

Unity, progress

This year's ASUN election campaign has been brief, and the opportunity for students to confront the candidates with questions about their stands on the issues has been limited. Nevertheless, there has been time enough for the emergence of substantial differences between the two serious parties slating candidates.

The platform statements of the Get Off Your Apathy (GOYA) party and the Unity and Progress (UP) party at first appear to be almost identical documents, with only a change in format. Several proposals listed in the statements are indeed the same in both platforms. But a careful reading of the platforms along with information that has been revealed during the campaign exposes appreciable differences in the philosophies of GOYA and UP.

A review of some of the differences between the positions taken by the parties on specific issues would be helpful to any student planning to vote in Wednesday's election.

The student lawyer proposal made by GOYA in its platform has drawn the most attention at this point in the campaign. UP, while leaving the option open of some other kind of legal service to UNL students, has taken the position that hiring a lawyer to act as a student-defender is unfeasible at UNL and unethical in Nebraska. UP has solicited the opinions of representatives of the Nebraska Supreme Court, the Nebraska Bar Association and the Nebraska Bar Association's judicial committee, all of whom agree that an attorney as a student-defender would be unethical in Nebraska.

GOYA candidates appear to have relied upon UNL Law College faculty members for their opinions on the student lawyer idea. It should be remembered that the State Supreme Court, not the Law College faculty, is the final judge of what is and what is not ethical for persons practicing law in Nebraska. It is true that other U.S. universities have student lawyers. But in the instances cited by the GOYA candidates, such a student lawyer was specifically prohibited from defending students in any court proceeding. Under this type of plan, a student lawyer would become little more than a "super advisor" to the student government. ASUN cannot afford such an advisor. The UP position on the student lawyer proposal is, at this time, the correct one.

Student fees continue to be an issue in campus politics. The recently released Student Fees Administration Task Force report recommends sweeping changes in the current fees structure. Several of the changes would necessitate drastic reorganization of

ASUN. Neither GOYA nor UP has spoken adequately to this issue. But UP, in its platform did take exception to some of the recommendations of the report. Although the party has criticized some sections of the task force report after being questioned during the campaign, GOYA did not even mention the Student Fees Administration Task Force report in the original party platform.

Educational reform and the quality of student life are the other issues which have been the subject of platform planks. The proposals made by the parties in these areas reveal further differences in approach and philosophy. UP has pledged to work to improve the relationship between UNL's City Campus and East Campus, while at the same time attempting to allow each division to maintain whatever amount of their traditional separateness they might wish to preserve. The only program proposed by GOYA aimed at a better inter-campus relationship is an improvement of the shuttle bus system. It seems obvious that whatever good might come out of such transportation improvements would overwhelmingly benefit City Campus students who may have a class on East Campus and want to be able to get into and out of what they view as the no-man's land at 33rd and Holdrege Streets as quickly as possible. GOYA offers no plan to increase interaction between students from the two main UNL campuses, unless East Campus and City Campus students happen to ride the improved bus system together. UP has clearly voiced a stronger commitment in this area.

Both GOYA and UP propose several educational reforms, many of which are identical in both platforms. But it is the differences which should be considered by student voters. UP supports the strengthening and expansion of both the Free University (which has been allowed to deteriorate by this year's ASUN leadership) and the independent study option. GOYA has not mentioned these two important parts of the UNL educational experience in its platform.

UP has pledged to strongly support the Program of Active Commitment to Education (PACE), which also has been afforded little attention by the current ASUN administration. But GOYA, whose second vice presidential candidate claims to be personally committed to the PACE program, does not even include a statement on PACE in its platform.

UP has offered several other creative proposals which could work to improve the lot of UNL students. One of the most innovative is the fees and appeals board which would give students an appeals route when they are charged administrative fees and fines. These charges are currently non-appealable, even if they are incurred through no fault of

the student.

One of the hidden issues of this ASUN election campaign has been the performance of the current ASUN executives. GOYA candidates seem closely linked in both politics and philosophy with the current administration. "The opportunities are here," the GOYA platform says, "all it takes is someone willing to get up and get them done." Yet Ann Henry, presidential candidate and chief GOYA standard bearer, has been a member of this year's executive committee and has not been able to pry the current leadership up off its apathy, and this is in spite of her good relationship with the ASUN executives.

