

Constitution referendum vital to rights

Approval of the proposed ASUN Constitution is a necessary first step in the securing of those rights which ought now to belong to University students.

Although even landslide approbation of the lengthy document will not guarantee such rights, a sizable positive vote could have considerable assuasion in present and future negotiations with administration and faculty.

Specifically, the Constitution, if ratified, will point to a renewed conscious effort on the part of the student body to obtain rights and responsibilities.

The Constitution will be reviewed by the Board of Regents, and that they will have severe reservations about some aspects of the provisions is certain.

Particularly questionable to the Regents (and to many faculty and some students) will be policies which were originally stated in Government Bill 24 last semester.

Though these constitutional provisions can for an "equitable" voice in many matters (rather than the complete control as demanded originally in the bill), there will be some apprehension on the part of administrators in accepting these changes.

In fact, there are some clauses in the proposed Constitution which are dangerous to the students, as well as to the power

bases of the faculty and administration. Among these are sections which would give ASUN the purse-string control over many organizations and which would tend to strangle freedom of expression on campus.

The Constitution, also, is contradictory in itself at times, and disagrees rather sharply with the Student in the Academic Community's Council on Student Life.

But all of these problems, caused by good intentions and poor wording, can be corrected immediately by amendments to the newly-ratified document. These amendments, if passed first by two-thirds of the Senate, can appear in the general election April 30, and the Constitution can become a workable framework of government.

There are several shortcomings in the proposed Constitution. But it is an improvement over the present one.

For that reason, and with the idea of urgently-needed amendments in mind, the students of the University should approve the Constitution.

By indicating desire for responsibilities and rights, the students can in this way take the important first step to securing them.

Ed Icenogle



Peering at movies by Rodney Powell

Some movies are works of art; others are sociological documents, more important for what they say about the audience than for any intrinsic merits.

"Faces," I think, belongs in the latter category. The reaction by those who like the film is remarkably similar — powerful, intense, searing," honest, and so on and so on. "Faces" is indeed powerful, but in peculiar way which I am not sure I can adequately define.

IT IS the same sort of power some television shows used to exert, but on a higher level.

I remember I used to watch "The Defenders" and be quite moved by black and white portrayals of American society.

"Faces" seems to me to do the same sort of thing — there are really no heroes and villains in the film, but there is good and bad behavior — honest, "open" behavior, when one's shell has been broken away, is good; all other behavior is bad, life — destructive and probably leads to iron deficiency anemia.

Cassavetes has been hailed for his daring, his integrity, his uncompromising frankness. I would be more impressed if he were not doing something that is very easy — he is simply attacking the emptiness of the lives of the upper middle class trapped in a business-oriented culture. He does this with all the subtlety and finesse of the old Richard Sirov.

WHICH IS not to say that the film fails. The acting is uniformly good; the technique emphasizing close-ups and interludes with a shaky hand-held camera fits well with Cassavetes' apparent conception of the film as a "real" revelation of human behavior.

Those who need to be reassured that middle class life is not fulfilling (these people are not self-actualized!) may be overwhelmed; it is a film that should be seen, I suppose, for it is successful on its own terms, however limited they may be. But we must demand more from a film if it is to be labeled "great."

"Joanna" is a film which has been willfully misinterpreted. It is, I think, a satire directed against the mod generation in London (or anywhere), or at least the fashionable notions about it picked up from films and the mass media.

"TIME" labelled it "the most dazzling directorial debut of the year." It's hardly that, but Michael Sarne has obviously seen a lot of movies (and commercials), so his photography has a lot of the dumb appeal of a well-photographed ad on the tube.

The visual eclecticism is, however, appropriate, for Joanna is a pretty eclectic girl — she's eclectic in one bed after another. And Sarne freezes on an art instructor's lecture about the baroque as a reaction against classicism, as well as some twaddle that the fact that there must be rules, even if only to be broken.

Amazing insight, right folks? The film is full of other gems — each day should be a work of art, everyone should be committed to something, it's better to be good than bad — things Eddie Guest would be proud of (remember, it takes a heap of living to make a house a home).

FORTUNATELY, Sarne apparently does not mean a word of it; any lingering doubts about his intentions are dispelled in the finale sequence, when the cast breaks into an excruciatingly awful song about Joanna (she's got a smile like Cinemascope — no fooling) after she has left on the train to return home.

This is intercut with shots of poor Joanna — which seems to me to suggest that the director is not too sympathetic to her plight. But most of the audience must, like Joanna, think this is for real, they set worshipfully through the philosophical sermonettes, and probably find it all very meaningful and relevant. What was that about seeing what we want to see?

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Review of Regents view of visitation

Graduate view

by Lawrence Wolfley

My main concern at Hyde Park last Thursday was to protect the bargaining position of the Benton-Fairfield graduate students with the Regents by distinguishing them from a small group of other students who seemed bent on making the issue their own. This has been accomplished.

But there still exists a wide-spread lack of understanding about the Regents' denial of our request, and the brief comments quoted in Monday's paper implied as much as they stated.

