

Editorial

Daily
Nebraskan

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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Last debate dull Forum doesn't educate voters

Monday night heralded the third rerunning of the "I will not raise taxes show" between Nebraska gubernatorial candidates Helen Boosalis and Kay Orr.

Although the proposition that televised debates between politicians are good is almost axiomatic in popular American culture, given the significant repetition between the three debates, one must wonder whether there exists sufficient subject matter for one one-hour debate — let alone three of them.

One of the few distinctions that seems to have crystallized during the debate was the candidates' differences regarding higher education. Boosalis' top priority for the university is undergraduate education; Orr places more emphasis on facilitating research at the university — and the emphasis receives billing in her plans for economic redevelopment as well.

Undoubtedly one of the oddest moments of the campaign came when KETV statehouse reporter Karen Kilgarin asked the candidates, "If you could ask your opponent any question you wanted to, and she was forced to answer, what would you ask and why?"

Boosalis had the unfortunate opportunity of having to be the first to answer the strange question. She asked: "How can you think that your experience, limited as it is to a small department, would qualify you to be governor of the state of Nebraska, where multi-million dollar budgets are prepared and implemented, where thousands of people would be in your administration?"

After Boosalis finished she and Orr stared at each other for a

moment, then Orr asked if she was allowed to answer the question. The moderator asked Orr for her question to Boosalis, but later allowed each candidate to use their rebuttal time to answer the other's question.

Orr responded by pointing out that she was elected to a statewide office and also had experience as chief of staff during the Thone years.

Orr's question to Boosalis dealt with her record as mayor. Orr wanted Boosalis "to explain how she gets the figure that she created 3,100 jobs in the city of Lincoln during her tenure as mayor, when the statistics compiled by the Department of Labor show that we lost 1,509 manufacturing jobs — that's 11.5 decrease in the number of jobs in manufacturing — when she was mayor. Omaha had a 3.2 percent increase during those same years, and state-wide there was about a three-fourths of a percent decline. Clearly these are statistics from the Department of Labor that show, in Lincoln, during an economic development plan by Mayor Boosalis, we lost 1,509 jobs."

Boosalis responded that she used facts not only from the Department of Labor, but from other sources as well, and that these showed that 3,100 manufacturing jobs were created during her eight years as mayor.

Undoubtedly the exchange was one of the most curious of the campaign. Given the questions and the responses, it might behoove the state next election time simply to let the candidates have an hour with each other for cross-examination. It would have to be more exciting than this year's debates.

Protectionism risky Caution urged in sticker campaign

There are a lot of red, white and blue stickers splattered over local grocery stores these days urging you to "Buy Nebraska First." They're being touted as the greatest things to happen to the Nebraska food industry since Arnie Barnes of "Late Night" fame gave Omaha Steaks national exposure. But are they?

The campaign represents the Nebraska Food Industry Association's effort to let you know that products like Dorothy Lynch salad dressing, Weaver's potato chips and Rainbo bread are Nebraska home-grown.

It certainly doesn't hurt to let Nebraskans know what products their businesses are putting out. But there's one problem: the very phrase "Buy Nebraska First" smells of protectionism against other states. While we're screaming about foreign countries keeping American products off their markets, it's impolitic to suggest simultaneously that Nebraskans do the same thing to fellow citizens in other states.

It's also not good business.

Since only 1.5 million or so people live in Nebraska, this state's food industries can't rely totally on the Nebraska market. An effort construed as discouraging products from outside Nebraska invites other states to do the same to our products.

Chapman says the food industry's purpose in this campaign is mostly educational. But he acknowledged that some Nebraska food products obscure to Nebraskans "are sold more readily elsewhere." In that case, this campaign runs the risk of shooting some food industries in the foot.

Another reason Chapman cites for "buying Nebraska first" is that prices of our products are largely competitive with those from other states. If so, a simple "Buy Nebraska" identification program may be good for consumers. But if an overzealous campaign convinces outstate businesses that profits are better elsewhere, they'll pull out and leave Nebraska consumers at the mercy of in-state businesses, some of whom may charge a higher price.



Let us not be 'dogmatic' Intolerance called a disease common to Left and to Right

"Studies in political science have shown that conservatives tend to be less tolerant of liberals than liberals are of conservatives."

This was perhaps the most tolerably intelligent line in what is by now a infamous guest opinion submitted to the Daily Nebraskan by ASUN Sen. Tim Howard and printed Oct. 2. I wish to address the allegations inherent in and implied by the above appeal to objective data.

First, I am not sure what studies Howard is referring to. I am not a political science major; he is. I am going to assume that he could produce the evidence he alludes to if asked. However, my comments make their point regardless of whether or not such studies exist, and — assuming they exist — whether or not his is an accurate interpretation of them.

