

# Editorial

## New study area justified, but students deserve voice

**A**lthough the UNL athletic department went through the proper channels in setting up the women athlete's study area in Smith Residence Hall, the Residence Hall Association, backed by ASUN, is justified in wanting to be consulted the next time a similar decision is made.

The decision to build the study area in Smith Hall took place near the beginning of August before any RHA representatives were on campus, said Douglas Zatechka, director of the Office of University Housing. At that time, Zatechka said the athletic department went through "the only proper channels" they could have.

Zatechka said that during the summer, representatives of the athletic department and Chancellor Martin Massengale asked him if he knew of any space in the residence halls that would make a good place for the study area.

He said the Smith Hall lounge/piano practice area was selected for three reasons:

- Cost of renovating the Smith Hall area was the least.
- Many women athletes live in Smith Hall.
- Smith Hall is the closest to the women's practice fields.

Zatechka also said the Smith Hall lounge did not appear to be used a lot although none of the lounges he has toured have ever been full.

Because RHA was not on campus when the housing office decided to build the two-room study area, the residence hall group is not justified in criticizing the procedure used for the Smith Hall project. By consulting Zatechka, the athletic department did all it could and did not railroad the project through without taking the proper channels.

However, residence hall students have the right to be concerned about and involved with decisions regarding the buildings where they live. To ensure this right, RHA and ASUN have urged the housing office to consult hall residents and hall governments before making similar decisions.

Smith Hall residents deserve a study area just as much as the women athletes, and RHA and ASUN should be commended for making this clear. Through the effort of the student governments and Smith Hall president Sydney Warner, the construction of a new study area for Smith Hall residents is being planned.

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### The Daily Nebraskan

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## Wean farmers off support

**S**unday we listened to this country's most popular entertainers wail for aid — in this case, Farm Aid. Nebraskans hear the songs and hope for something to happen, because the tune they've been listening to is a dirge.

The crumbling farm economy is in ample evidence around us: A record-low NU budget increase, low state budget and now another request for cuts. Gov. Bob Kerrey is asking state agencies, including NU, to voluntarily trim an extra 1.5 percent from their budgets.

The farmers, say FarmAid organizers, are not asking for a handout, they're just asking for time.

They've been asking for time since Roosevelt's New Deal. Obviously, our farm program has outlived its usefulness; the billions of dollars our government has poured into agriculture has not prevented the closings of thousands of small farms, and in some cases, those dollars have actually made the problem worse.

The Minneapolis Star and Tribune conducted an in-depth, six-month research project on the farm economy this summer. Some of the facts gathered in the study, called "Propping up the Farm," merit attention.

• Price supports are 30 times more expensive this year than they were in Roosevelt's time, including discount for inflation.

• Congress spent record amounts on farm aid in the 1980s. Yet in the past five years, about 100,000 farms went under.

• Four million farms have collapsed since 1945 despite price supports that rose faster than farm income. There are about the same acres in farms today as there were in the 1930s.

• In the late 1970s, taxpayers chipped in 14 cents for every dollar of farm profits. That contribution is now 43

cents per dollar.

• In proportion to their contribution to the public welfare, farmers receive more federal help than any other sector of the economy.

Although a complete cutoff of farm supports would be damaging to many farmers, most don't depend on the land completely for income.



Chris Welsch

Only about one in eight farm families makes most of its money on farming. The ones who do are the biggest. The top producers, one of every 100 farmers, produce almost one-third of the crops. On the other hand, one of every three farms sells less than \$5,000 worth of crops. These farms are consistent losers, which have to be supported by outside income. Those in-between, the majority, have incomes below the national average.

Federal money that goes into research and development has actually hurt farmers in some ways. Today's farmer can grow several times the number of bushels on the same land — which has added to this nation's surplus food and low prices. Americans eat only 61 percent of what our farmers produce, the Star and Tribune reports. The rest is stockpiled or exported.

Even price supports cause problems. By artificially hiking prices, many farmers cannot compete on the international market. Their prices are too high.

Where do we turn now, \$130 billion after the New Deal?

Eliminating price supports and other programs would hasten the demise of

the small farm, collapse many small banks and towns and cause a great deal of suffering. But leaving them in place is a \$30 billion annual drain on the economy, which is already burdened with a huge deficit.

Market forces will crush the small farmer out of existence eventually. It takes big land, big machinery and big money to run a successful farm.

That is a tragedy. America was built by small farmers — small farms are our roots.

At one time, small farmers were conservators of the land, saving it for generations of children. Now many have to rape the land in order to survive.

Congress should hear the FarmAid song and respond by slowly, but surely, weaning farmers off support. Subsidies and loans should be targeted toward the smallest farmers who have a chance to make it. Programs should not, as they do now, benefit the biggest farmers as well as the smallest.

Eventually, the open market will prevail. It's the system we founded this country on and generally it works to make an efficient economy. For our farm economy to work, there must be fewer farmers producing less food.

Money not used for farm supports should be used to re-educate and relocate farmers. Programs should be instituted to prevent abuse of the land by the corporate and large farms that will be on it.

Political realities make such suggestions pipe dreams — wasted warbling. The farm lobby is strong, farm-state Congressmen are strong, the aid will continue and farms will continue to fail.

Sunday's warbling in Champagne, Ill., will earn about \$50 million to ease the plight of the farmer. That's almost enough money to pay the interest on U.S. farmers' \$212 billion collective debt — for one day.

## '60s radical lives quiet life of Islam

**F**rom the sun-dappled park comes the background rhythm of urban life, the slap-slap-slap of basketballs on blacktop. Across the street, in a small convenience store, and in profound peace of mind, sits the proprietor, selling eggs and reading the Koran.

He is Jamil Abdullah Al-Amin. He is 41. He used to be H. Rap Brown. But that was long ago and, in a sense, in another country. It has been a winding and ascending path from his boyhood in Baton Rouge, La., to Atlanta's west end. The hyperkinetic human torch of urban unrest, circa 1967, is, in 1985, enveloped in a strange serenity in a city known for its hum of energy. The man who was the hammer of America, or at least of Cambridge, Md., has become a merchant, but with this distinction: He is, at last, really radical.

That radicalism was a short candle.

It was rhetorical radicalism, elicited from young people by older flatterers and amplified by the media 18 years ago. Today, and for the long haul, Jamil is in inner emigration, out of his country and into Islam.



George Will

He burst upon the nation in the 1960s, when the social air was composed of (in the words of a Rex Stout character) "oxygen, nitrogen and odium." He succeeded Stokely Carmichael as head of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, which soon

changed the second word to "National." He said the sorts of things that then passed for trenchancy: "If you give me a gun I just might shoot Lady Bird." The only lasting legacy of his brief blast of prominence is an aphorism: "Violence is as American as cherry pie."

The 1960s were God's gift to conservatism, a decade dominated, not numerically but culturally, by overreachers. Those years were noisy with the voices of fundamentally frivolous people feigning seriousness, people convinced that sentiment is the measure of virtue, that rhetoric is the measure of sentiment and that morality is a state of mind: I feel, there fore I am. This radicalism helped to produce two significant effects: the "backlash" candidacy of George Wallace and the presidency of

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