

opinion
READER

Freshman supports Initiative 402

In regard to James Sennett's column (DN, Nov. 2). Well, how can a person with enough brain power to write for a newspaper write something as ridiculous as "the issues are too complex to discuss here, but Initiative 402 should be defeated?" This comment brings rise to such thoughts as "you must be too stupid to exist."

Let's say I had no idea what Initiative 402 was. Name recognition alone could lead to my negative vote. As a journalist of any integrity at all Sennett should discuss it or not mention it at all. Initiative 402 just gives the power back to the people. It does not automatically mean our withdrawal from the compact.

In 1980, Congress adopted a low-level nuclear waste compact policy. It divided the United States into 13 different compacts. Nebraska's compact includes Missouri, Arkansas, Louisiana and Oklahoma. One representative from each state in the compact belongs to the compact's board of directors. It is this board that selects the state to have the site. Our compact selected Nebraska. Our compact is the first one to have moved so far so quickly. The policy stated that a minimum of three sites were needed for the whole country.

If 402 fails and we get "dumped" on, the other 12 compacts can pay our compact to take up to one-third of the country's waste. Our compact will divide this payment five ways — Nebraska receiving one-fifth of the money; 100 percent of the waste. The side against 402 has over \$1 million to spend on its campaign, 95 percent of this money comes from outside Nebraska. The ads this money pays for are rather misleading. Many claim that the waste is purely medical.

In reality only 2 percent of the volume is medical and that would equal only 1 percent of the overall potency. The word low level is misleading. It includes every part of a nuclear power plant except the fuel rods. Low level doesn't mean it's much safer than high level waste.

The argument I've heard most commonly against 402 is the money we would lose is the cost of building and maintaining a dumpsite. Secondly there is more to expenses than money. What if our ground water gets contaminated? The government, which has employed a company to build the dumpsites, has a most unimpressive record as far as safety is concerned.

More importantly, if each state had to deal with its own waste instead of shipping it off to some "distant" state, that many non-Nebraskans confuse with Alaska, they would be more inclined to cut down on their production of this low-level garbage.

Life is complex, Sennett, but that doesn't mean we should hide our heads in the sand of trivialization.

Nell Eckersley
freshman
education/social sciences
member of EARLY WARNING!
and human rights activists

Washington needs Sen. Dave Karnes

As the elections draw near, I question the logic of the people in Nebraska. Polls indicate that Republican candidate George Bush is leading Democratic contender Michael Dukakis and former Gov. Bob Kerrey, the Democratic candidate, is leading Republican incumbent Dave Karnes.

In both of these races, the leaders are widening their leads. The people I want to target in my letter are those who are planning to vote for both Bush, a Republican, and Kerrey, a Democrat. I would ask you, if you were boarding a plane that had an apparent destination of New York City, would you or the pilot benefit from a navigator that had never flown to New York but rather he is familiar with and has brought his flight maps for the flight to Los Angeles. This would be the situation if Bush and Kerrey won.

I have worked in Washington D.C., on the floor of the House of

Representatives for nine months. Let me assure you that there are only two sides of the aisle: the Republican side, the Democrat side and there is no independent side of the aisle that consists of congressional representatives that they were likeable, charismatic and so on. Indeed, charisma, likability and other such traits do not by themselves guarantee effectiveness as a leader. Kerrey may have been the most charismatic person ever to occupy the Governor's Mansion. Yet few governors got as little done.

Take heed from senate minority leader, Bob Dole, when he said, "Does it make any sense to give George Bush a mandate in Nebraska and not send someone who will support his policies?"

Kerrey did not have a good track record while he was governor. The Legislature was in turmoil, the budget for higher education was repeatedly cut and efforts were made to cut entire departments, economic growth was at a standstill and Commonwealth depositors lost a substantial amount of money. Kerrey spent more time in California than he did in western Nebraska, and the list goes on.

Sen. Dave Karnes has accomplished more in his short term in office than Kerrey did in four years. Karnes has been the first senator to visit western Nebraska since I can remember and he seems to really care about the state. I question Kerrey's dedication to the state when a large portion of his campaign funds have been raised outside the state.

I encourage you to rethink your logic as the election draws near and I encourage you to vote.

Nathan Geisert
senior
ag honors
and 1st vice president
Association of Students of the
University of Nebraska

Sennett's selection disgusts student

James Sennett's endorsement of

George Bush both saddens and disgusts me. It seems that Sennett has gone along with the media addressing only the narrow agenda that Ronald Reagan and staff have set. He has foregone his responsibility to the people to bring the truth; the things that make a difference.

Sennett says that he thinks Bush is a safer choice than Michael Dukakis, since he and his administration will be nothing more than a weak facsimile of the Reagan administration. The same administration that brought us the Iran-Contra scandal. And what exactly was Bush's role in that crime? Nobody knows since all the records of Bush's involvement have been frozen in court until after the election. But hey, how much safer can you get?

Sennett says that Dukakis might get in office and start pushing buttons and pulling switches until this country goes down the tubes. The problem is, we're already there. Many people say that the third world war will be economic and that we've already lost, mostly because we don't have a president dynamic enough to get this country to deal with world problems.

In Europe, there's a thing called "Project 1992." It's a comprehensive plan that drops all trade barriers between European countries. It will unify all the countries of Europe into one massive economic Goliath.

Since 1940, when we were the world power, the balance has shifted far to the East. Japan already outdoes us in most technological production fields, and the twin tigers Korea and Taiwan can undersell anything we make, but they are being quickly eclipsed by the awesome production powers of industrialized China.

And how will America respond to this all-encompassing shifting of the world? ... with the 8-year-old stale agenda of a cold-war actor.

What about the population explosion? It hasn't stopped you know. And it's not just "their" problem, it's everybody's problem. By the year 2000, the population of India will be 2 billion. That's higher than the world population of 1910. Remember that India already has nuclear power and

will most probably possess nuclear weapons by 2000. How stable will a country crammed with 2 billion walking skeletons be?

What about South Africa? How long will Bush continue to bloody the hands of liberty with support of apartheid? What will be his pathetic excuse for the death of our brothers and sisters?

What about the START treaty? The Pentagon has said that the only reason they went along with the scrapping of missiles in the first place was so that they could update their weapons systems. Their "needs" include: 50 MX missiles, 136 Stealth bombers and more Trident submarines. Never mind that so many of these Reagan administration weapons don't work, in spite of the fact that we've sunk 33 percent of the federal budget into it, and created a high deficit in the process.

Europeans celebrated the START treaty because they thought it would make the NATO countries safer in case of war, only it won't. I want you to think about the nuclear power plants in Europe — all 120 of them. They are all prime military targets in a conventional war and extremely vulnerable. In the event of any large scale aggression, the least one could expect is 10 or 20 Chernobyls.

But, back to the United States. Will Bush continue, as Reagan has done, to ignore the growing homeless problem? Will he also squash the educational budget of the nation? He will most certainly outlaw abortion, the only question is how many years in the federal penitentiary those women will face. How much further will he entrench the classes, making the rich richer, the poor poorer, and the middle class smaller? How much longer will America continue to ignore its own people and the world, and how safe will anyone be if we keep unquestioningly marching onward to oblivion?

Joseph C. Bowman
sophomore
anthropologist

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