

# At the graduate level

editorial  
comment  
by  
Bill  
Wallis

In an attempt to resolve my own ambivalence about the recent disturbing state of relations between practically all existing constituents of the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, I have come to a number of conclusions about the situation as it now stands and would like to offer them to readers of the *Daily Nebraskan*. Many of them will seem (painfully) obvious to the well-informed and concerned individual; many are perhaps not so obvious to the average student.

**FIRST, THERE IS** an enormous gap in sensitivity (and therefore, the product of sensitivity, concern) between the basically agrarian social structure of Nebraska and the University it supports. One upshot of this gap is the election of a governor who is following in the footsteps of so lowly-touted a public official as Ronald Reagan where appropriation of funds for educational institutions is concerned. This is, and should be, the concern of all constituents of the University.

**SECONDLY,** this insensitivity was given much food to grow by the "disruptive" activities which occurred on this campus last May; and, in fact, one upshot of this work was a general disregard on the part of several individuals for the essential dignity and power of authority allotted to administrative, professorial, and student positions. These incidents have been publicized often enough for all to know what they were (and are): Students occupied the Military and Naval Science Building for a short period of time. The administration found this occupation of University

property disruptive to normal University operations and ordered the building evacuated. Both the majority of students present in the building and the faculty members with them, refused to evacuate the building—the most vocal among

these faculty members was assistant professor Stephen L. Rozman of the department of political science. The building was, at length, evacuated peacefully.

**THIRDLY,** the consequences of the affronts given and received on May 5 and shortly thereafter are now threatening the advance of higher education in Nebraska, and (once again) the "normal" functions of this University: Governor Exon's budget proposal, which will be in all probability be passed by the state legislature, seriously cuts the appropriation of funds to the University, thus seriously endangering its present standing, and causing pessimism about the possibility of its advancement. Stephen Rozman has not been re-hired, and is pressing legal action against the Board of Regents.

The decision of a faculty committee which found Rozman's action not inappropriate on the night of May 4, was not given proper consideration by the Board of Regents in reaching their decision to not re-hire Rozman. Student demonstrations and the consequential arrests, fines, and suspensions of individuals have served to create an even greater gap of insensitivity between the citizens of Nebraska and their appointed representatives, the Regents, the state legislature, and the governor and his staff—this has occurred, in addition to the serious endangering of the futures of the individuals arrested.

**FOURTHLY,** the present situation presents many deep and disturbing problems to the constituents of the University. The University as a whole faces the enormous and distressing problem of taking a step backward in a time when, if anything, institutions of higher learning must take great leaps forward. Administrators must walk a tight rope while dancing

the most difficult of dances, the grovel-strut ballet, which consists of prostrating oneself to the givers of gifts (the state legislature, the governor), and yet facing with dignity and honesty of intent and purpose the professorial staff and student body.

It seems to me, incidentally, that the administrators of this University are to be congratulated on their wisdom, patience, and general good-humor with which they have dealt with the University situation in the past several weeks (of these officials, I refer principally to Chancellor D. B. Varner.)

A number of wise and dedicated educators and scholars have openly criticized the entire manner in which the Rozman case has been handled by both the University administration and the Board of Regents. These individuals are among the finest teachers and scholars in this University—and their futures must not be endangered by rash acts on anyone's part. A generally disgruntled and ambivalent Faculty Senate is dealing poorly with the little power they have in the University structure. A small student minority are showing a dedicated concern for Rozman's case but have little or no outlet for the energy of that concern. The relations between all constituents of the University community seems generally very poor, and especially the relationship between members of faculty and administrative bodies.

**FIFTHLY, I WANT** to make several observations:

(1) *The Rozman case and issue will be with us for some time in the future, and the best we all can do is hold to our beliefs in the matter with conviction while presenting those beliefs with civility and in a manner becoming to the position and complementary to the responsibility attached to that position, and while*

*following events closely so as to be informed of the events which will be upon us in the following month.*

(2) *Demonstrations which disrupt normal University activity will not be tolerated by any concerned member of the University community. They should be avoided, for the sake of the demonstrators and the demonstrated for and the demonstrated against—in other words, the entire University community. Other channels of expression of discontent must be found, such as demonstrations which do not disrupt normal University procedure petitions, letters, and/or sheer word-of-mouth protestation to all those who should be concerned.*

(3) *Faculty members who have violently and valiantly protested the Rozman decision made by the Board of Regents and the administrative handling of the situation should not endanger their position in the University community. They are essential to its advancement, and their dismissal would only make more probable the already-depressing prospects for advancement of the University at Lincoln*

(4) *Administrative officials should continue with the best of their ability patiently and honestly to deal with old affairs and new complications as they arise—this they are doing.*

(5) *The Board of Regents should be appealed to by all responsible parties to, if not reconsider the re-hiring of Rozman, not to act as hastily in conjunction with hasty administrative requests to hire and fire. It does not require so much time to listen to faculty and student representatives' views on matters as important to all concerned as was the Rozman.*

I plead for patience and honesty of purpose on the part of all concerned with the hope that the mistakes of the past will not be compounded.