In the meantime, my own attitudes have developed. What follows is an attempt to provide background for further discussion, and to define a provisional position on some of the larger, related issues. It goes without saying that while I speak from first-hand knowledge, I speak not as an official representative of Benton-Fairfield, but for myself.

First, the B-F students did not ask for wide-open visitation, but for the right to periodically decide for themselves the arrangement and hours suitable for visitation.

From a purely administrative point of view, the Regents are probably not the best body to decide on questions of visitation. Nothing can be done in a campus community which does not affect others in some way, and matters such as visitation should of course be decided in consultation with some higher administrative body.

In this instance there was indeed general administrative approval of the graduates' request, and recommendations in concurrence were handed on to the Regents. Nevertheless the request was denied. The Regents, obviously, are elected officials who consider themselves answerable not to the students but to the taxpaying Nebraska voters.

I would venture to say that the average Nebraska voter's understanding of on-going needs of the students here, especially the B-F students, and the Regents' feeling for what the average Nebraska voter expects from the university, are both uncertain.

I grant that the students themselves may not always know what is best for themselves, but only they, I believe, in cooperation with those older adults who are really in contact with them and sympathetic to them as human beings, can make intelligent experiments and determine workable procedures. If the self-determining capacity of the students is ever to be realized, they must first be experienced with genuine responsibility.

The students in Benton-Fairfield are now in a position to decide for themselves on visitation. These are foreign students and generally older graduate students whose maturity has been demonstrated throughout the past school year.

I am a full-time member of the senior staff in the English department. I do not feel out of place in Benton, nor do I feel exceptional. I consider the conduct of Benton's residents exemplary. I signed into the graduate dormitory hoping to find at Lincoln, in my initial living arrangements as well as in my academic department, the kind of unity and ease of association which was definitely lacking in my rather up-tight graduate community. I have not been disappointed.

It is sad that the Regents do not realize what a meaningful experiment Benton-Fairfield has been, and what an opportunity they offer for the university. Bing Chen is to be commended for the care with which he has planned and administered the operation. The result is unique on this campus.

Foreign students from all over the world interact and learn with some of the best graduate students we have, in a learning environment in which all have taken a personal interest. I have never seen anything so closely approaching a functioning "community of scholars."

The Regents do not seem aware of the opportunity presented by Benton-Fairfield. They are not familiar with the people living there, and they do not know how those people differ from the undergraduates living in the rest of Seleck. To the voters, certainly, students are all just students, and older students differ only in being typically more difficult to manage.

Is it too much to ask that the Regents decide on the basis of the evidence, and not on the basis of a policy made years ago that no group of students at Nebraska is ever to be allowed any form of co-ed visitation? If the Regents insist on being the ultimate authority in this matter, is it too much to ask that they inform themselves about who lives in Benton-Fairfield, and perhaps even take time to find out what those buildings look like from the inside?

As a group the residents of Benton-Fairfield want visitation because such coming and going is part of their normal activity as adults. But this is not to say that complete agreement exists. Especially among the older married men — there is hesitation to make an issue of something obviously indifferent to them personally. Some of the girls would consider men — in the halls, even at restricted hours, simply an inconvenience. It would be necessary to dress even to go to the common rest room.

But adjustments might be made, say by leaving the top floor of each building for those desiring absolute privacy; or just by personally accepting the idea on a democratic basis. In any case, the real issue is the B-F students' right to decide on hours and areas, or even on having visitation at all, for themselves.

As everyone knows, opinion among the undergraduates is split. No one can pretend to speak for them, and much less to exert them to action, until more data is in, and until they themselves have become more familiar with the complexities involved.

Ideally, though this is not an ideal world, the Regents should:

1) review their decision and grant autonomy to B-F as soon as possible.

2) discard, as this implies, their policy that under no conditions will students ever be allowed co-ed visitation.

3) undertake to generate a basis of student confidence in them, to demonstrate their well-meaning by stating the rationale by which they intend to make future decisions. In this light, the action at B-F could be seen as an experiment.

Most of all students object to being treated like children and ignored. This is very true of graduate students. When the Nebraska student is treated like a responsible adult, he will respond like one. On this campus frustration among the minority may never erupt into open disruption, but the educational tone of the entire institution will be lowered.

This, to me, is the ultimate issue — the quality of life on this campus and its effect on the quality of the educational experience.

It may well be that the really substantive issues on this campus ought to be the quality of instruction

and the condition of the library; but until the most part of the students awake to their closest obligations, matters more refined will remain ignored.

Undergraduate view

by Fred Starrett

The problems we face today, are, after all, the same problems our parents faced in college, only now, some of those parents have become part of the problem. So today we faced the frustrated problem solvers of yesterday. They, the parent-administrators, are so unsuccessful at controlling their own kids that they rush to a university to control someone else's. This is commonly known as *in loco parentis*.

With this "key factor" in mind we can approach this week's problem. I feel that any issue capable of wakening the attention of Hyde Park so completely away from world problems and back to the "home front" is good enough for me.

