



## to the editor

### Constitution controversy

Dear editor:

Six weeks ago a group of ASUN senators were selected for a committee to review the present ASUN constitution with the sole intent of modifying those portions which were either ineffective or outdated. As they proceeded with their task they began to realize that to be truly realistic, they would have to change more than just a few sections. Consequently they called for a constitutional convention to draft a new and hopefully better document from which ASUN could work more effectively.

The first major change that was made was to cut the number of elected offices of the student association from 38 to 15 people. Numerous questions arose as we proceeded with this modification. Perhaps the most important was what this would do to the representativeness of the association. There are several points which we think answer this question.

1) Cities with populations in excess of 400,000 people are governed by city councils as small as 10 people. With this in mind it would seem that 15 students could represent a campus of 20,000 students effectively.

2) Having fewer people representing a college would tend to make them more identifiable in the eyes of their constituents, thus making them much more responsible for their actions.

3) It would be easier for specific representatives to relate back to the official bodies of each college. For instance, one or two board members from agriculture

or engineering could easily convey information between the board and the respective executive groups of the colleges. Again in this situation it would be hard for a member to deny his responsibility to his constituents and pass it off on another member.

4) The question of whether or not this group would become elitist tends to go back to two other points. First we tend to have more faith in our student body than to think that they could be easily fooled time and time again into voting for an elitist association. Secondly, the members of the association cannot be chairmen of committees, consequently more people would be brought into the operational stage of student government than before.

We did not feel that representation should stop at the election process. Consequently we improved the previous petition system so that students would have direct input into the association. As in the examples below.

1) By the use of a petition signed by 100 students a resolution may be introduced to the board. This places the board in the position of having to commit itself on student ideas and opinions.

2) A petition signed by 35 per cent of a college, say 700 students in a college of 2,000, can initiate recall and a new election on any board seat.

3) A petition signed by 1,000 students can initiate a referendum on any issue.

Further, we felt that other campus organizations should meet with the board regularly throughout the semester. To allow for this we created a president's round table which would bring campus leaders together to discuss issues of importance to students. Finally we provided for open hearings to take place twice each semester to further broaden student participation in the association.

The new board, as designed, can become an effective arm of the student body. Because of its size it can more readily deal with issues that come up throughout the year. The old senate tended to be little more than a resolution oriented debate society. The actual work that was done occurred in committees and in the executive sessions. This seems to have been true throughout its history.

This new board would develop its own policies from their initial stages to the end, thus having more direct input into their effectiveness. It would be easier for the board to meet with committee chairmen or other individuals such as the university chancellor throughout the semester because of its size and flexibility.

Perhaps most important of all the members of the new board would be seen and held accountable as individuals rather than lost in a sea of faces. It was easy with the old senate to blend in and do little. With the new board each member will have to function since there will be no place to hide. Student government will no longer be a game but will become a functional and workable organization which will indeed be able to initiate programs for its electorate, the students.

ASUN Constitution Committee

### Representation

Dear editor:

As the weaknesses of the proposed ASUN constitution become more apparent, the arguments of support are becoming more ridiculous.

In Friday's (March 17) paper, Patti Kaminski said "There's only a fraction of a difference between 35 people or 15 people representing 20,000." Actually a

35-member senate has one representative for each 570 students, whereas a 15 member board, as proposed by the new constitution, would have each member representing 1,330.

Supporters of the new constitution argue that a smaller group is easier to work with and will get things done. This is true. Inefficiency is an admitted flaw of democracy. It is surprising that no one has come out for a triumvirate or a monarch-or would the new constitution be a step in that direction?

Terry Lewis  
Russ Semm  
Sally LeBaron

### Unwarranted criticism

Dear editor:

In reference to Steve Ferris' letter to the editor (March 15) I believe that he made several unwarranted criticisms of Roy Baldwin's guest opinion on a consumer cooperative.

Ferris points out that Baldwin's ideas are markedly similar to those expressed earlier by Bruce Beecher. Ferris fails to point out that Beecher and Baldwin served as co-chairmen of the ASUN Student Services Committee, which investigated the possibilities of such a cooperative.

Ferris claims that Baldwin's proposal is not specific. On comparison I find both candidates' proposals rather general and lacking in definition. More investigation must be made before specifics like membership costs and services provided should be announced.

I find Ferris' criticism lacking justification.

Alan Lukas

### Academic censure

Dear editor:

I read with interest your second lead story, "Wolfley urges Prokop censure," in the Thursday, March 16 issue of the Daily Nebraskan.

I note particularly the repeated references, presumably by Wolfley, to the cowardice of faculty members who do not support his resolution and the blunt suggestion that their reasons are "fear of economic repercussions."

It may come as a surprise to a champion of free speech such as Wolfley that there may be pertinent reasons for voting against his resolution which have nothing to do with cowardice or fear of economic repercussion. I would seriously doubt, for example, that Wolfley is opposed to due process in the dismissal of faculty members. Nonetheless, dismissal without due process is essentially what he proposes should happen to Prokop on the basis of a single offense by a person who is not a member of, and therefore not bound by, the rules that are in force in the academic community.

Under the circumstances, Wolfley's protestations that his proposal is not politically motivated ring a bit hollow.

Regardless of how one feels, however, it reflects little credit on Wolfley that without possible prior knowledge of the motives or considerations of other staff members relative to his proposal, he is willing to impugn their character and prejudge their motives in advance of any action they may or may not take. I wish to serve notice that his accusations are unjustified in my case and in the cases of many other staff members I know.

Richard K. Boohar  
Associate Professor  
of Zoology

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