

Daily
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University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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Dangerous drinks

Contamination of groundwater must stop

For far too long, Nebraskans have had to drink water that could be contaminated. The pesticides and fertilizers used by farmers to help their crops grow gradually have seeped through the soil and into Nebraska's valuable water resource.

The University of Nebraska has responded to the problem by lobbying for research money. Next month, officials will go to Washington, D.C., to lobby the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development for more than \$2 million. Another \$1 million grant has already been supplied by the Burlington Northern Foundation.

The proposed program would include renovating a building on East Campus for an agricultural chemical leachate research laboratory and two satellite field labs at North Platte and Clay Center. According to the Sunday Lincoln Journal-Star, the two towns have different types of soil that would allow researchers to determine for sure how the chemicals leach.

Let's just hope that senators in Washington will be more open to the idea than some of the Nebraska state senators in Lincoln who were concerned about the lack of specific research proposals. This proposal is more than specific.

It is also greatly needed.

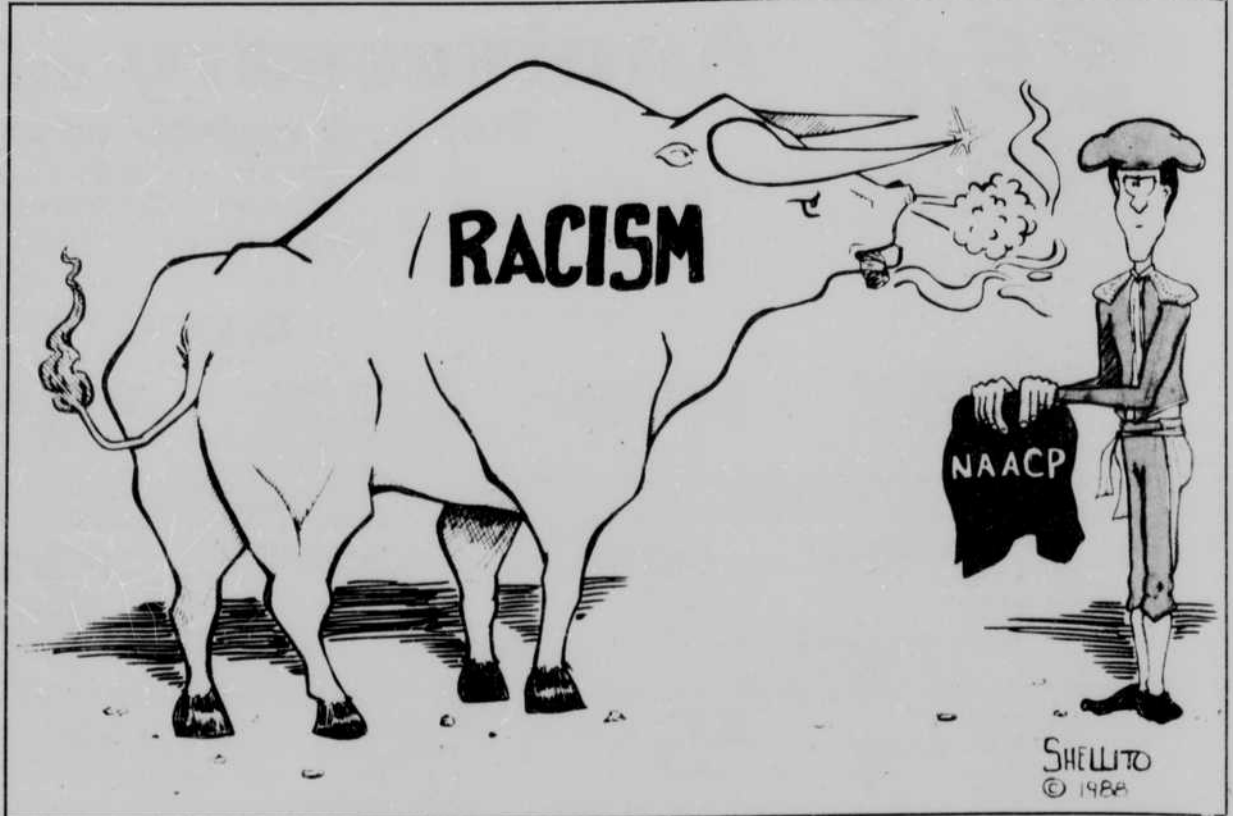
Research has shown a definite link between fertilizers and nitrates. Nebraska has one of the highest nitrate levels for drinking water in the nation. In some instances, it has been recorded as much as two to six times as high as the lowest unsafe level. Nitrates are most dangerous to infants six months and younger. On top of this, 82 percent of all Nebraskans drink groundwater.

