

Editorial

Commonwealth failure should spur change

In light of the special report issued Friday on the collapse of Commonwealth Savings Co., the Legislature would be wise to give special attention to LB828.

The bill, introduced by Sen. Don Wesely of Lincoln, would increase the state attorney general's salary and prohibit him and his staff attorneys from private law practice while in office.

The Commonwealth report was prepared by John Miller, special assistant banking director, and David Domina, special assistant attorney general. Although it contained little new information, it came down hard on the current attorney general, Paul Douglas, and pointed to the need for revision of state law.

According to the report, Douglas and Lincoln attorney Paul Galter purchased 78 lots from Commonwealth Vice President Marvin Copple and sold them for a profit of \$118,288. Sixty of the lots were sold to Copple's personal secretary Judy Driscoll, who received loans from Commonwealth to make the purchase.

The report also reached the following conclusions:

•That the land transactions apparently were payment for consultation Douglas and Galter gave to Copple.

•That it appeared Douglas and Galter had a client-attorney relationship with Copple.

•That Douglas should have acted immediately when he was informed in the spring of 1983 that Copple might have committed theft from the failed industrial institution.

The *Sunday Journal and Star* reported that Douglas rejects the criticism in the report, and will issue his own report around Feb. 6.

Whether Douglas committed any wrong acts is not for us to decide. The courts will, if necessary, make that decision. But it is clear that current state law allows for the attorney general to become involved in questionable activities. The state must act to eliminate that possibility.

The attorney general is required by state statute to investigate matters affecting the Banking Department as well as other executive departments. But by allowing him to also be involved in private practice, the state is risking the development of a conflict of interest.

Under our present system, the possibility always exists that the attorney general could be doing business with the same people he is supposed to be investigating and prosecuting. In such a case, it is questionable what would be put first — the attorney general's private interests or those of the state's citizens.

No one has proven that Douglas committed any illegal or unethical acts, but his private dealings with Marvin Copple have caused many people to question his role in the whole situation. Unfortunately, this likely will make it difficult for him to be effective in his role as attorney general.

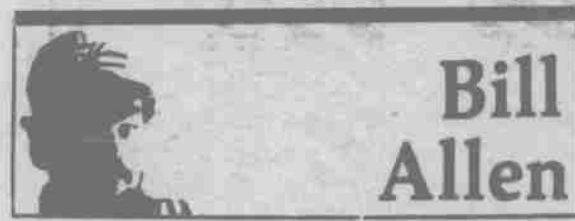
Regardless of the outcome of the Commonwealth case, the Legislature should act to prevent a similar situation from happening in the future. The state does not have a responsibility to bail out private institutions such as Commonwealth but it does have an obligation to see that a complete investigation of any suspected criminal activity is carried out.

It can best do that by assuring that those involved in any such investigations and prosecutions will not have conflicts of interest.

Allen chides unpatriotic fans, salutes favorite tops 'n' quips

As occasionally happens when you're a columnist, I've found I have a few bits and pieces I've wanted to write, yet none of them are really enough to fill a whole column. So, in order to clear out a few notebooks, I'll jot them down for you today.

It's a shame that nowadays sporting events seem to be the only places you can hear our national anthem, "The Star-Spangled Banner." I've always



Bill Allen

taken the song seriously, especially when I attend an event personally, rather than watching it on television.

At games, I notice many people are fidgety and seem anxious for the anthem to end so they can go back to talking. I'm not really political or anything, but it does bother me when people can't give three minutes of their time to respect their country.

Between the holiday bowl games and Christmas specials, our household almost always watched the local and national news. There is one thing I am now pretty sure of — I could care less what Nancy Reagan got Ronald for Christmas.

Ten times I must have seen the news clip telling the world that she got him a sweater. In the first place, aren't there grain or pork belly markets out there just waiting to be reported? Didn't the president sign something or meet with someone? Was there nothing more significant than the fact that he got a sweater?

In the second place, I'm wondering if this is supposed to be some kind of propaganda. The Reagans are obviously wealthy. Is Nancy trying to come down to the level of us common folks by getting Ronnie a mere sweater? Isn't this the same Nancy who spent tens of thousands of dollars for new White House china?

