

# Editorial

## Big business to battle income tax proposal

The fate of Treasury Secretary Donald Regan's simplified income tax proposal rests in the hands of special interest groups and big business.

Difficult as it may be to believe, the Reagan administration proposed Tuesday a tax strategy which would seem to hurt corporations. Since business has the most to lose, it will put up a fight. And it has the money and the warriors to wage a bloody battle.

Regan's proposal set the stage for this inevitable legislative battle. The proposal, if enacted by Congress, will close many of the loopholes through which corporations have been able to escape paying taxes.

Of course, any proposal of such magnitude cannot be praised or damned without great scholarly study and deliberation. But the repeal of corporate tax breaks and investment tax credit will help rustle taxes from big businesses — taxes they haven't been paying.

A Congressional Joint Tax Committee study recently found that financial institutions paid only 2.7 percent of their income in taxes during the first three years of the 1980s. A repeal on tax breaks on interest and dividends likely will draw their ire.

Yet oil companies, who would lose money because of the repeal of special

energy tax breaks, and other businesses have the most powerful lobbyists on Capitol Hill. These businesses, through campaign contributions and political action committees, also control elections and committees.

Even with a strong endorsement from President Reagan, the proposal will have to fight strong opposition lobbyists.

Still, the tax proposal has to be taken with a grain of salt. No one save Reagan has had enough time to adequately study the effects of the proposal. It must be in the back of the country's mind that the president's aims have more to do with

furthering the cause of laissez faire capitalism than economic justice.

The tax burden won't be shifted by the Treasury's proposal. The different sections of the nation's economy will pay almost the same in taxes as they pay now. It seems that only corporations will pay more. But even their flat tax rate would drop from 46 to 33 percent.

Also, the affect of the plan on the economy is minimal. The government's revenue won't be increased, and so the plan can't address the massive federal deficit.

Jeff Browne  
Daily Nebraskan Senior Editor

## Reagans need to keep family feud to themselves

From time to time, New York Gov. Mario Cuomo refers to the nation as a family. To him, that's a good thing, suggesting warmth, love, closeness and a sense of shared responsibility. To me, though, everytime Cuomo mentions family, I think of my friend's uncle who ran off with his brother's wife.

The last thing we need is a country that's like a family. We had that once. It was called the Civil War.

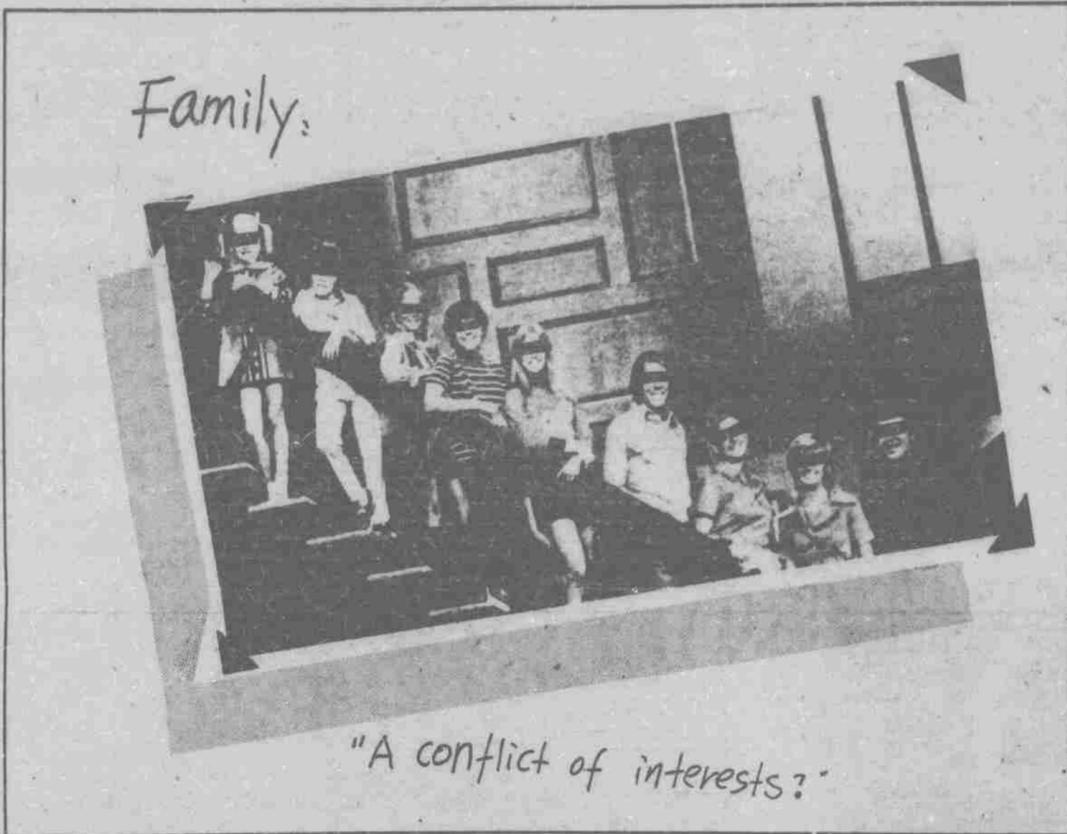


Richard Cohen

Now we have the Reagan family to prove my point. In an interview, Nancy Reagan admitted that she and her stepson, Michael, just don't get along, that there's an "estrangement" that has existed for three years. To this, Michael has reacted with hurt and shock and the usual chagrin. One only wishes he had reacted with silence.