Anything which will help maintain the quality of groundwater in Nebraska needs to be applauded. Nebraska is just one of several states over the Ogallala aquifer, one of the largest aquifers in the country. We cannot allow a groundwater system of such magnitude to be contaminated. The health of not only the state, but also the entire nation, depends upon it.

While the health of the population is most crucial, the health of the agriculture industry also should improve. The more we know about agriculture, the healthier the industry as a whole will be. What with all the economic difficulties being sustained by farmers, they need all the help they can get. It will be one less thing for them to worry about.

It is high time the trend toward blatant contamination is brought to a halt.

But the plan for research deserves more than just applause. It deserves money.



Jackson best bet for Democrats

Royko says Democratic convention will test racial equality in U.S.

It's possible that when the primaries are over and the Democratic National Convention begins, Jesse Jackson will have the most delegates. Not enough to automatically win the nomination, but more than any of the other bumbles.

If that happens, what do the Democrats do?

From what they're now saying, they'll look at the other candidates, decide which one is the least feeble, then try to convince the voters that they have found someone of heroic stature.

Then this person will run and almost certainly lose to George Bush, who will be propped up by Ronald Reagan, and all these tens of millions of dollars in paid TV political propaganda will have been wasted.

Since they're almost certain to lose anyway, why don't the Democrats show some imagination and do something different, make a little history, put some pizzazz into the whole thing.

What they should do is this: If Jesse Jackson has the most delegates going into the convention, they should nominate him and make him the Democratic candidate for president.

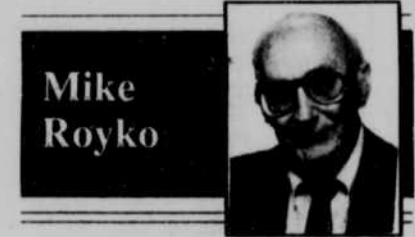
That would be the fairest thing to do. After all, the Democrats have gone to great pains to get away from the old-time backroom dealing, the delegate swapping, the brokering. When George McGovern came in with the most delegates, he was nominated. When Walter Mondale was the leader, they threw the convention to him.

So why not do the same if Jackson is the leader?

What's that you say? Jackson will be a cinch to lose? That's probably true, but so what? George McGovern was a cinch to lose, but that didn't stop the Democrats. Walter Mondale was

a cinch to lose, and they went right ahead and let him do it.

Not only did they lose, but they left no legacy that would benefit the Democratic Party in future campaigns. Just the opposite: McGovern put in motion the alleged reforms that took Democratic politics away from the professional and led it to the present marathon primary system and the pandering to every goofy special-interest group.



Mike
Royko

But by nominating Jackson, the Democratic Party would create a legacy by putting the national conscience to a true test. We would be having a referendum on racial discrimination, which is the most destructive and persistent of all our domestic problems.

Name any of our urban miseries—poverty, crime, unemployment, education, housing—and it boils down to race. Add up the costs, not only in dollars, but in fear and distrust, and the bottom line is race.

So why should the country waste time listening to some white neo-liberal, pseudo-liberal, old-time liberal or whatever the rest of these Democrats are, talking about all these social problems, when we can have the genuine article—someone who has lived the social problems. In fact, some might even say that he is a living, breathing social problem himself.

And what a perfect match-up it would be—Jackson vs. Bush. The Southern-born black man from the

humblest of backgrounds against the white Eastern aristocrat.

If Jackson got up and talked about what it was like to ride in the back of the bus, to be told he couldn't eat at a greasy-spoon lunch counter, to have the job doors slammed in his face, to sip from a separate drinking fountain, how would Bush respond—by describing the difficulty finding reliable domestic help these days?

