

## Hell-met on wheels

Bad news for motorcyclists: LB795, introduced by State Sen. Blair Richendifer of Walthill, would make it mandatory that all cycle drivers and passengers don helmets before mounting a bike.

It's difficult to understand why legislators persist in reintroducing this legislation. Their shortsightedness is even more bewildering when reports indicate that in most cases helmets are more dangerous on than off.

A helmet is more of a hazard than people realize. According to one source, if a cyclist is involved in an accident while traveling at more than 15 m.p.h., the helmet offers virtually no protection and is worse than worthless.

Additionally, almost all helmets are constructed of a Fiberglas-like substance, which bounces if dropped on pavement. If a person wearing a helmet is thrown from a cycle onto his head, the exacerbated bounce easily could cause a broken neck.

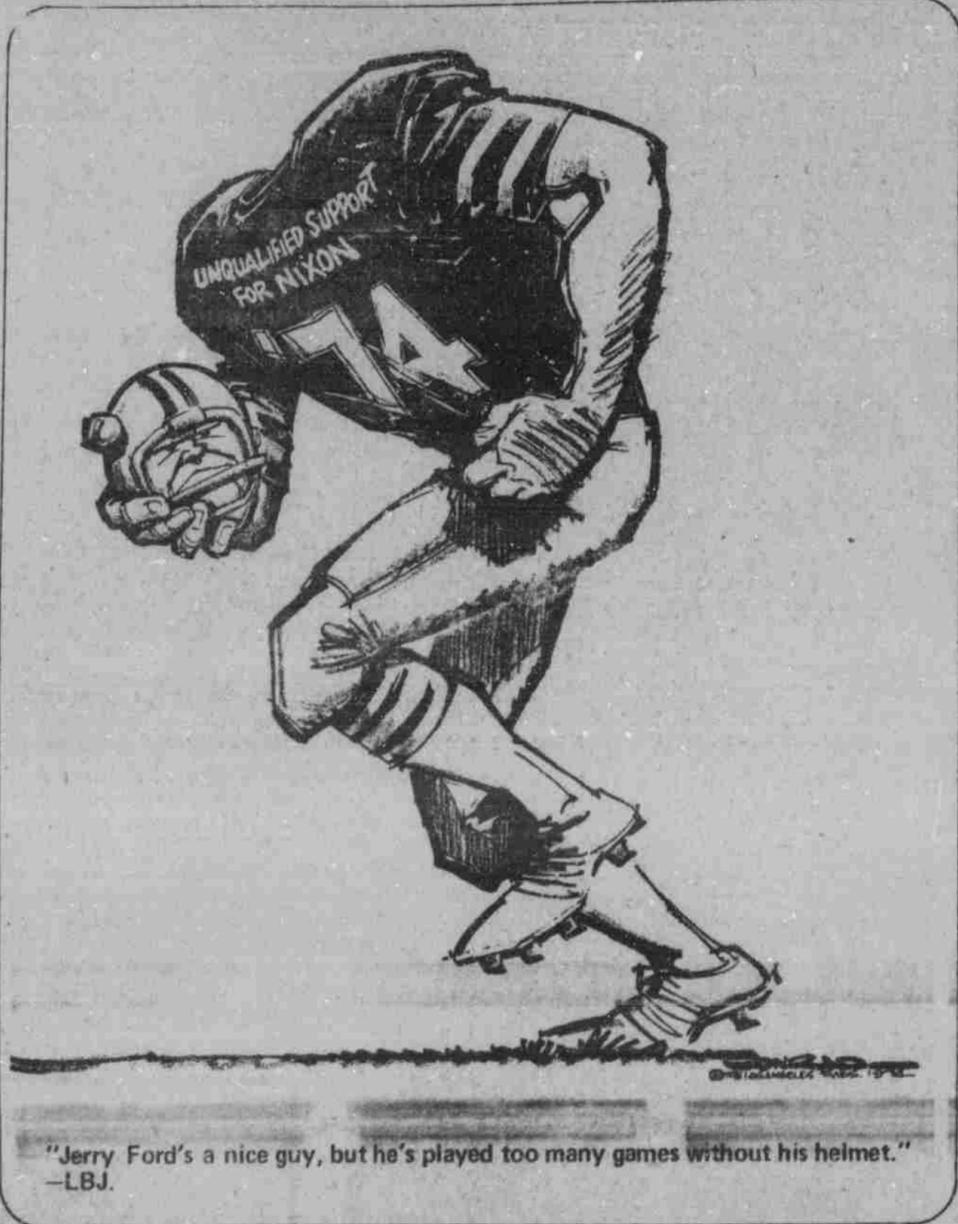
Fiberglas is an extremely poor material for helmets because it deteriorates with age and temperature, resulting in often invisible cracks in the helmet. If a person wearing a cracked helmet is thrown headfirst onto the pavement, the helmet is likely to break apart and itself cause more extensive head injuries than if not worn at all.