The UP platform points to what ASUN has accomplished in previous year, and says that ASUN can again make a difference at UNL. As UP presidential candidate Bill Freudenburg stated at last Thursday's debate, "ASUN doesn't have to be as bad as it's been this year." The *Daily Nebraskan* feels that the UP executive candidates have the best chance of rekindling student interest in ASUN and of making student government matter again at UNL.

Sue Overing, UP second vice presidential candidate, hasn't worked directly with ASUN before. But she has worked in student governing matters as secretary of the Abel-Sandoz Residence Hall Association. She would be able to bring a new perspective into the administration of ASUN.

Karen Richardson, UP first vice presidential candidate, has worked with various financial aids committees, including the PACE Advisory Committee. She also served this year as chairman of ASUN's Communications Committee. Her efforts to improve the free flow of information between ASUN and students were often hampered by the current administration. Richardson has proven to be a tireless worker whenever she becomes involved in any program.

Bill Freudenburg, UP presidential candidate, is an ASUN senator. His student government experience includes being an RHA representative, service on the Legislative Liaison Committee and directing this year's Environmental Task Force. Freudenburg attempted to be innovative in the face of the status-quo philosophy adopted by this year's ASUN administration and senate.

With some fresh executive leadership and a senate that is willing to commit itself to something more than shuffling resolutions, ASUN could become what it was meant to be—the UNL student's advocate and servant. It will have the best chance of making meaningful progress toward that goal if the Unity and Progress party's executive, senate and advisory board candidates are elected Wednesday.

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Platform promises collapse

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by Randy Beam

The political platforms, even on ASUN election trials, are the chic tools that parties use to convince the electorate that there really is a difference between us that are running for office and them that are running for office.

This year is no different. Shaman Jack Mason's platform, which promises that he'll build a platform in the Coliseum, may be the most honest of all. Everyone knows that's a promise he can't keep.

However, the other parties—Unity & Progress (UP) and Get Off Your Apathy (GOYA)—take ASUN more seriously.

Last year, there were two other parties taking ASUN seriously. The winner was Bruce Beecher's Student Cause (SC) party. And SC, just like everyone else, had a platform detailing its goals for the coming year. The SC platform stated:

"Student Cause feels that in the past year ASUN has been only nominally representative of the majority of students on this campus. We feel this is largely due to the lack of interest and general apathy of many ASUN senators." (Since the day that 17 SC senators were sworn into office, at least six (35 per cent) have quit. One senator attended only one meeting.

"Through new leadership and new ideas SC will provide the initiative and open-mindedness necessary to make ASUN a viable organization."

(ASUN has not proposed one major, new program this year. What ASUN would refer to as its major accomplishments have been carry-through of old ideas.)

Platform:

"We, the members of SC, feel that student government is strongly dependent on the financial support of student fees. Because of the current controversy surrounding student fees and their continuation, we feel that an alternative method of

funding should be initiated, one in which the student government is financially independent of the control of the Board of Regents."

(There has been no such attempt reported to the ASUN senate.)

The platform talks about the Student Koop:

"Student cooperative cards will be sold to students which will provide discounted prices on records, art items, gas and liquor."

(No liquor store is part of the Koop.)

Koop continued:

"The money received from card sales will be used to initiate new services. With a proposed yearly charge of \$10 per card, over \$50,000 would be available from sales to 25% of the student body."

(The Koop has about 150 members (three-fourths per cent of UNL students), and has collected \$750.)

More:

"Suggested student services that SC will work for are: a nonprofit student-owned and operated general store, grocery store, theater and day care center."

(Where are they?)

One could go on and on. Broken promises about married student housing, about ASUN working for self-determination in housing regulations and about ASUN senators speaking in living units.

The point is that anyone with a stencil can author an ASUN platform. To mold platform promises into reality takes work, creativity and stamina. It means a willingness to do more than just take an administrator's word that "it can't be done." At the same time, it means knowing when something won't work and then looking for an alternative. It means more than just saying, "We'll get involved."

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