EDITORIAL COMMENT

New life for CSL

Council on Student Life met Tuesday night to discuss questions raised by the attempted injunction against the Time-Out Conference, **The Daily Nebraskan,** and World in Revolution. It seems that the Council may be on the brink of a definition of its function, if it will only recognize the opportunity for what it is.

It seems that everyone involved with student activities is again asking the $64,000 question: Who can determine which organizations have a claim to student fees and what monetary priorities should be set? This is not a new question. And it's about time we came up with an answer.

A special subcommittee was appointed to look into these matters. CSL meets in regular session tonight. Obviously, after years of questioning it is highly ridiculous to assume that a report with all the answers will be presented. It's too early for specific answers now. But an even more important precedent can be set, that of jurisdiction.

CSL now has, within its reach, a reason for being. It is entirely valid that some board should hear complaints and act on decisions concerning allocation of student fees. Since its formation, CSL has been hunting for questions to investigate. Certainly this could be one of CSL's major functions. As a governing group that claims to oversee Nebraska students' lives, CSL clearly should have the power to determine where our student fee monies go.

Students fees are just that...money paid by students for the organization and maintainance of certain student services. For that reason, a group with significant student representation should dole out the funds. For too long various activities and services have blindly assumed that since fee support had been there in the past, the subsidy would continue.

It is natural that certain students are questioning the legacy of student money allocation. What is not natural is the array of groups that have been called on to make this momentous and highly political decision.

One year we find ourselves at the mercy of the legislature. The following fall we find ourselves at the back of a crowded courtroom wondering who will finally take a stand and what that outcome will be.

CSL should take up this function. Few would dispute the validity of a study of student fees. But let's talk to the right judge in a court of the students and not the outside world.

Laura Willers

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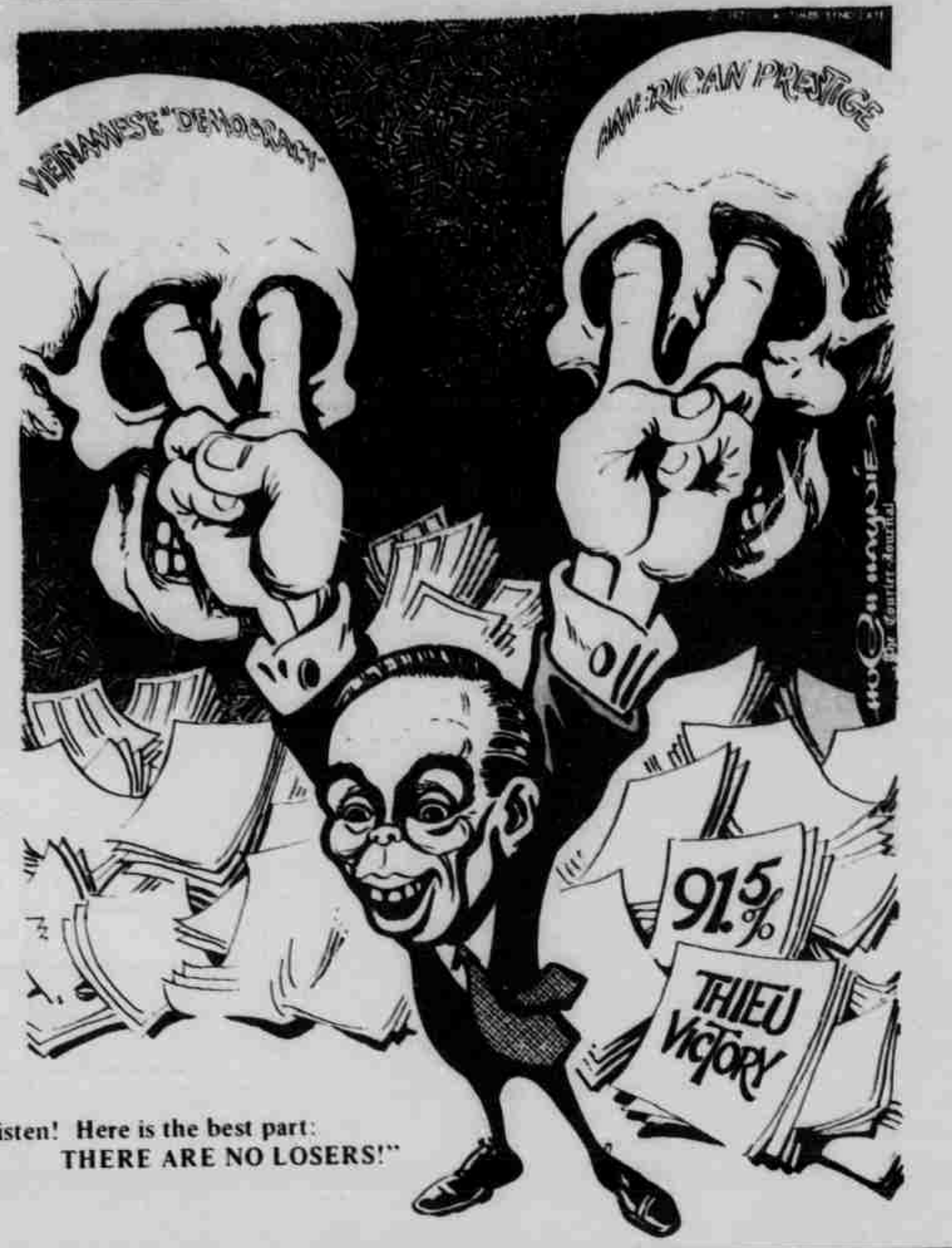

