

Editorial

State needs safer foreclosure enforcement

American farmers are in the process of trying to rewrite their history in the same way that blacks and Indians are rewriting their history. ... We must begin to build a kind of unity where we can make our voices heard, where we can drive people out of office who refuse to hear us." — Merle Hansen of Newman Grove on why he was protesting last week in Kansas City.

Hansen and about 100 other farmers who traveled to Kansas City in search of media attention during the presidential debates didn't get much. But as the farm economy continues to deteriorate, and as

more small farms go under, they will be joined by other protestors. Some won't be so peaceful.

Arthur Kirk wasn't. Kirk was shot and killed last Tuesday on his farm near Grand Island as he ran to a sandbagged windmill. A Nebraska State Patrol special weapons and tactical team shot him when he would not halt, officials said. Earlier in the day, deputies came to his farm to serve him legal papers to recover his farm assets and \$100,000 to repay a Grand Island bank. He pulled guns on them, and they left.

A few hours later, he told the Grand

Island Daily Independent that he would fight to keep his farm. In a copyrighted story Wednesday, he said, "I'm not afraid of them. I'd rather fight them in court, but I'll do it this way. ... I don't belong in a dirty damn jail." A few hours later he was dead.

Kirk was prepared to fight. He was armed with an AR-15 rifle, he was wearing a gas mask, a steel helmet and his face was camouflaged for night fighting, officials said. He was armed and dangerous.

However, the handling of the incident raises several questions. The deputies

knew Kirk had pulled a gun earlier and that he had said he would fight to keep his farm. A SWAT team may not have been the best way to serve the papers or to arrest Kirk. If left alone for several days, perhaps his death could have been avoided. We urge an investigation of the handling of the case to ensure it was proper and that it was necessary to shoot Kirk.

Not all small farmers will take foreclosure peacefully, obviously. Nebraska law enforcement officials may face the same situation again soon. A safer way to carry out such unpleasant tasks is needed.

Minnesota Senate race echoes presidential fight

The outline of the story is more than vaguely familiar. On one side there is a folksy Republican incumbent wrapped in a protective coating of money, incumbency and a nice-guy image. On the other side is a Democratic challenger who's trying to find an issue sharp enough to poke through. Even the dialogue of the challenger has a certain echo: "If the contest is decided on personality, he will win. If it's decided on issues, I will win."

But this isn't Reagan versus Mondale. It's the Senate race between Rudy Boschwitz and Joan Growe.



Ellen Goodman

The parallels between the presidential campaign and the Senate campaign have not been lost on the people in Fritz Mondale's home state. Republican Sen. Rudy Boschwitz is something of an anomaly in politically moderate, issue-oriented Minnesota. The conservative senator, a millionaire businessman with a penchant for plaid shirts and root-beer-flavored milk, came into the public eye originally on television ads for his plywood company and zany billboards. Among the more memorable billboard messages was one suggesting: "Unite St. Paul and Minneapolis, Drain the Mississippi."

He won his seat in 1978 essentially because Minnesotans were mad at the way former Gov. Wendell Anderson had gotten himself appointed to Mondale's Senate seat. But the Democratic Farmer-Labor candidate is also something of an anomaly.

Joan Growe is the only woman running for the Senate in Minnesota since the 1920s. The 49-year-old former teacher and secretary of state for the past 10 years, decided in 1983 that Boschwitz was "vulnerable." Not because of his plaid shirts; because of his record.

He had become, as Ted Kennedy called him, "Rubber Stamp Rudy" for Reagan.

"Vulnerable" is, however, a relative term in politics. In this heralded "year of the woman," there have been 10 females running for the Senate — six Democrats and four Republicans. But there's only one female incumbent this year, Nancy Kassebaum, and only one female front-runner, Nancy Kassebaum. Most of the others are running in what are described in classic understatement as "tough races." As one woman at Democratic headquarters in Washington says ruefully, "Let's face it, in most cases if it's a

real good shot, then the people at the head of the line to run are men."

The race here was regarded as at least remotely winnable and Growe only got to the head of the line after winning the party's nomination in a grueling convention, and then winning the primary with 76 percent of the vote.

In August, Growe was trailing the genial Boschwitz in the polls by 21 points. But last week, the Minnesota Poll put her within striking distance. She was only 7 points behind the senator among people who were most likely to vote. A high 16 percent of voters were still undecided.

This is not bad for a candidate who didn't get a single ad on television until after Labor Day and who has been outspent by more than \$4 million.