I also found some quotes I'd like to show you:

"Never give a compliment as if you expect a receipt." — anonymous.

It sometimes seems that's the only reason people give compliments. Today, give someone you don't know a compliment. It feels great, really.

"The paranoia of stupidity is always the worst, since its fear of destruction by intelligence is reasonable." — Arthur Miller.

You can apply that to so many things that I think I'll just let you think about it.

I found (I can't remember where) a

great slogan for dieters. "Join the fight against hazardous waists."

You should thank Matt Wallace, your ASUN president. I've always asked that people with human interest column ideas tell me about them.

Last month, Matt came over with a newspaper clipping from a Lincoln paper that asked for "guides for visiting business executives." Matt was afraid this might be some kind of front for a prostitution ring, and asked me to check into it.

I won't go into details, because there aren't many and I'm not sure of them. Anyway, I think the police were called, and I don't see the ads anymore. I'll probably never know for sure if there was anything to the whole deal.

The point is, it showed a real concern on Matt's part for the students on this campus. He didn't want anyone (I don't exclude males) to get involved in a potentially hazardous and illegal situation.

I personally don't think ASUN has become more substantial in the minds of students during his term in office, but incidents like this show me that you, the students, elected someone who does have your best interests in mind.

I finally did something I've always wanted to do.

I'm sure most of you have read those little statements on the sides of candy bars and potato chips that say, "If not completely satisfied return for full refund and postage."

Well, awhile back I bought a half-pound bag of Lay's potato chips, my favorite kind. There were an unusually large number of dark, over-fried chips in this bag. So, I took advantage of their refund offer and wrote them a letter asking for my money back.

In my letter I explained that I usually enjoy their product, but that this particular bag was unsatisfactory.

Three weeks later I received a check for \$1.59 and a letter thanking me.

Here's an excerpt from that letter from Gayla Thamason, manager of consumer affairs:

"We sincerely regret the concerns you have expressed, but appreciate your bringing this matter to our attention."

They promised to look into the situation and said they "strive to satisfy" all their customers.

That's for all of you who have wondered what would happen if you did take the time to ask for a refund.

If you wonder why I always wanted to do that, but never did... well, to be honest, everything has been OK until now.

I hope the rest of the week goes okay for you.



Letters

Facts lacking on alcoholism

I would like to address two excerpts from the recent article, "Alcohol intake moderation lends ammunition to battle of the bottle" (Daily Nebraskan, Jan. 18). In the article, the Daily Nebraskan reporter draws from her source, Ray Daugherty, two statements which are very broad and misleading.

The first statement was that college freshmen and fraternity members drink more than any other college students, and secondly, that "Drunkenness has become a part of the lifestyle in fraternities."

It seems to me that if Mr. Daugherty intends to make statements such as these and the Daily Nebraskan intends to publish them, they should provide some form of statistics to validate them. If such references are to be made about fraternities in general, we would like to see it in black and white figures. Statements such as these are misleading and do not lend themselves to the integrity of the Daily Nebraskan.

James Willett
President
Interfraternity Council

Allen critics uninformed

Regarding Jerry Muir's letter (Daily Nebraskan, Jan. 19) and his complimentary remarks toward Bill Allen: Pick up any newspaper in the country any day of the week and I'm sure you'll find a controversial editorial

column — or at least something more worthwhile to respond to. It seems that ever since Bill's excellent column on sorority racism appeared in print (Daily Nebraskan, Sept. 26), every Greek on campus has become a Bill Allen attacker.

Perhaps Bill's Jan. 16 column wasn't his best work. Perhaps it was. It appears Jerry Muir has attempted to answer that question himself. Who is to speak of someone's "little, if any, intelligence" unless they're insecure about their own?

If the self-appointed Bill Allen critics would figure out that these columns are written primarily to poke fun at everyday life, then they wouldn't keep themselves awake nights dreaming up rude, base and uncalled-for responses to Bill's columns.

Grow up, people — 99.9 percent of what Bill writes is 100 percent true.

Laura Brommer
senior
advertising

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.

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.

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