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EDITORIAL

Ethanol power

Regulations will help agricultural economy

While more controversial issues were in the national spotlight this week, President Clinton quietly made a decision that will benefit farmers in Nebraska and the Great Plains.

The Clinton Administration last week reinstated more than 100 regulations protecting the use of ethanol-blend gasoline in areas with high smog concentrations. Ethanol is put in gasoline to reduce carbon monoxide emissions, which contribute greatly to smog.

The regulations, issued in the final months of the Bush administration, have been held up by Clinton pending their final review. Lobbying from farm-state senators — in particular Iowa Sen. Tom Harkin — saved the program.

Some environmental groups objected to the use of ethanol in gasoline, claiming that ethanol's faster evaporation rate increases — rather than lessens — the smog problem. The new regulations will almost certainly face continued opposition from oil companies during the period of public comment.

The new lease on life for ethanol comes as welcome news for Nebraska and Iowa farmers. Ethanol, distilled from corn, creates revenue for farm states like Nebraska.

Ethanol production used 400 million of the 9.4 billion bushels produced by U.S. farmers in 1992. By 1995, the ethanol program could consume 800 million bushels of corn.

The end result would be the addition of revenue into a farm economy that sorely needs help for rural development.

Time for sacrifice

Budget needs to be trimmed to cut deficit

When President Clinton gave his inauguration speech, he was praised for asking Americans to work and sacrifice to make the United States a better country.

Now that sentiment is facing its first test. The Clinton administration has suggested that cost-of-living increases for Social Security recipients might have to be limited because of budget constraints.

The immediate reaction from some was predictable.

Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan, chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, said Clinton's proposal wouldn't make it past his committee. Moynihan called the proposal a death wish.

General reaction has been less extreme. The lack of a public uproar may indicate that for the first time since 1983, a cut in the cost-of-living increase for Social Security may actually pass this year.

Social Security is an important and valuable program, and it should not be cut unnecessarily. But in a time of great budget constraints, cutting a cost-of-living increase is not too much to ask.

The larger issue behind the Social Security proposal is how Americans will react to the real need for cuts in federal programs in order to trim the ballooning federal debt. Other programs must also be evaluated to see if they have room to be trimmed as well.

Will we be able to see beyond the narrow constraints of our individual needs to see the larger issue of the future of the country?

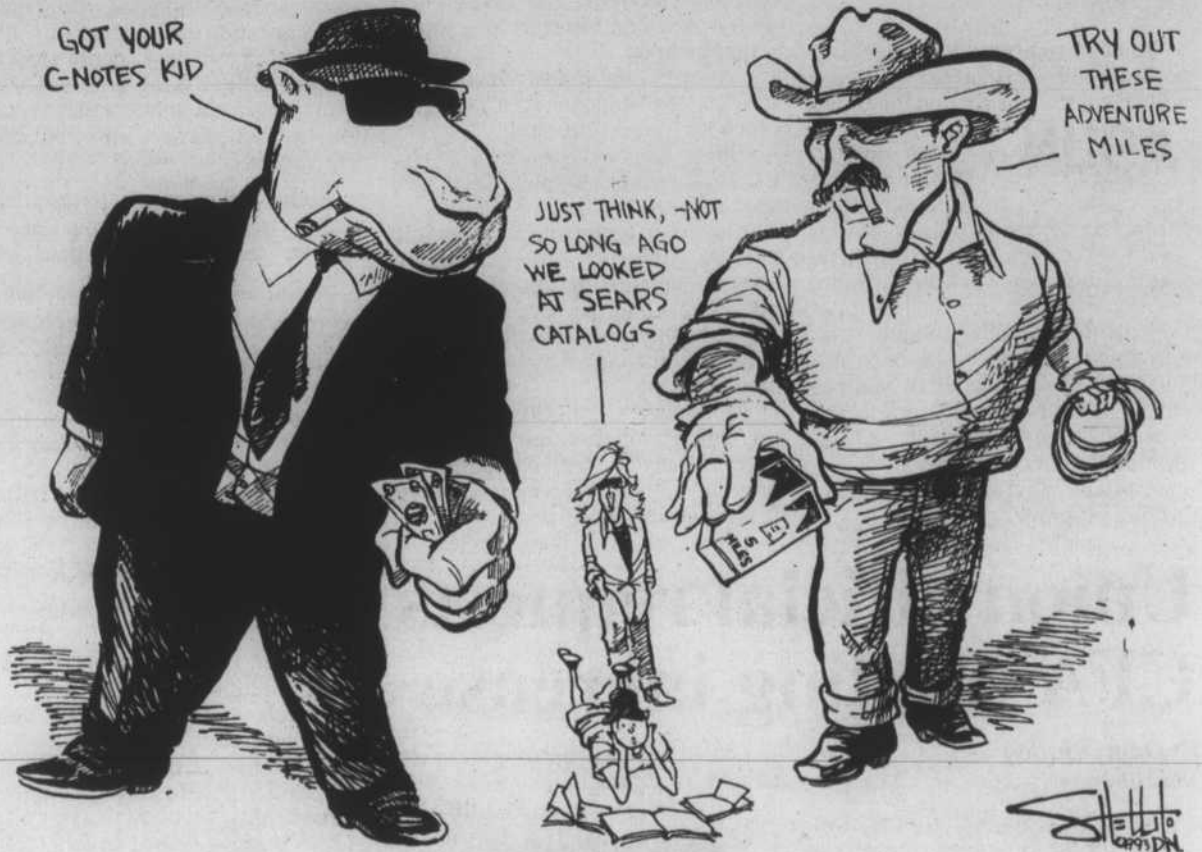
That is what we praised Bill Clinton for suggesting at his inauguration. Whether we are willing to back up our praise with our actions will be clear in the upcoming months when hard decisions have to be made.