Compare that confrontation with, say, a debate between Bush and Michael Dukakis. Even the ladies from the League of Women Voters might doze off.

It's said that despite our glorious Constitution, our state of commitment to equality, we are really a racist nation. Even our allies say it. The British scolded us all during the 1960s black demonstrations. After all, it's one thing to shoot a few troublesome Irishmen, but what we did in Selma was absolutely unsporting. The French chided us for our bigotry, between bouts of mistreating their Algerians.

So this will be our opportunity to demonstrate that maybe we aren't as bad as they, and many of us think we are. Or maybe we will find that we are as bad. Either way, we'd learn something. Remember, knowledge sets men free. We might have a few brawls while gaining the knowledge, but that would just make for livelier Ted Koppel shows.

Finally, by running Jackson, a black man, for president, we would bring this country closer to that magic moment that some cynics say will never come.

Surely, his candidacy would mean that at long last a black man would become a professional football coach.

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Royko is a Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist with the Chicago Tribune.

Letter

Criticism of criticism is response to Wolff

As an alumna of this once-great institution who is back from the East Coast after an absence of 30 years, I have watched for some time with dismay as the evidence accumulated that my beloved university has fallen on evil days. I have illusions that my opinions will lead many of your readers to change their perception of the matter about which I am concerned, but I feel that it is time for me, as a graduate of the University of Nebraska, to stand up and be counted.

The school that once boasted men of the stature of Oets Kolk Bousma, Thomas Raysor and Edgar Johnson, to mention only a few, has now become a station for the dissemination of sociological claptrap. What "team teaching," the study of trigonometry and the speaking of a foreign language have to do with the liberal arts is beyond my comprehension. While all this may reduce the workload on the academic specialist, I fail to see in it any benefits for the student in the pursuit of humane studies.

Furthermore, in the same issue of the Daily Nebraskan in which the above innovation was announced, a story ran on a lecture by a Massachusetts academician Professor Robert Wolff. Wolff claims to "nip Bloom in the bud." The report states that the Teaching Council asked Wolff to speak because of his review of the best-selling book written by Allan Bloom, professor of philosophy at the University of Chicago. It is clear from the report that some teachers at UNL have been running scared since this book appeared and brought Wolff from the Berkeley of the East for the sole purpose of discrediting this well-

researched social history.

I have read Bloom's book, and I would wager that Wolff has not. He may have skimmed over the pages, but this is a book which needs to be "chewed and digested." The few quotations from Wolff's speech are full of errors. Bloom does not hate or downgrade his students as his critic claims. This is pure calumny. On the contrary, the book is a scathing attack on those professors, with whom Wolff apparently identifies himself, who have been short-changing their students over the past two decades.

Wolff says, "Bloom doesn't really understand the ideas he is teaching." Which ideas? Plato's notion of The Ideal? Aristotle's Metaphysics? Nietzsche's concept of the Apollonian-Dionysian dichotomy? Has Wolff even heard of such ideas? If so, one would never guess it.

It is obvious to me that Wolff is deliberately misrepresenting Bloom's book in the most blatant fashion. I hope those students who consider that they are scholars in the great tradition will go out and buy a copy of it when it comes out in paperback in May. If they do, they will have no trouble seeing for themselves the manifest untruth of Wolff's assertions and the motives of those who brought him to this campus.

I do hope those faculty members who agree with Bloom's thesis—but have been holding their peace so as not to make waves—will encourage their students to examine the book rather than allow others to do their thinking for them.

Althea Ware Lawrence
alumna

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Letters will be selected for publication on the basis of clarity, originality, timeliness and space available. The Daily Nebraskan retains the right to edit all material submitted.

Readers also are welcome to submit material as guest opinions. Whether material should run as a letter or guest opinion, or not run, is left to the editor's discretion.

Letters and guest opinions sent to the newspaper become property of the Daily Nebraskan and cannot be returned.

are the regents, who established the UNL Publications Board to supervise the daily production of the paper.

According to policy set by the regents, responsibility for the editorial content of the newspaper lies solely in the hands of its student editors.

Anonymous submissions will not be considered for publication. Letter should include the author's name, year in school, major and group affiliation, if any. Requests to withhold names will not be granted.

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