

OPINION

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EDITORIAL

Down, not out

Reform delay doesn't equal defeat

Senate Majority Leader George Mitchell, D-Maine, officially announced this week that health care reform would not happen in 1994.

The announcement brings to light the difficulties of timely reform in Washington.

Millions of Americans who were hoping desperately for immediate health-care reform will have to wait for access to needed medical care for at least another year and more likely, several more years, before any reforms will actually be enacted.

Many college students, as they turn 21 or face graduation, will experience for the first time the difficulty of securing affordable health care. Approximately a third of those who have no health insurance are between the ages of 18 and 29.

Also, many first or entry-level jobs will not include health-care benefits, giving graduates a firsthand look at the issue Americans have been debating heavily for more than two years.

There is no question that health-care reform legislation is needed.

Yet, reform that would directly affect the lives of every American is not something that should be entered into without intense — and time-consuming — deliberation.

Few can explain the complexities of the major plans being considered in Washington. Terms like HMO, entitlements, universal coverage, single-payer plan and health-care provider still confuse the average taxpayer and policy-maker alike.

The United States now spends a seventh of its national income on health care. Reform of something this costly, in short, had better be done right the first time.

And before putting into place another costly program, we need to continue looking into ways to cut unnecessary government spending.

The temporary exclusion of health care from President Clinton's list of accomplishments should not reflect badly on his first two years in office, either.

The boldest headlines in newspapers in recent months have been those announcing the president's plummeting approval rating and bungled foreign policies.

The press and the polls, however, have not been quite fair about highlighting Clinton's domestic record, which some say has surpassed that of former presidents Kennedy, Ford, Carter and Bush combined.

Just to name a few:

- The budget deficit reportedly will go down three years in a row for the first time since the 1950s.
- More than 70,000 federal jobs have been eliminated, with more than three times that many targeted for elimination.
- Americorps, with 20,000 volunteers expected, will be larger than Kennedy's Peace Corps, providing students with opportunities to do needed community service and earn assistance for higher education.

The exclusion of health care is not a major defeat, but another critical goal in step with two years of domestic progress.

It is a goal that will take all of our efforts and voices to accomplish in the coming year.

EDITORIAL POLICY

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LETTER POLICY

The Daily Nebraskan welcomes brief letters to the editor from all readers and interested others. Letters will be selected for publication on the basis of clarity, originality, timeliness and space available. The Daily Nebraskan retains the right to edit or reject all material submitted. Readers also are welcome to submit material as guest opinions. The editor decides whether material should run as a guest opinion. Letters and guest opinions sent to the newspaper become the property of the Daily Nebraskan and cannot be returned. Anonymous submissions will not be published. Letters should include the author's name, year in school, major and group affiliation, if any. Requests to withhold names will not be granted. Submit material to the Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St., Lincoln, Neb. 68588-0448.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Pro-life

I have a few words to say to Denise Saxton, Melanie Chin and all pro-abortion people (DN, Sept. 22, 1994). I am pro-life, and I am appalled at your thoughts about baby killing.

Melanie Chin said that the fetus had not been proved to be a life. I lost a baby a couple of years ago through miscarriage. I lost my baby when I was eight weeks pregnant. I went to the doctor a week after I missed my cycle and had an ultrasound; we could see a heart beat. What does that indicate to you? Life, perhaps?

I'll go even further back to conception. As soon as the egg is fertilized, cells start dividing and forming the baby. Lifeless things do not move or grow. The next question is, when do you believe the soul enters the body? Do you think God just throws one in the body as soon as the baby is born? Or maybe when the child is baptized? Some people aren't even baptized. Does that mean they have no soul? I don't think so.

I believe the soul is there at conception. I believe that my baby is in heaven and that I will see him someday. Our 8-week-old baby has a name, and my husband and I think of him and remember him on the anniversary of his death. What a wonderful reunion we will have someday.

What do you think the reunion would be like between a mother and the child she killed? Wouldn't it be interesting if aborted babies were God's jury? Where do you think you would end up? They might tell God that it is too inconvenient, or they don't have time for you and it's just too stressful.

People, WAKE UP!! Those have to be the lamest excuses I have ever heard. You sure found the time to have sex. This goes for both men and women. I agree with Saxton that men should take responsibility for their actions. If they don't want a baby, maybe they had better think twice about sowing their oats. For the sake of the unborn, use birth control — or better yet, abstain until you get married. There are so many diseases out there.

I have since had another baby. He was born last year. He is the most beautiful miracle that I have ever seen. It makes me cry thinking about the millions of beautiful babies that are butchered because they happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time.

I feel sorry for you people. Hopefully someday you will have a change of heart. Your babies don't need you anymore. You cut them out of your life. But you might need them someday. You better hope they have a forgiving heart.

Alissa Johnston
Lincoln



Bret Gottshall/DN

Kidding?

Hoo Boy, that Shane Tucker, what a wild man! Every time I read one of his columns I start to laugh until tears literally squirt from my eyes!

When I read that abortion column (DN, Sept. 20, 1994), I had to check into the emergency room at Lincoln General Hospital because I laughed so hard I pulled some vital muscles.

I know he's kidding. Nobody thinks that way, now do they? Do they?

Sean Green
sophomore
journalism

Democrats

We would like to correct and comment on just a few of the gross inaccuracies and hyperbole contained in Shekhar Gupta's letter (DN, Sept. 23, 1994). Gupta seems to have as much regard for the facts as his idol, Rush Limbaugh.

According to Mr. Gupta, the Republicans are responsible for passing the recent crime bill. Hello? According to the roll vote, only seven Senate Republicans broke ranks and joined the majority to

pass the bill. Led by the obstructionist Bob Dole, Republicans fought it tooth and nail — even those provisions that they were on record as favoring when proposed by the previous Republican presidential administration.

Your admonition that Democrats should not complain about gridlock because they have majorities in both houses is laughable and shows your lack of understanding of the legislative process. According to Senate rules, 60 senators are needed to end a filibuster (endless debate intended to kill a bill or force certain changes favorable to the stalling minority) and thus bring a bill up for a vote.

The Senate is currently 56-44 in favor of the Democrats, which means that the Republicans can suppress a vote by refusing to end debate on a bill, and the Democrats are powerless to act.

We especially take issue with your broad brush statement that Democrats do nothing for themselves and Republicans stand for "individualism." This type of dogma, uttered time and time again by the likes of Mr. Limbaugh and yourself, is both inaccurate and hypocritical.

So-called conservatives who take a laissez-faire approach in economic matters are the first to advocate the heavy hand of government in matters of personal freedoms — control over one's own body (right to choose), freedom of religion in public life (prayer in schools) and tolerance of others "different" from the rest of us (discrimination in sexual orientation), for example.

The world is not as black and white as you seem to see it, Mr. Gupta. Believe it or not, we Democrats have jobs, pay taxes and wish to see government do things that empower, not hinder, the "individual spirit." We do believe that government can be a useful tool for change for the better and can give people a voice who would not otherwise have one.

When a minority of the government suppresses that voice through a perversion of the democratic process, we think that a little "whining" — at a minimum — is in order.

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