EDITORIAL POLICY

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DEB McADAMS

Passion doesn't strike in battle

I've never been in a life-threatening situation where my survival depended on someone nearby.

Crouching in a rain-soaked hole in some distant republic with a hoard of armed zealots who think I'm the devil and are trying to kill me, for example. I can't fathom anything more stimulating.

I'm sure that I could think of nothing else except how to seduce the person next to me. I would be so preoccupied with having sex that I couldn't be bothered with trifling details like how to keep from getting incinerated, blown up, perforated or otherwise dismembered.

I wouldn't be wasting time frantically invoking the gods of all religions to let me live. I wouldn't be grappling with any moral reluctance about killing someone, or wondering if the person next to me could kill someone. I'd be thinking, "What a nice time for a nude frolic!"

Actually, I'd be wetting my pants and crying hysterically.

Evidently there are those in the armed forces who believe that gay people are likely to be sexually aroused in the hysteria of battle. My, what big nerves of steel they must have.

The military isn't all combat, of course, and the experience includes serious discipline, inhumane endurance and humiliation. People form close relationships when they survive the military together. Some of my father's closest friends were sailors with him 50 years ago.

The camaraderie of military life is being exploited to defend banning gay people from serving, and men have raised more objections than women. The most obvious reason is that women are still fighting for their privilege to serve, and they understand all too well the battle of exclusion.

Another factor in the relative si-



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lence of servicewomen on the banning of gay people from the military can be summed up nicely in a word: Tailhook.

Unwanted (i.e. disgusting, violent, revolting) sexual advances have been a part of women's lives since we smashed grain with stones. Men don't share our few thousand years of coping experience.

Public opinion forced the discipline of officers who allowed servicemen to assault servicewomen at the Navy's Tailhook convention. The offenders may have learned that the public objected to their behavior, but they probably don't fully understand the consequences of their actions. I'd suggest a forced march in loose boxer shorts through the bars of Castro Street with a carte blanche grope for the patrons.

Tailhook reminds us that there are, indeed, perversions of camaraderie in the military. The digression results

from individual decisions. The prohibition of a gender, a persuasion, or a race from the military service constitutes an evasion of responsibility.

Responsible behavior separates us — ever so slightly — from chimpanzees. A straight male can just as easily decide not to molest a woman as a gay male can decide not to molest a man. It's quite simple. We call it being civilized.

Secretary of Defense Les Aspin was asked on "Face the Nation" if the conflict of lifting the ban would overshadow more important issues. Secretary Aspin observed that the social problems of the military are the social problems of the nation, and they would not disappear. He said that his job is to find out how to lift the ban without endangering anyone.

While our incredibly expensive military grapples with the animal of prejudice, Hussein is rolling his missiles into the U.N. no-fly zone and Bosnian women are being subjected to an organized Serbian rape program.

The irony of allowing gay people to serve in the military is that they have always served. They simply served in silence. President Clinton's lifting of the ban reflects the very basis of civil rights, that "people shall be judged by the content of their character."

For thousands of individuals, lifting the ban will mean lifting a veil of secrecy. It will mean that they can function without the dead weight of fearing exposure and losing everything.

For some, the change will be difficult. Others will simply refuse to accept it.

A word of advice for those men who fear becoming a gay man's object of desire while pinned in a fox-hole: Don't be so provocative.

McAdams is a sophomore news-editorial major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Education

Sam Kepfield's most recent masterpiece (DN Jan. 28, 1993) claims that assimilation of minorities is the key to success in America, not multicultural education. Sam measures success in monetary terms, and claims that multiculturalism is based on dealing with feelings, which distracts children from becoming good citizens because they have less time for reading, math and most importantly, American indoctrination, I mean history and culture.

Sam, look at our inner cities once again and tell us that denying minorities an education in their history and culture turns out good citizens. Don't you think if we spent some time on

children's feelings about themselves there might be less violence and anger? Wouldn't minorities have an easier time integrating into our society if white children were taught to be tolerant and understanding of minorities?

Paul Koester
senior
agronomy

Help

Kathy Steinauer (DN, Jan. 29, 1993) seems to think the pro-life movement's time and money would be better spent "on the starving, homeless, dying people that surround us and really need our help." She suggests we begin with the money collected in the Catholic Church's "One

Rose, One Life" campaign.

If Steinauer is so concerned about people who "really need our help," perhaps she should donate time or money to Catholic-led charities like Covenant House, Boys Town and Catholic Social Services.

Does Steinauer think the soup kitchens, homeless shelters and AIDS hospices of this country are being run by the National Abortion Rights Action League, Planned Parenthood and the Fund for a Feminist Majority? She would probably be shocked to find many of them are operated by churches — Catholic and otherwise.

Joe Luby
senior
history, English and math