"Listen! Here is the best part:
THERE ARE NO LOSERS!"

tom braden

Paying for schools

WASHINGTON—Serrano vs. Priest is not yet as famous as Brown vs. the Board of Education of Topeka, but within the next few years it is likely to have as great an impact on the public schools. The California decision points eventually to something as radical as a national tax for schools.

Serrano vs. Priest is a ruling by California's supreme court that children who live in poor school districts are being denied equal protection of the law. Central to the court's decision is the notion that a child's education is the function of the wealth of the state—not of the wealth of the school district in which his parents happen to live.

What the decision means for California is a statewide property tax or some other means of putting school-tax money into a common pot and reapportioning so as to give each child the same amount of financial backing for his school years. The California decision has already had a partial counterpart in Florida. Test cases are coming up in other states, and be likely, eventually, to reach the nation's Supreme Court.

For California, the decision marks the end of a long effort to give children an equal education without upsetting the ancient idea that local school districts should finance local schools. Since the 19th century, the state has aided school districts by giving them state funds according to a school population formula. This accentuated the inequality because state money was granted on an equal basis among districts without reference to their taxable wealth.

Beginning in 1940, California tried to correct the inequality by an additional amount of state aid, this time apportioned according to the ability of the district, poor districts getting more than rich ones. The move did not solve the problem. Rich school districts levied an additional tax on each $100 of assessed valuation at an insignificant increase to the homeowner and continued to outpace the poor ones.

Thus it was that beginning in 1945, California tried to solve the problem by equalizing districts according to wealth. The effort continued through the 1960s as the state board of education labored to persuade rich districts to merge with contiguou, poor ones.

But the law required that the issue be decided by popular vote in each school district and the result was predicatable. Even the poorer districts sometimes voted against merger, persuaded by school officials who were afraid merger might mean fewer school officials.

Even if elections had succeeded, inequalities would have continued to exist as between heavily populated areas in the south of the state and sparsely settled areas in he north which happened to have industry or large power plants.

Industry and large power plants will provide the opposition to the statewide property tax which the California court has sanctioned. They will want money for the schools to come from other taxes than property because under a statewide property tax they will now begin to pay their fair share of the school burden. They cannot win in the legislature if California voters discover the truth: That average taxes on residential property will go down once property taxes on large industrial and power complexes are tossed into a statewide pot.

By an extension of this argument, is it fair for schoolchildren in property taxed poor states—states which have little industrial base—to have poor schooling as compared to children in richer states?

If a child's education is not a function of the wealth of his school district, why isn't it a function of the wealth of his nation?

gene budig

Bigger budget would help NU programs

GUEST Opinion

The following article by Gene A. Budig, assistant vice chancellor of the University of Nebraska, is reprinted from College & University Business.

No fewer than 22 governors are exerting budgetary pressures designed to assure comprehensive reevaluation of graduate programs at their state universities, according to a March, 1971, survey of 31 governors.

They appear to be convinced that the number of doctoral programs can be reduced without impairing in any way the well-being of their states.

It appears they are primed to make a dramatic shift in the emphasis of American public higher education, one that would strongly favor the junior and community movement. Their attraction to the two-year, vocational-technical programs is great, primarily because these offerings hold continued prospects for immediate employability.

