

Editorial

Interior chief Clark continues Watt policies

Things have been pretty quiet at the Department of the Interior since James Watt left.

The former secretary's abrasive style and prejudiced remarks brought the department into the media spotlight. His successor, William Clark, keeps a low profile.

Although the style has changed, the policies remain the same at the department. Clark was given only a slightly better grade than

his predecessor by the Sierra Club and Friends of the Earth, according to an article in last week's Time.

Clark got a D. Watt failed. The environmentalists gave Clark an A+ for diplomacy and personality, but they maintain many Interior Department policies are damaging the environment.

The two groups released a report on Clark and criticized him in several areas. One is the conti-

nuation of leasing huge chunks of the continental shelf for oil drilling. The report says Clark is leasing the off-shore land, disregarding warnings of harmful environmental impact.

Watt opposed the additions of any land to wilderness preservation areas. About 4 million acres of public land are being considered. Watt got 1.5 million acres dropped from the review. The report says Clark could restore

the lost acreage, but he hasn't.

Whereas Watt added almost no species of flora or fauna to the endangered list, Clark has added 20. The report criticizes Clark, though, because 4,000 life forms are endangered — 20 is only a token gesture.

The National Wildlife Federation contradicted the report. They commended Clark for defusing "the tension" Watt helped to create.

As our industrial society expands, preserving wilderness becomes increasingly important. Clark's style is much preferable to that of Watt, but the Interior Department should act as an advocate of the land, rather than as an exploiter of it.

Wilderness should not be sacrificed for a growing economy. We have wreaked havoc with the balance of nature. Now we need to do everything we can to protect and nurture what is left.

YEP.. DURING THOSE DEBATES I REALLY KICKED A LITTLE

... (RHYMES WITH CLASS)

W. G. G. G.

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I'LL TELL YOU SOMETHIN'.. THAT FERRARO GAL IS SOME WEALTHY

(RHYMES WITH RICH)

SO REMEMBER... GO OUT AND VOTE

FOR ME... GEORGE

(RHYMES WITH TUSH)

Criticism of hostage plan is cheap shot

During the 1980 presidential campaign, Ronald Reagan confided to a visiting dignitary that he knew precisely how to get American hostages out of Iran: He would fly American paratroopers to the holy city of Qom, have them seize the Ayatollah Khomeini himself and hold him hostage until the Americans were released. Maybe you've seen that movie.

The diplomat was diplomatic. Chagrined as he was, he said nothing. He did not ask how a bunch of Americans could find the ayatollah in a strange city, how they would get out once they got there, and how Reagan was sure that the Americans being held would not be killed



Richard Cohen

on the spot. There were, to say the least, some problems with the Reagan rescue plan.

In the end, of course, Jimmy Carter tried something along those lines. Soldiers were flown to Iran in an attempt to rescue the hostages. The result was the debacle in the desert, the loss of eight Americans and the humiliation of seeing one of the lesser ayatollahs display the charred bodies of Americans to the television cameras. For the United States, it was an ignominious moment and it seems hardly to matter to most people that all 52 of the hostages came home alive. It goes without saying that it matters to the former hostages, and their families.

Both President Reagan and Vice President George Bush have made much of the Iranian situation in the presidential campaign. They invoke it as emblematic of the Carter administration — four years of impotence, culminating in the humiliation of a proud and mighty nation by a Third World power. What they do not say is what they would have done instead. Assuming that Reagan would have attempted his own plan, the result would probably have been far worse. There is a good chance the hostages would never have come home alive.

Neither Reagan nor Bush acknowledge that — acknowledge that they have been as unable to deal with terrorism in Lebanon as Carter was in Iran. Instead, they hold up the Grenada invasion as the shining example of their decisiveness and daring-do. This administration takes no guff. It stands tall. It does not, however, come clean.

In the first place, Grenada is a lot closer to the United States than is Iran and it was defended by some 700 Cubans (mostly construction workers) and 1,500 members of the island's People's Revolutionary Army. Against them were arrayed 5,000 American combat troops and a vast amount of firepower. Even so, the invasion was marred by confusion and accidents. As the Long Island newspaper, Newsday, has pointed out, half of the 20 American casualties were caused by "accidents and mishaps." In fact, accidents claimed the lives of three Army Rangers and four Navy Seals — the very commando-like units of the administration likes to extoll.

Accidents and mishaps are the stuff of war. They are precisely what crippled the attempt to rescue the Iranian hostages and they have to be factored into any military operation. What made Grenada different from Iran was its size, its proximity and the amount of force used. As one military analyst told Newsday, "I think the South Pasadena fire department could have taken Grenada."

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Religious disclosure necessary to evaluate candidates' devotion

Foreign folks who watch "Dallas" may infer otherwise, but Americans really do place something above money in importance. Religion.

Note the furor in this year's presidential contest about the religiosity of its various candidates. The issue has outlasted Geraldine Ferraro and her husband's tax muck-up and George Bush's blind trust. Americans care about the kind of connections their potential leaders have with God — enquiring minds want to know.



Chris Burbach

Yet we have no tried and true method of evaluating a candidate's piety. How can we really be sure that we're not electing heathens to high office? We could ask God, but he's pretty hard to get an interview with. We could toss 'em in a tub and see if they float, or make them pick up a Bible and see if it burns their hand. Or we could try a method that works pretty well for money monitoring and require each candidate to complete a religious disclosure sheet.

The disclosure, which would be mandatory for all candidates and their spouses, would reveal in detail the candidates' religious records. It would have to be witnessed and signed by a duly ordained minister or television evangelist.

Candidates would be asked to respond to questions in five areas: denominations, sin, church attendance, Bible trivia and general piety.

Candidates would answer yes or no to the first question, "Are you or are you not a Christian?" If the answer is yes, they move on to the next question; if no, they drop out of the race.

Those continuing with the disclosure must enter a log of their transgressions from the preceding year, not including little white lies (space considerations). Candidates must reveal the number of times they repeated a sin, the remorse they feel for that sin and the restitution they made.

They would then reveal their church service attendance records, complete with good excuses for the days

they missed. Candidates also must provide information on their church duties and donations above and beyond the call of duty, or lack thereof.

A more strenuous test would require candidates to answer fill-in-the-blank Bible trivia questions, like "When Lot's wife looked back, she turned into a -----," "Joshua fought the battle of -----," and "Jesus was killed by -----." Only American Bibles will be used to check answers, foreign translations will not be permitted.

Finally, Oval Office hopefuls would have to prove their general piety by producing pictures of themselves with a minister or nun, renouncing Satan and communism, reciting at least three prayers and singing at least three hymns.

Extra space would be provided for candidates to recount particulars of their faith not already requested — miracles worked or witnessed, conversions tallied, and relationship with the Rev. Jerry Falwell.

Until such a proposal is adopted, we can only wallow in ignorance about our future leaders' devoutness, basing our votes on fuzzy, unverifiable claims. And that's just not enough. Enquiring minds want to know.

Editorial Policy

Unsigned editorials represent official policy of the fall 1984 Daily Nebraskan. They are written by this semester's editor in chief, Chris Welsch.

Other staff members will write editorials throughout the semester. They will carry the author's name after the final sentence.

Editorials do not necessarily reflect the views of the university, its employees, the students or the NU Board of Regents.

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