

Editorial

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University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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Watching schools

Achievement check promotes learning

A proposal by Education Secretary William J. Bennett that would require colleges and universities to begin documenting student achievement would serve as a long-overdue "check and balance" on the higher-education system.

The requirement also would as many as 9,000 institutions, including trade schools and community colleges. Institutions would risk losing accreditation unless they prove that students are achieving specific goals.

This would force universities to keep track of students' progress. People would no longer "slip through the cracks" of the system like former Creighton University basketball star Kevin Ross. Ross couldn't read when he graduated from Creighton.

In a Sunday Washington Post article, C. Ronald Kimberling, assistant secretary for postsecondary education, said, "Without measurements to assess whether students are learning, quality in education is meaningless . . . Diplomas shouldn't be handed out."

The new rule raises questions

of how to measure students' progress. It is probably impossible to give standardized achievement tests that do not discriminate against certain groups.

Grade point averages don't reveal intelligence by any means or, for that matter, real learning. In many cases they simply measure memorization and regurgitation skills. There was a student who took all his classes one semester pass/no pass except a dancing class. He had a 4.0 that semester.

The requirement also would help the undeclared-major student to get advising instead of being lost in the system.

The new rules also would include student consumer protections. Accrediting agencies would have to ensure that schools were honest about costs, refund policies and graduation requirements.

These rules would be a great benefit to students who are sometimes misled by advisers. Some students are forced to spend an extra semester because they are a few credits short because of faulty advising.

Reagan needs stand on AIDS legislation

The Reagan administration once again has found itself crossed up on a hot topic. This time it's AIDS.

Although members of the Reagan administration acknowledge that people with AIDS have been discriminated against in employment, housing and school admissions, they still urge lawmakers to "deter action on specific proposals for substantive rights or new enforcement procedures" aimed at protecting people infected with the virus.

This doesn't make sense. They say they know that people are being discriminated against, yet they want to prohibit laws that could help stop discrimination.

In testimony prepared for a congressional subcommittee hearing, Dr. Otis R. Bowen, secretary of health and human services, outlined the administration's stand.

They also say there is no need to guarantee that AIDS test results remain confidential. The administration says it realizes that people may not seek tests and not get counseling or medical tests. That will just perpetuate infection.

Bowen says the decision should be made by states with regard to their particular needs. He says most states already have statutes protecting confidentiality of public health information.

If the government doesn't take a stand, there won't be any more money for research and laws protecting victims of the disease. As a result, AIDS will never be controlled.

By prohibiting these laws, the Reagan administration shows its true mentality. It has lost sight of basic civil rights.

Editorial Policy

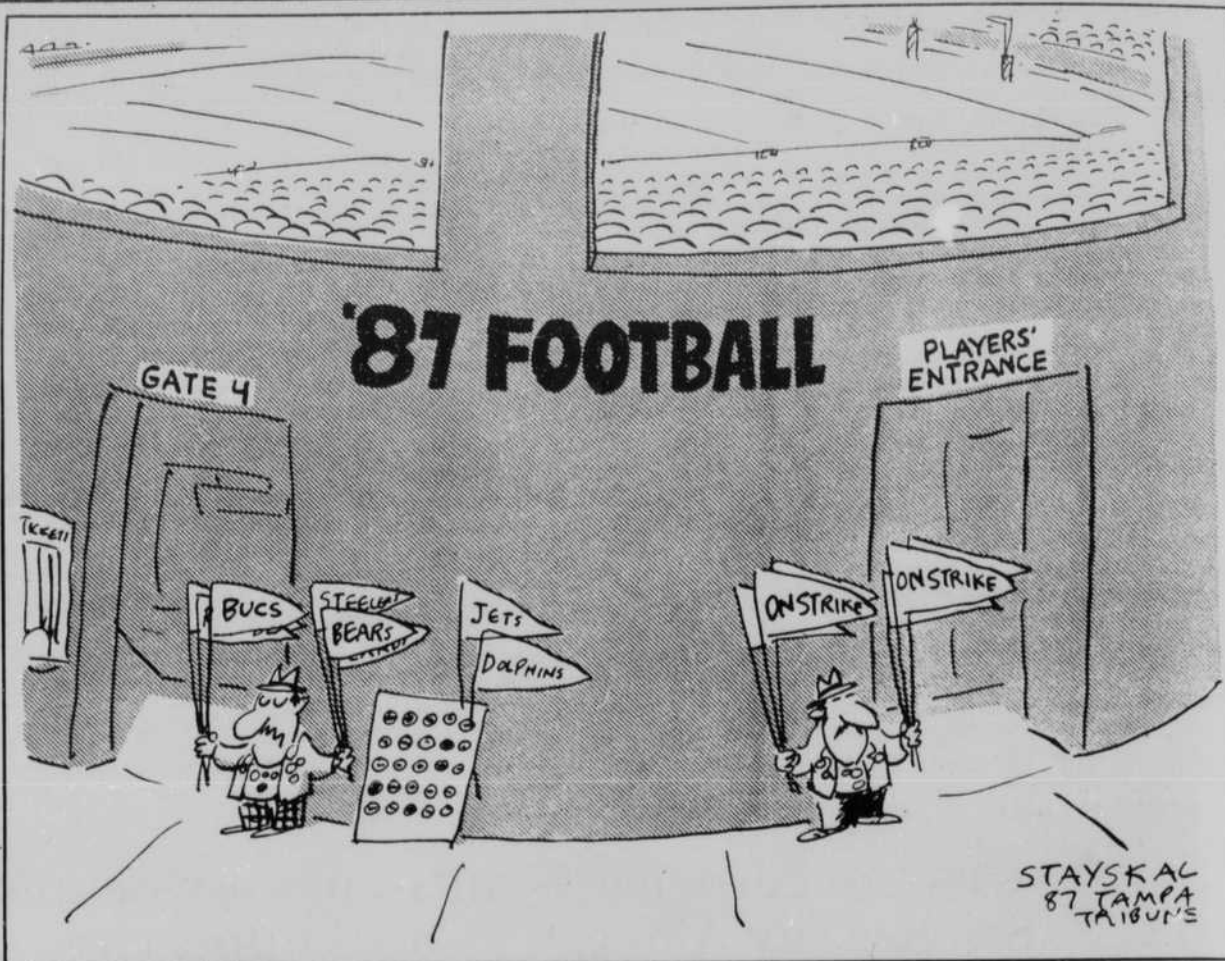
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Stop corporate raiders