Polls also show that Minnesota voters agree with Growe on some important issues — she is pro-freeze and pro-ERA, he is against — but they "like" Rudy. This is the same conundrum which frustrates other progressive Democratic women facing more conservative Republican incumbents.

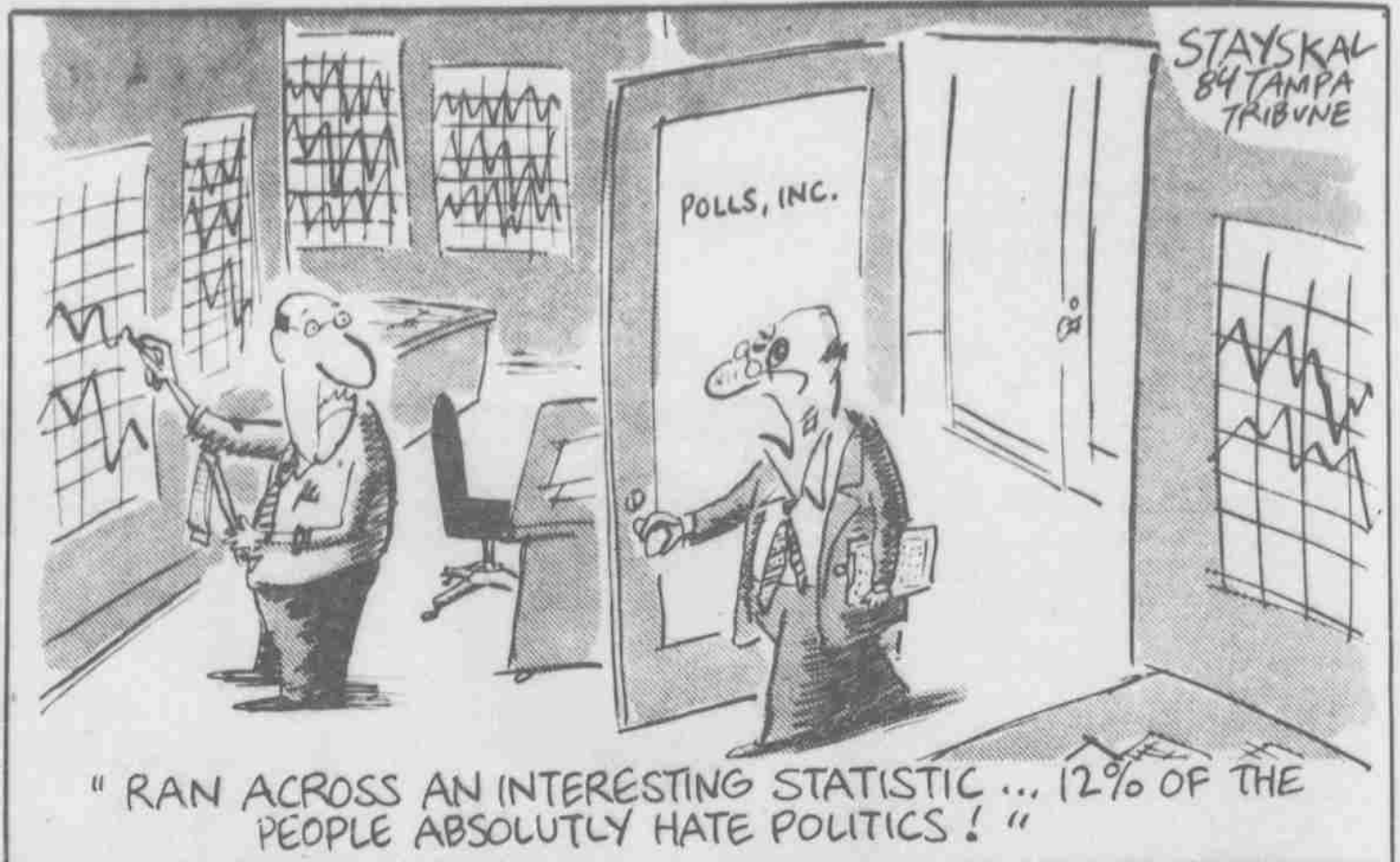
Growe, a hard-working, intelligent, but not charismatic campaigner, decided that she couldn't out-nice-guy Boschwitz. Instead, she has gone after him for refusing to take a no-cut pledge on Social Security, for supporting a controversial product-liability bill and for not releasing his tax returns.

