board has now forbidden the use of funds to finance campaigns of candidates for public office.

Continued on Page 5



Editorial Policy

Unsigned editorials represent official policy of the summer 1984 Daily Nebraskan. They are written by this summer's editor in chief, Lauri Hopple.

The Daily Nebraskan's publishers are the regents, who established the UNL Publications Board to supervise the daily production of the newspaper.