Adequate protection from a helmet involves covering the back of the head, forehead and temples. But a negative side effect of such protection is that hearing and eyesight are handicapped. Peripheral vision is seriously hampered, and it's difficult for a cyclist to hear automobiles creeping up or behind him.

It's true that nearly all motorcycle deaths are caused by head injuries, but so are nearly 85 per cent of all automobile deaths. The law (or attempted law) should not single out only one phase of motor vehicle transportation. If the legislators believe helmets would indeed protect cyclists, helmets also would protect drivers and passengers of cars.

A better solution would be to require by law that helmets be sold as mandatory safety equipment on any motorcycle. As is now the case with seat belts in cars, the responsibility of wearing the helmet would rest with the individual.

Mary Voboril



"Jerry Ford's a nice guy, but he's played too many games without his helmet."  
-LBJ.

## ASUN prognosis poor; restructure prescribed

Although the ASUN Senate elections are more than a month away, rumblings of the coming political season have begun. But before the speeches and promises start, it would be well to take a hard look at what student government is and what it ought to be.

ASUN Senate is experiencing hard times. It has been trapped in a vicious spiral of decreased support, then decreased effectiveness, and even less support.

Obtaining public support is not a new problem. Each new administration comes up with its secret plan to end the apathy, and each administration seems to leave feeling cynical, somehow betrayed by the lack of support it received from students. These feelings certainly are not lessened by comments from the regents and chancellor, who continually cast doubt on any senate

proposal because they say it doesn't represent anyone.

Many of the senate's difficulties can be traced to its structure. ASUN Senate is designed as a governing body,

john michael  
o'shea  
distant  
thunder

but for this kind of organization to work it must have power. Without power, it cannot function.

The concept of student government is misleading. It implies that students

have some inherent governmental power. But they do not. ASUN Senate must draw from branches of the administration for any of the power it claims. The problem with this is obvious.

ASUN Senate enters a kind of parent-child relationship with the administration, in which the parent rewards the student government by giving it more authority when it's mature and responsible. The price of becoming mature and responsible often means selling out student concerns, often with justification that "it will be worth it in the long run," though it never has been.

It is becoming painfully clear that ASUN Senate, as now structured, no longer can even hope to be effective in representing students. It is no longer simply a matter of one administration or another.

The only way to salvage the Senate

is to return to the concept of a student association and realistically define its objectives. It will require the acceptance of ASUN Senate as an office of student advocacy within the University, rather than as a mythical government. It also will demand radical structural changes. Vestiges of the student council approach must go in favor of open-ended research and advocacy committees. This approach could cure many of the most frustrating problems now facing ASUN Senate by adjusting its goals to fit its abilities.

When the aspiring politicians do arrive with glowing promises in hand, don't be fooled. It will take more than glowing promises and getting off your apathies to forge a new student association. What is needed now are candidates on the right road, candidates who will indeed lend their hands.

## Religion policy discriminates against Christians

Editor's note: This guest opinion is in reference to a story in last Thursday's Daily Nebraskan that detailed the Board of Regents' policy statement about religious activities on NU campuses.

By A. Frank Thompson

I wish to thank the Daily Nebraskan for allowing me my right to express my ideas. At the same time I acknowledge that in stating my beliefs I may be in violation of the Board of Regents policy on religions. Webster's *New World Dictionary* defines religion as "any specific system of belief, worship, conduct, etc., often involving a code of ethics and a philosophy." Currently, the University facilities are extended to the Young Americans for Freedom, Transcendental Meditation, Young Republicans, Young Democrats and Women's Resource Center, not to mention many other organizations with specific ideals. It appears that the University is singling out Christian organizations as those with religious backgrounds. The cartoon accompanying the story also indicated a desire to protect students from someone with unorthodox views. I always thought the University provided a forum where adults could listen to

differing views and decide what they wished to believe.

Yes, I am a Christian; however, I am also an American citizen and have always supported the rights of others to speak their beliefs. Under the

## guest opinion

Christian philosophy as given in the second book of James, faith goes together with works in determining your spiritual being. Works are the evidence of one's faith. My ability to have fellowship with other Christians is being restricted. Does this mean I can no longer perform good works? If so, I assure you I intend to continue. I have attended college for five years at four universities. I hold that the most important event was not obtaining the two degrees I now have; but rather, becoming a Christian. Why does the University wish to deny every student the educational opportunity to decide what he or she believes?