Second, let me say that I do not feel personally offended by Howard's scathing accusations (except for the fact that I, along with my friend Jim Rogers, was one of the unfortunates singled out for Howard's fatal — though apparently quite tolerant — ritual of "trashing"). I have long resisted any confining labels, and have therefore, a fortiori, resisted the label "conservative." If anyone wishes to hang such a label on me, I will gladly produce many things I have written that one would be hard-pressed to defend from a conservative framework.

Well, with these disclaimers out of the way, I can begin.

Thesis: Political intolerance is not inextricably nor even inherently a product of any particular political standpoint. Rather, it is the product of a given attitude toward whatever political position is held — namely, the attitude of dogmatism.

To substantiate this thesis, I will appeal to evidence that demonstrates both liberal and conservative standpoints to be quite susceptible to intolerance; then I will describe what I mean by dogmatism and maintain that it is this attitude — present in all cases offered — that is the source of intolerance.

Were one to put forth the claim (as has been done) that a liberal political standpoint carries a greater prospect

for toleration within a system, she would be faced immediately with several viciously famous counterexamples. I see very little tolerable in the entire history of Marxist-Leninist states — virtual paradigm of left-wing political enterprises. But leaving Cuban boat people, Afghan invasions, Vietnamese aggression and the crushing of Polish labor unions aside, one still must wonder about liberal political reactions in the West to recent right-wing activities.

We are barely a diamond's throw removed from the override of President Reagan's veto of sanctions against the government of South Africa. Without condoning the apartheid mentality (for I myself believe the regime to be demonically wrong), I submit that the impassioned condemnation on the part of those who spearheaded the embargo hardly smacks of anything that could be called political tolerance.

James Sennett



In our own great state of Nebraska, one could ask the Rev. Everett Sileven about the tolerance of liberal-minded people. Again, without condoning his own asinine behavior, one could make the case that he was driven to flight and flaming rhetoric by those who sought to padlock first and ask questions later. Like most crusades, his has enacted long-needed changes in government policy, but only after countless tolerant liberals got many a chuckle from their tasteless "Sileven jokes."

I could go on ad nauseum, but I will conclude with two short remarks. I find little in the spirit of political lenience in the arrogant portrayals of President Reagan as a maniacal dictator with designs on divinity. Also, the column in question contained such vocabulary as the aforementioned "trashing" and the quite celebrated "right-wing neo-Greek" (if Bill Allen were dead, I'd hear him turning in his grave), not to mention the really classy threat to take ASUN's

financial ball and go home if the DN does not play by its rules.

But, as mentioned above, the waters ford no easier for conservatives. We have already mentioned Botha's reign of caucasoid supremacy. For all his smiles and off-handed humor, our dear president gets no accolades from me for his degree of willingness to allow others gracefully to disagree with him. And certainly talk of Marxist states can always be countermanded by reference to the countless unfortunates who wasted in Ayatollah-land or by appeal to that greatest of all bugaboos, the definitionally conservative Third Reich.

Space will not permit me to rail the bloodsuckers as I did the bleeding hearts. Besides, I have found that it is liberals who most often delude themselves with this tolerance myth. Conservatives are often at least honest enough to say, "It's tough, but that's the way it is." At any rate, I believe my point is made.

What do Hitler, Stalin, Botha, anti-Bothaites, Reagan and whoever is at the helm of the Democratic Party these days all have in common? It is this: They are convinced beyond further discussion that they are right. When one reaches the point where he considers all further questions to be out of order, then he necessarily turns intolerant.

It is this spirit that views its own position — however well-substantiated — as only one more voice in an eternal conversation in which we are all subservient to truth, and not to any prematurely propositionalized counterfeit of it. All systemizations of reality are finite; as such, they are always open to critique. It is this attitude toward a particular bias that produces tolerance — not any particular bias on its own.

The final note. The only way to defend the thesis with which this column began is to define "liberal" etymologically, in which case the point becomes tautologous. It also, however, creates an invalid argument. For, so defined, the opposite of "liberal" is not "conservative," as the argument supposes, but — you guessed it — "dogmatic."

James Sennett is a graduate student in philosophy and campus minister with College-Career Christian Fellowship.

Soviet knight captures queen, mate?

The last time an American and Russian met at a summit in Reykjavik, the American was Bobby Fischer, the Russian was Boris Spassky and the game was chess. The American won, then quit the game forever. Next week, same place, different game, Ronald Reagan meets Mikhail Gorbachev. This time around, either outcome would be a blessing. Neither is likely.

Charles Krauthammer



All summits are a risk, the Reykjavik summit more than most. A snap summit

carries added drama and thus higher expectations. And we have already had one fireside summit. No one will be satisfied if the only result this time is a smiling "spirit of Reykjavik." Gorbachev wants results, meaning agreements, and the fear here is that he is prepared to call the summit a failure if he does not get them.

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