

## AACS protest

Last Friday's confrontation between several blacks and ASUN President Bruce Becker appears to have been motivated by something other than a sense of true protest.

The ASUN booklet in which the disputed drawing appeared was basically satiric in content. It is true, however, that the caricature could be construed as offensive to black students, especially the Afro-American Collegiate Society. It is also true that this stereotypical configuration is exactly what

blacks have been trying for centuries to erase. However, most segments of the University community have advanced far beyond the ultrasensitivity to stereotypes which would be required if this were to be the sole reason for this incident.

Indeed, the way in which the whole protest was conducted leads one to believe its organizers were somewhat less than serious about their cause. An almost comically-choreographed and melodramatically-presented production, the incident seemed much more like an incredible farce than a reasoned protest.

The laughing, jostling but senselessly menacing attitude displayed by the actors in the situation could only be interpreted as being a solid indication of something less than a sense of purpose.

It is a good guess that at least a few of those participating in the show had no idea at what or whom their protest was aimed, letting themselves be used as political pawns in a splendid display of menace-without-meaning. Being a pawn can have its merits in group identity, but such a role is of questionable value in intellectual protest.

The most questionable part of the entire affair is that it happened to come just two days after UNL hired a new Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs, Ken Bader, who will in many ways determine minority programs.

It has been speculated, and not without cause, that the blowup was initiated by some black leaders to sound-out the new dean, and not for any real protest purpose. While it will be interesting to see Bader's reactions to the situation, it is a sad commentary of the political pragmatism of the individuals involved in this protest.

After an unjustified altercation over such an insignificant issue, any further protest against more important and overriding issues, such as equal employment, equal justice, equal pay and equal opportunity can only be met with a disrespectful sneer and possible overreaction from the other side.

While it is important to sound-out the new dean and find out his beliefs and reactions to overbearing problems, it is most important that just this type of drastic overemphasis of relatively unimportant events be avoided. If not, when the time for more vital decisions comes, sensitive action from the other side cannot be expected.

For now, confrontation politics is nonsensical. The other side has read *Mau-Mauing the Flak-catchers*, too. And they're not afraid anymore.

Jim Gray



Detail from ASUN booklet by Rainbow Studio

## The conventions

Daily Nebraskan editorial policy is the product of an editorial board consisting of Editor-in-chief Jim Gray, Managing Editor Tom Lansworth and News Editor Randy Beam. Individual editorials represent the views of the writer but not necessarily those of all editorial board members.

It was a long, complex summer.

And probably the longest, and most complex parts of the summer were the political conventions. As drawn-out and boring as the conventions and their accompanying festivities were, few will deny that the two political events provided as sharp a contrast as is possible within the current system.

The Democratic National Convention, while plagued by infighting, indecision and poor planning was easily the most representative political convention ever held. Meeting under reform plans based on the party's McGovern Commission plan, the party made definitive strides toward a balanced representation of the populace.

At the convention, 38 per cent of the delegates were women, 15 per cent were blacks, and over 23 per cent were younger than 30 years old, according to *U.S. News and World Report*.

The Nebraska Democratic delegation was 45 per cent female, 5 per cent black and 32 per cent under age 30.

Most importantly, however, the convention provided a true forum where strongly divergent opinions were aired by all involved and no minority was kept from participating. Change was evident everywhere—change for the better.

On the other hand, the GOP convention, otherwise known as the Second Coming of

Milhaus was a classic textbook case of the clockwork convention. The precisely-timed, showy extravaganza honored the wondrous miracles brought forth by the present administration.

At the GOP hop only 30 per cent of the delegates were women, 3 per cent were blacks and less than 15 per cent were younger than 30 years old—a good deal less representative of the total population than the Democratic gathering.

The Nebraska GOP Delegation was 13 per cent female, 6 per cent under age 30 and had no blacks.