The tax question has been more popular with the people than the press. Boschwitz did release tax "summaries" last August which showed that he had paid only 15 percent in 1982, the year of the first Reagan tax cut and the year of his own business reversals. He refuses to release any more data claiming "privacy."

But this time Boschwitz has needed more than his plaid shirt to maintain credibility. He has put his accountant into one TV commercial (this is the year of the accountant) and his colleague, Sen. David Durenberger (R-Minn.), in another. Durenberger pronounced dourly in a full-page newspaper ad: "Mrs. Growe, you've gone too far." On TV, he accused her of vicious personal attacks on Boschwitz who is "far too good a person" to have to take such nastiness.

Growe responds to this with an amused nod, "People used to say I wasn't tough enough," she remembers. "Now when I get tough, they say I'm being mean." At least they haven't accused her of being bitchy.

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Local races draw fire

'Political twins' run for Board of Education

There are a couple of races of local concern which deserve some comment in these, the waning days of the 1984 campaign year. One is the legislative race for the 29th District, my district, between one of the most liberal Republicans in the state, Shirley Marsh, and conservative Eugene Dankert. The other is the race for State Board of Education for District One — Lincoln's district — between Tweedle-dee and Tweedle-dum, also known as Max Larsen and Pat Nolte.



Jim Rogers

In the 29th District race between Dankert and Marsh, it is obvious that Dankert is the superior candidate. This is true for several reasons. First, it is not obvious that Marsh is excited about being a state senator, especially after she made that aborted attempt to become state treasurer in the 1982 election.

Now I don't mind a politician running for offices which would increase his or her ability to serve the public while serving in another political office. But the shift from state senator to treasurer simply is not one of those moves. Rather it smacks of simply a desire on Marsh's part to find a full-time, better paying job.

If her reasons for running for treasurer in 1982 were not so obviously selfish I could easily forgive her. But as is, I refuse to vote for a person who is keeping her eyes peeled for political or personal advancement when she should be attending to the busi-

ness for which she was elected.

Additionally Marsh has only a mediocre record as a senator. Even granting that she has gotten several pieces of legislation passed (albeit over a period of many years), Marsh is simply too much of a caretaker legislator. She has no vision for the future. In a word, she is unimaginative. The times we live in require much more of a legislator than Shirley Marsh, and this we have in Gene Dankert.

Turning to another race, the two people running for the Lincoln area seat on the State Board of Education should win the 1984 "Identical Political Twins" award. I've read just about every story written about this campaign and so far I have been unable to discern any issue upon which Larsen and Nolte disagree.

For one day it looked as though Larsen supported waving teacher certification for science and math teachers in order to ease the shortage of teachers in this area while Nolte did not. But the next day the Lincoln Journal reported that it had erred in reporting Larsen's position and that in fact his position was just the same as Nolte's on the issue.

Well, if I don't write in the name of somebody who I think could do a better job than either of the two — like Bozo the Clown — I'll probably end up voting for Nolte. The reason is that Larsen glories in his shame as evidenced by the two ads which he has been running in the Daily Nebraskan with nauseating regularity.

The gist of the ads (actually the jest of the ads) is the fact that Larsen supports teacher certification and higher salaries for teachers. The ads are really perverse.

First, respecting the teacher salaries promise, I called the office of the State Board of Education and asked whether or not the board had any direct influence on teacher salaries; the answer was no. Max Larsen's ads are thus misrepresenting the truth by intimating that he can really do something about the salary issue. In effect he is trying to fool people into voting for him. Sure, he can lobby the legislature, but if he thinks he can swing any vote that the NSEA hasn't already paid for simply because he is a board member, he should reflect upon the proposition again, and perhaps mercifully drop out of the race.

Additionally I'm not sure why Larsen is even bringing up the issue of teacher certification except for the fact that he is proclaiming his intention to circumvent the express intent of the Nebraska Legislature in passing LB 994.

The Unicameral has dealt with the issue of Christian schools and teacher certification, the State Board of Education is required to follow the law. It is reprehensible that Larsen evidently proclaims his desire to abuse his potential office and bring the law to naught. For shame Max Larsen.

Nebraska needs brave and imaginative board members who will advocate meaningful change in education policy; changes such as implementing a system of vouchers to allow family choice in schooling decisions. This year all we get to choose between are two people who desire no more than to be official mouth pieces for Nebraska's teachers' union — we deserve better.