But he didn't. Instead, he called a press conference and granted interviews. He said he wasn't even invited to the ranch in Santa Barbara for Thanksgiving. "What timing for the first lady of this country," he said of Mrs. Reagan's pre-turkey remark. Referring to the fall Mrs. Reagan took just before the election, Michael said, "Maybe the bump on the head was more serious than we thought." He added that he was thinking of writing a book about his relationship with the Reagans. I can hardly wait.

There are those, and they are legion, who fairly chortle at the Reagans going at one another in print. The first family, after all,



Phil Teal/Daily Nebraskan

has been holier than thou when it comes to promoting family values. Indeed, the whole conservative movement has been pretending that God has given it the family as something of a ward. It must protect and succor it. It must pass legislation buttressing it. It, and not un-American liberalism, cares for the family and its cherished, traditional values. No one has expressed this better than Ronald Reagan.

But so what. The family is the one area in which hypocrisy is

unavoidable. No matter how good your intentions, your family somehow gets away from you. Relatives just don't behave as they should — that is, how you would want them to. Every family is a collection of people connected not just by blood, but by mutual antagonisms, and no outsider can ever tell who's right and who's wrong.

Almost every family is a repository of feuds and hostility, of scandals that make "Dallas" seem tame, of vows broken and prom-

ises breached, of people brought together not out of choice, but out of circumstances — because someone married someone else and God knows why. Thanksgiving and even Christmas remind us that families are mixed blessing. There are more fireworks around this time of the year than there are on the Fourth of July and sometimes on the weighty issue of whether mashed or sweet potatoes shall be served at the otherwise festive dinner.

Maybe it's just me, but I'm sick

of families making us a part of their fights. That holds for Cheryl Crawford whose mother, Joan, may have been the world's most awful mother, but I didn't want to know it. It holds also for Gary Crosby, who in a book told us things about Bing that I could have been perfectly happy not knowing. What made it all so much worse is the guess — nay, the certainty — that if Joan and Bing were still around, they could have made a parent's case against their kids. These things are unknowable. They should, at the very least, be unmentionable.

It would have been best if Nancy Reagan had simply told her interviewer that she was not going to talk about her family — that she would extend her husband's vaunted 11th commandment (Thou shall not speak ill of a fellow Republican) to her own family. But all she did was acknowledge that she and her stepson did not get along. To that shot from her peashooter, Michael responded with a Big Bertha of a press conference, interviews, and now a threatened book.

Maybe there's no stopping Michael and we can all sit back and watch the first family act like any other. I'm sure he thinks he's justified. What kid has not wanted to call a press conference to tell the world about his parents? But the whole thing is unseemly and tells us nothing we either need to know or do not know already.

Michael... Nancy, your country gives you a choice: Either make up or shut up, but either way close the window. The neighbors are listening.

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## Average-guy singers give common man hope

With all the excitement Bruce Springsteen brought to town with his "Born in the USA" tour, I've found myself in front of my bathroom mirror playing the air guitar and lip synching into a carrot-stick microphone.



James A. Fussell

Everyone should have one unrealistic dream. I want to be a rock'n'roll idol for one night. That, or play third base for the Phillies, I can't decide. But, a rock star — be still my sweaty heart. These fans; those wild, screaming, unprincipled, unshaven, unbathed, unconscious, frantic and frothing fans. Screaming for me to do just one more set.

Dreamer... I can't sing. Really. Ask my minister, stand outside my shower window. When you look up off-key in the dictionary, you see my picture.

Usually when I see a star on the tube who is all of 23 and working on his second million, I try to console myself by remembering my strengths.

Big deal, I can write. Steinbeck didn't have any roadies, Royko may have had people tear his clothes off, but not out of adulation. It's a hard thing to accept, but young women just don't swoon in the aisles when you write a perfect infinitive absolute, and nobody pays \$35 to watch you struggle with a lead paragraph, or bleed your copy. I wish I could sing.

"But, wait a minute," I said the other day as I was listening to an old Bob Dylan classic. I realized that Dylan was making millions singing like a moose with adenoid problems. Of course he was a pretty

fair songwriter. Details.

Over the next couple of days I listened with renewed interest to the voices warbling out of my stereo. Chuck Berry, Bob Dylan, Neil Young, Brian Adams, Bruce Springsteen, Rod Stewart, Mick Jagger, and Joe Cocker. To be brutally honest, none of them can sing their way out of a cardboard box.

Don't get me wrong, I like all of them, and would gladly see them in concert, with a great deal of enjoyment. You see, they just can't sing. And this is good — good for their careers, and good for us. The hidden secret to many successful rock stars is a sort of creative badness.

Boy George, now there's an exception. That boy has a sweet voice. Pure talent. Right there, he knew he was in trouble. My gosh, he could sing. He needed a gimmick, and he needed it fast.

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