Nor is any guaranteed relief in representation pending as a result of the GOP show. Arguing against "quotas" in representation—a false issue if there ever was one—the Republicans passed rules urging states to "endeavor" to achieve 50-50

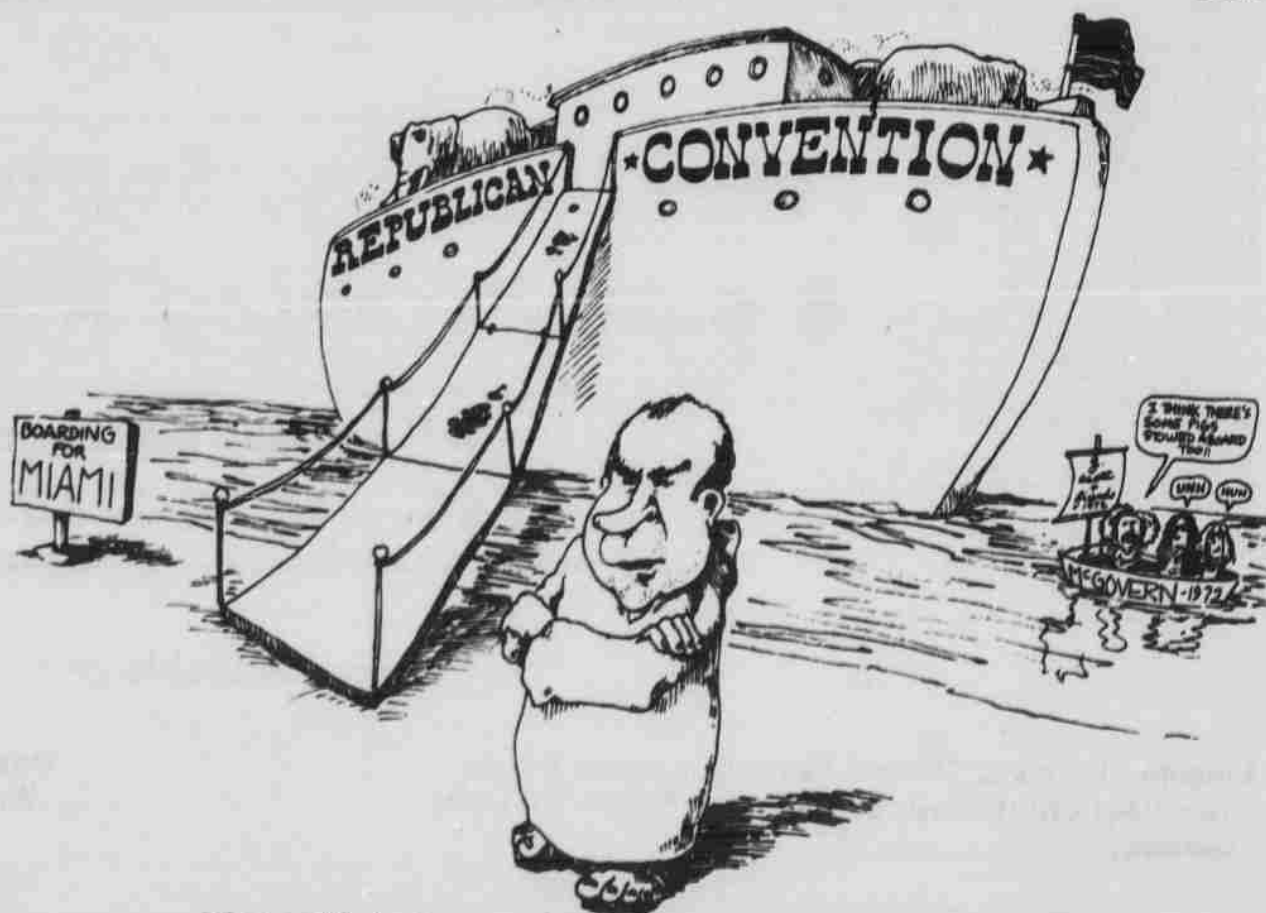
male-female representation in 1976 and asking them to consider helping young and minority delegates. This rhetoric without action is totally ineffectual.

Even with all this to contend with, the saddest part about the Republican convention was that absolutely no place was given for dissent within the party. Rep. Paul McCloskey only barely received his one legal dissenting vote in opposition to Nixon. He was not allowed to speak before the convention.

It was a clean, uneventful convention. But it wasn't democratic process.

With all this brought into view, one thing becomes exceedingly clear: the Democratic Party is the only party which currently has as its goal total representation through democratic process.

Jim Gray



"Only old elephants and as many wasps as possible, this trip!"