A majority of the nation's governors are conversant with the literature of higher education and they are quick to cite statistics which support their contentions. For example most of the 22 chief executives are keenly aware that:

"In a time of an oversupply of doctorate and an undersupply of money, should the state invest its dollars in another level of education which might have a higher yield?"

—Federal dollars stimulated, but state dollars largely underwrote programs that came into existence during the 1960s;

—National production of doctorates nearly tripled from 1958 to 1969 from 9,000 to almost 26,000.

—The average cost of a doctoral degree in a science is more than $60,000;

—Most young Ph.D's are experiencing problems in gaining employment and many of them are ending up being "under-employed," and

—The cost of graduate education, especially at the doctoral level, will remain quite high.

Along with state legislators, governors are asking themselves and their constituents one basic question: In a time of an oversupply of money, should the state invest its dollars in another level of education which might have a higher yield?

Governors and legislative committees in a number of states have commissioned "impartial" professionals to analyze and respond to the question. But regardless of their responses, there is no doubt that the next two years will bring a curtailment of graduate education programs and an expansion of the two-year vocational programs. Economic and political considerations will be overwhelming and domineering.

At least 10 governors are overtly receptive to the idea of dramatically expanding geographical cooperation among the institutions of higher education in the expensive areas of graduate education. These officials contend that their states can no longer be "all things to all people educationally."

Expanded educational compacts or reciprocal arrangements, which are certain to materialize, will mean a likely reduction in the number of doctoral programs at various state universities.

It is significant to note that 50 institutions in the United States produce 90% of all doctorates, and the remaining 10% are produced by the other 190 doctoral institutions. Gubernatorial sentiment leans heavily in the direction of eliminating low production doctoral programs and not adding additional programs, especially at the 190 institutions, according to Kenneth Roose, former vice-president of the American Council on Education.

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They cite data indicating that, in a number of instances, new doctoral programs are living off the rations supposedly allocated for undergraduate programs. A measurable curtailment of graduate programs would upgrade undergraduate education, they contend, and such a curtailment would allow more innovative programming in the vocational areas.

In "Doctoral Planning for the 1970s," recently published in "The Research Reporter," Lyman Glenny aptly asserted that "the watchwords of the 1970s should be: Limit the number of doctoral programs and improve the quality." His assertion is destined to be frequently quoted in gubernatorial circles in the next few years. There is no doubt that he had touched upon a sensitive nerve which has caused painful reaction by a score of publicly elected officials.

There has been limited discussion on ways to restrain many of the newly developing insitutions from engulfing the doctoral market. It has been suggested in some quarters that the federal government, rather than slicing its support of graduate education across the board, should indicate that federal policy for the next decade will be to identify no more than 75 universities that will be eligible for federal funds.

Several governors from more sparsely populated states indicate that such a move might be in the national interest in preserving the strength of the major graduate centers. However, a large majority of the nation's chief executives are opposed to the thought of major withdrawal from the graduate education area; it is a matter of public service, they contend.

Professional educators need to realize that the 1970's are going to be very much different. For at least the next two to three years, budgetary constraints upon most public universities are going to be tight, and to ambitious educators they are going to be painful.

It should be noted that 20 of the 31 governors who participated in the study believe that even state intitutions with highly regarded graduate programs may have to consider cutting back in order to shift resources to areas of higher priority.

Along with a growing number of educators, they think that "time is running out" on substandard programs in state universities. Such programs, the governors believe, must either be brought up to acceptable standards or eliminated.

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According to Allan Carter, an analyst of graduate educational trends, the availability of funds from external sources to support new graduate programs will be minimal. He believes the drop in fellowship support for graduate students from federal sources will place additional burdens on the university when its traditional forms of support - state legislatures, tuition and private gifts - are likely to be shrinking.

Heightening the governors' anxiety is the most recent report by the Carnegie Commission on Higher Education. In a Jan. 1971, survey, 42 governors responded that their states could afford very little more in support for the institutions of higher education. Thirty-nine governors expressed the belief that the federal government would have to greatly increase its support.

Significantly, the commission has recommended that federal funds for higher education be increased and that the state's share decline proportionately.

But this relative decline in state funds will be quite small over the next decade and states will have to continue providing about one quarter of increasing total funding for colleges and universities - a topic of certain debate at state levels.

OPINION & COMMENT