States must retain traditional role in governing corporations

Nearly a year ago, a group of corporate raiders led by British financier Sir James Goldsmith began its hostile takeover attack on Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. While the assault lasted only a short time, the experience left a permanent impact on the Lincoln community where more than 2,000 jobs were threatened.

In the course of stopping last

tile takeover.

Nebraskans witnessed another corporate takeover horror story in 1985-86 when a corporate raider threatened to take over Internorth Corp. headquartered in Omaha. To defend itself, Internorth looked to strengthen its position by acquiring Houston Natural Gas. Surprisingly, the smaller company, HNG, quickly took control of the corporate board and moved the corporation headquarters to Houston, costing Nebraska and Omaha thousands of jobs, economic activity and a damaged self-image.

Something needs to be done to prevent these raiders from plundering American corporations for quick profits. These "Wall-Street Pirates" aren't far different from the pirates of the Caribbean whose looting and pillaging disrupted commerce on the high seas. "Wall Street Pirates" who use abusive tactics and financial manipulation to reap short-term profits should be held accountable by reforms at both the state and federal levels. We must make the takeover process fairer to the shareholders, communities and workers involved.

Because states traditionally have chartered and regulated corporations within their jurisdictions, it is important that states continue to play a leading role in governing their corporations in this area. States obviously have a

natural interest in hostile takeovers — and since they are closest to the situation, they know best what needs to be done. State legislators also are more responsive to local problems than federal bureaucrats and are able to act quickly and flexibly to new abuses. In the case of Goodyear, Ohio's responsiveness to the hostile takeover was one of the reasons Goldsmith eventually backed away from his bid.

Congress soon will consider legislation which would take a counterproductive approach to the hostile takeover problems by pre-empting the states' governing authority in this area. A move to shift this responsibility to Washington would strengthen the position of Wall Street raiders while weakening the ties that bind corporations to their communities. In essence, our congressional delegation will have to choose between local control or federal control, between Main Street or Wall Street, between Nebraska businesses or corporate raiders. I strongly believe we must maintain states' traditional role in governing their corporations and not allow the federal bureaucracy to take over this important responsibility. Washington must not act to preempt the states' role in this area — or we will soon see a bad situation become even worse.

Don Wesely
state senator

Guest Opinion

November's takeover attempt, Goodyear incurred \$2.6 billion in debt. This forced Goodyear — to cut costs and put the company back on its feet — to offer early retirement programs to some of its Lincoln employees and extend its five-year modernization plan at the Lincoln plant to six years.

Clearly, Goodyear and its employees paid a high price to fight off the hostile takeover. But what were the costs, if any, to Sir James Goldsmith? He made a handsome profit from the deal — nearly \$87.5 million in gross profits from the shares he sold back to Goodyear, and another \$22 million for the expenses he incurred during the bid.

The sobering lesson learned from the ordeal is simply that corporate raiders can strike whenever and wherever they choose, and no community is completely safe from the threat of hos-

Royko's self-analysis reveals a loathable, loony columnist

Note: Mike Royko is on vacation. While he is gone, we are reprinting some of his favorite columns. The following first appeared Oct. 10, 1975.

I've always been hooked on the self-analysis tests that frequently appear in the features pages of newspapers and magazines.

The questions have multiple-choice answers, and each answer has a different value in points. You add up the points and determine the kind of shape you are in.

For instance, the question in a test on drinking might go:

- Q. Do you usually drink:
(a) Only at parties? (1 point)
(b) Only a nip after work? (2 points)
(c) A pint before breakfast? (3 points)

Or, if it is about your mental state, a

question might go:

- Q. Do you spend a lot of time:
(a) Worrying about bills? (1 point)
(b) Thinking you are getting old too fast? (2 points)
(c) Sitting in a dark closet by your-

interest.

The idea is that a bad score should warn you to change some of your habits. I've taken them all. And, on the basis of the results, I have discovered I died sometime in 1968, that I'm confined to a padded cell, that everybody I know hates me, or should, and that I'm very happy.

But I haven't changed any of my habits. Why push my luck?

Not long ago, a new test appeared in a column by Ann Landers. It consisted of questions about boozing and drugs and sex, and getting drunk and arrested, and getting young girls in trouble and all sorts of fascinating stuff.

The trouble was it was designed for teen-agers, to determine whether they were goody-goodies (0 to 21 points), normal (22 to 35 points) or depraved and dissipated (36 points and up).

See ROYKO on 5

Mike Royko