## Rozman...

Continued from page 1

because:

—THE REGENTS justified their action on an ex post facto basis of statements taken out of context from the Scranton Commission, which investigated the nation-wide campus disturbances that followed the U. S. invasion into Cambodia.

—The attorney for the Spelts Commission, which investigated last spring's anti-war protests on the Lincoln campus, expressly reported to a University faculty committee that any direction to leave the ROTC Building was not directed at Rozman.

—The discussion and decision concerning Rozman's dismissal "took place in secret and not in a public and recorded lawful meeting," contrary to Nebraska statutes and the Regents' rules.

—The Regents disregarded the findings of a special fact-finding committee they appointed to investigate the actions of the political science teacher during last spring's anti-war demonstrations. The committee, composed of five faculty members, concluded that Rozman "was not guilty of inappropriate actions during the week of May 4."

—THE CONCLUSION of the Regents was based on "false rumors" and "political threats and pressures."

Rozman's suit contends that the Spelts Commission was not charged to "weigh or evaluate charges against individual persons, nor did it adopt due process procedures to do so fairly." The Spelts Commission said Rozman's actions last May "were highly inappropriate for a teacher."

Almost \$1,000 had been collected for Rozman's legal defense fund as of Wednesday.

But Rozman might not need the fund. In his suit, he asked that the Regents pay for his legal fees.

## Tribunal to decide by Friday

by CAROL GOETSCHUS  
Staff Writer

The nine students placed on temporary probation or suspension during last week's sit-ins probably will know by Friday if the sanctions will remain in force, according to Ronald D. Gierhan, assistant in the Office of Student Affairs.

The Student Tribunal held hearings Wednesday for six students placed on probation and will make their recommendations to Student Affairs. Three students had hearings before the Tribunal Tuesday.

**IN FOUR HOURS** of testimony before the Tribunal, Nola Kinnaman, Ed Anson, Stephanie Thomsen, Bell Behmer, Jacki Barret and Carl Circo presented their defense.

During the testimony, the question whether the sit-in was a "disruptive" action surfaced again and again.

Gierhan, presenting the Administration's case, stated that normal passage through the reception area of Chancellor D. B. Varner's office was "somewhat obstructed".

**THE ADMINISTRATION** claimed that there was

constant conversation, and "the noise level was sufficient for office personnel not to be able to carry out normal activities."

Gierhan read a report by Campus Police Inspector Robert Edmunds, which stated that the office secretary was distressed. Administration held that the secretary left early because she couldn't continue normal activities.

**BEHMER TESTIFIED** that Varner refused to read the group's statement, "Call for Non-disruptive Action." The ASUN senator also stated that he heard Vice-Chancellor G. Robert Ross tell the secretary that she could leave early if she wanted, that she could go to her doctor's appointment and need not return.

According to the Administration, Varner told the students at 12:05 that they were being disruptive and asked them to leave. At 12:10 Varner stated that disciplinary actions would be taken against all students who didn't leave in 15 minutes.

All students except eight left the office. At 12:30 the defendants were placed on probation.

**THE DEFENDANTS** testified that they were shocked at the probation sanction: that they hadn't been warned.

One of the main points contested between the defense and Administration was whether Varner made an effort "to end the disruption through reason and persuasion," a guideline listed in the *Response to Disruptive Action Statement*.

Stephen L. Rozman collaborated the defendants testimony. He stated that Varner wasn't prepared to communicate with the students.

**ROZMAN DESCRIBED** Varner as meeting the students' questions with "stony silence."

**SPEAKING FOR** the Administration, Gierhan stated that Varner felt the issues posed by the protestors were dealt with in his office and later at an ASUN open meeting Monday.

Rozman arrived at Varner's office about ten minutes before the students were placed on probation.

**THE QUESTION** of

Turn to page 3