THE DECISION by the Regents to deny the graduate and foreign students visiting hours has "touched off" one of the largest campus reactions in my memory.

There were three reactions expressly evident at Hyde Park Thursday. Well, two expressly and one negatively stated.

The expressed reactions were (1) The old let's get frustrated and bomb the North trick, or I don't care what the facts are, we haven't had a demonstration at Nebraska and it's time we did; (2) we have reopened carrier pigeon communications with the Regents and they have agreed to negotiate, in May.

The other group was not noticeable except for their ghost, who has haunted every student action assembly at Nebraska since the year one. It is the inbred Nebraska trait of apathy, exemplified by their belief that since they graduate in four years it is not their problem.

THERE IS a fourth group that hasn't been mentioned and in this group I have placed myself. I wanted to be an activist and speak at Hyde Park, but I was aware that the Daily Nebraskan's entire Friday edition was to be devoted to the American Indian, so there was no chance of getting my picture or even my name in the "rag." It was then that I decided to join the "pen is mightier than the sleep-in" group.

You may remember us by our more popular slogan — "our group had 100 percent fewer casualties than yours (except, of course, in Chicago).

The need for a student demonstration is not present in the visiting hour issue. It is present, however, in the denial of a meeting with the Regents until May. If a mutually convenient time, early in April can not be agreed upon, then, I feel a strike may be in order.

Now, it is important for the students concerned and working with this issue to communicate and form an action group. It is also equally important for the Daily Nebraskan to keep the interest alive and the student body informed on the progress of the peace talks.

It may be time for the students to get off their ass, but it is not time to be one.

The decision between more talking or more fighting

by Flora Lewis

Saigon —To put it over-simply, the situation here now is that the generals' meat is the diplomats' poison, and vice versa. The basic questions that President Nixon must soon decide emerge clearly enough from the miasmic gunsmoke over South Vietnam.

The military situation has improved substantially in favor of the allies. That has brought both leading American brass and top South Vietnamese officials to revive hopes of winning the war. By winning the war, they mean forcing withdrawal of North Vietnamese troops and reducing the Viet Cong's offensive capacity to isolated acts of terrorism, without giving the Communists any political foothold in the South.

THEREFORE, these people oppose any speed up of the Paris talks, any concessions that would limit their ability to press the military momentum they have gained. They don't raise military objections to the withdrawal of some American troops. Withdrawal of up to 50,000 men would not substantially affect their operations. They would just have to work on a leaner basis. American and Vietnamese leaders agree to this assessment.

Their main objective now is to win from President Nixon which means essentially from American public opinion, the two to three years of continued full-scale American involvement which they consider necessary to pursue that kind of victory. They understand that to stretch the fuse on the time-bomb of American impatience, some visible gesture of American disengagement is required. A limited troop withdrawal would provide that gesture.

But they fear that Hanoi might misread this script and take it as a real sign of American willingness to quit the war. That, it is felt by all involved here, is Hanoi's one remaining hope that the Communists can still win if they hold out long enough. So Saigon opposes withdrawal.

IN THAT sense, it is true that neither side has definitely abandoned the expectation of victory.

The only real chance for a compromise settlement, which has to be the aim of negotiation, is when both sides accept that a continued military offensive will not fulfill their war aims in any foreseeable future. At the same time, both sides must feel that a compromise would bring them a partial advantage.

Thus, American diplomats do not expect the Communists to quit fighting without the assurance of at least limited political gains, and probably belief in the chance of larger gains later. Nor will the Saigon government grant political concessions without feeling it has the upper hand in the long range political struggle.

Saigon's current mood is one of relative optimism about military prospects and deep pessimism about the government's ability to hold the country together politically. So the demand from here to Washington is for more time, more chance to seek military gains on which future political control can be based.

YET, IT IS clear to all that there is a very real if unfixed deadline on the amount of time which the American public will grant President Nixon. Other American foreign interests, such as relations with Russia and with allies and vital friends such as Japan, are also at stake.

Therefore, from the diplomats' viewpoint, a compromise now is likely to be more favorable than a protracted military campaign with its undeniable risk of provoking a total and abrupt American revolution against the war effort. The more optimistic the generals become the more pessimistic are the diplomats for the good reason

that battlefield success may diminish Nixon's urge to negotiate.

Therefore, from the diplomats' viewpoint, a compromise now is likely to be more favorable than a protracted military campaign with its undeniable risk of provoking a total and abrupt American revolution against the war effort. The more optimistic the generals become the more pessimistic are the diplomats for the good reason that battlefield success may diminish Nixon's urge to negotiate.

Right now, in the absence of presidential decision, American policy is to talk and fight. But it isn't really working. The big question Nixon must answer is whether he wants to play for fighting time with some gestures or hurry the war's end by seeking compromise.

Hanoi is unlikely to decide whether to stress talking or fighting until its leaders feel they know American's intentions. If Nixon wants to negotiate, the only way to make it clear is to stop the allied offensive in the South and tell his commanders to concentrate on holding what they have. The choice still has to be made between talking, which means concessions, or fighting, which means many more years of war.