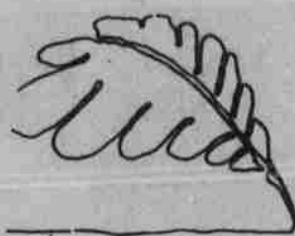


to the editor



Dear editor,

I am enclosing a copy of a letter I have just sent to my attorney, Pat Healey, in the hope that you will publish it in the Daily Nebraskan

Please excuse my delay in responding to the unfavorable decision to our court case and, specifically, to your letter. I have been gathering my thoughts and awaiting a free and proper moment.

My reluctance to even think of pursuing the case to a higher judicial level is based on two factors: 1) I could not win in the Nixon-Burger Supreme Court; 2) I feel that a sense of defeatism has pervaded the University of Nebraska community to the point that those who had so strongly identified with my struggle against the Board of Regents have since divorced themselves from this effort. Indeed, this second factor outweighs the first in my mind.

Even though the wording of the case has been "Rozman vs. Board of Regents" I have never thought of this struggle as a personal one related solely to my own individual interests. Moreover, had I not been convinced from the outset of the case that important sectors of the University community likewise regarded this confrontation as a people's struggle, I would have refrained from engaging your services as an attorney and would have withdrawn quietly from that community without challenging those who used me as a target for their act of repression.

If this had been a struggle of a single individual rather than a significantly mobilized community, factors of my personal benefit and gain would have blotted out the important issues involved. It goes without saying that I would have lacked the material resources to have fought this battle had I not received such tremendous support from so many students and faculty, plus organizations which included American Association of University Professors and the American Federations of Teachers.

From the outset, I recognized the potential of this case in promoting community consciousness of the nature of the system, for hadn't the system revealed its true Mr. Hyde character in its very act of repression? I have never relished my having been the target of the repression, but, still, I do recognize the positive value of repression.

Clearly, it serves to shatter the illusions we so automatically tend to nurture, entranced by the opiate of optimistic liberalism. I have reluctantly concluded that our optimism about the system in which we live must be made to decline much further before our remaining harmful illusions will disappear so that we can fully see reality. Only then will we be able to come to grips with injustice and work for positive change.

How clearly I remember the reassuring statements of students and faculty alike, the echoing choruses of how certain victory was in this case; that the repression was so blatant and so crass that the courts would undoubtedly rule against the Board of Regents. Frankly, I am thankful that my consciousness level had advanced beyond the stage of liberal optimism prior to the onset of this confrontation with the forces that rule the University of Nebraska. Only because of this was I mentally prepared for the defeat to come. My concern now is the lesson learned by my optimistic liberal supporters. To me, the liberal is a greater source of anguish than the conservative, since the former is painted by social injustice.

Yet, the liberal is no threat to the power structure. Indeed, he is one of the pillars propping it up. Oh, if we could do something about his trusting nature, his belief in the basic reasonable character of all those surrounding him. Has the lesson of the Rozman case been learned by these liberals? Or can they be shaken from their positive outlook only by further shocks, perhaps of a greater intensity (and which are sure to come)?

For me, the most positive facet of the Rozman case was always its educational value, not the weak promise of a victory in the system's courts, nor, much less, a personal gain for me. My prime concern was that the minds of each member of the community be opened to the reality of the system, to its true nature.

What was to be gained from the position of those whose consciousness reached only to the degree where they could say, "Gee, Rozman got screwed," or "Those regents and their lackeys on the administration are really s.o.b.'s." A defining of the problem on the basis of personalities was a misconception of reality. Of overriding importance was the understanding of a system which impelled the regents to act as they did, and impelled the administration to give its knee-jerk response.

As for our relationship, Pat, I found it to be a positive one. Few attorneys in Nebraska would have committed themselves to this case more for a concern over the issues involved than for financial incentive. I remain confident that a sizeable sector of the University community regards you as a friend for your energetic defense of its interests. I am certain that this loss will not deter you from devoting your energies to future victims of repression. Indeed, if I know you, it will have the effect of strengthening your commitment.

I must admit that I had some incipient reluctance at the time we decided to take the case beyond the federal district court to the appellate court. I could see that the district court defeat had seriously demoralized the liberal community at the University. Would these liberals repeat their normal policy of abandoning a commitment when the going gets rough and things look bleak? I felt that many of them would, if only to protect the stability of their overall positive outlook (hence, the defeatism as a protective mechanism). Yet, after speaking with you I felt certain that we had adequate finances to pursue the case through the appellate court, so I decided to continue the court action (and keeping the issue alive had the potential of promoting further consciousness).

Now, I am troubled that the costs greatly exceeded your estimates, so that nearly \$300 of your out-of-the-pocket expenses still remain unpaid, in spite of the fact that we came up with additional revenues beyond our estimates.

I call upon the members of the University community to extend their commitment to this case at least to the point where Pat Healey is paid this final debt.

Steve Rozman

A searing allegory
by noted director Peter Watkins
("War Game," "Privilege") of the suppression
of personal freedom by private
citizens acting in the name of justice.



Punishment Park

Wednesday, December 6
3, 7, & 9 p.m.

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Wednesdays: 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Fridays: 3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

If materials are not returned, next
semester's registration will be withheld.

THANK YOU,

Nebr. Union Record &
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