

Unjustified jibes

It's somewhat disconcerting that political agencies make the press the whipping boy when things go awry or credibility ebbs. This was the case at Wednesday night's ASUN Senate meeting, when John Vistadt, a newly appointed senator, irresponsibly tossed political jibes at the *Daily Nebraskan*.

One of the gripes bandied about Wednesday was that the *Nebraskan* only reported "sensational topics" involving the senate. On the contrary, it's debatable whether ASUN in past months has accomplished or initiated anything that might generate any sort of sensation.

The *Nebraskan* traditionally has saved space for senate meetings, even in the case of absent quorums or when nothing newsworthy occurs. Some individuals, in fact, have criticized the *Nebraskan* for granting the senate too much space.

Other criticisms directed at the *Nebraskan* Wednesday either were superficial, naive or untrue. Among them:

—"All publicity concerning ASUN is published after the fact."

Anyone who reads the *Nebraskan* regularly will agree that this is incorrect. For one thing, *Nebraskan* has been reporting on the March 13 senate elections for about a week. Other stories this semester have pertained to the Associated Student Ko-op, Legislative Liaison Committee and the legal aid to students office.

—"The *Nebraskan* never reports how a senator votes on a particular issue."

This is the senate's fault. The way the voting system is set up, students merely raise their hands or indicate their yeas and nays verbally. In the past year, a roll call vote was taken only once.

Suggesting that the *Nebraskan* is biased apparently is part of the game. It's true that the *Nebraskan* has not been editorially kind

to senate stagnation in the recent past, but such editorial page opinion is the prerogative of the individual editor in chief.

Concerning the past year's coverage of ASUN and its adjuncts, the *Nebraskan* editorial staff believes it has been fair as well as more than generous in allocating space.

It also stands behind the *Nebraskan* ASUN reporter, who has a strong journalism background, has worked for professional newspapers and along with the rest of the reporters was cautioned at the beginning of the semester against slanting the news. As everyone, she does have opinions concerning the senate, but her stories have been impartial. The *Nebraskan* staff does not believe any senate coverage has been slanted.

The *Nebraskan* always has welcomed criticism. But hopefully the next time ASUN senator attacks the *Nebraskan*, he or she will have something besides a personal vendetta in hand to back up the complaint.

Mary Voboril

'Work through the system, Dad'

Mac Trucker came home with a pleased grin on his face, a glint in his eye and a nasty gash over his nose.

"Boy, what a day! What a day!" he said happily as he hung up his leather jacket and opened a beer. "We had a park-in on the turnpike that tied up traffic six hours. There's us, standing around yelling, 'Hell, no, won't go!' And when the cops try to break us up, I personally got me two windshields, four tires and a nightstick on the noggin."

"That's nice, dear," said Mrs. Trucker. "I'll put dinner on."

Trucker's son, Irvin, who was home from State University on semester break, frowned. "Frankly, Dad," he said, "I don't see what you hope to accomplish with all these sit-ins and trashing."

"We're fighting injustice, kid," said Trucker. "And let me tell you, 70 cents a gallon for diesel is a real injustice. What do you expect I should do?"

"Well, Dad, if you feel so strongly, I'd suggest you write a letter to your congressman."

arthur hoppe

innocent bystander

"You out of your skull, kid?" inquired Trucker.

"No, Dad, as we say in college these days, you've got to work through established channels to change rules you don't like. It's the only way to preserve our system of law and order. The alternative is anarchy."

"Look, kid, for months we been demanding a roll-back on diesel price from every dingbat in Washington, meaning the President on up. And all we get's the run-around."

"You've got to admit, Dad, that the President has more information on the overall situation than you do. And I'm sure he's doing his very best to get us out of this mess we're in."

"At least we got his attention, kid."

"But don't you see, Dad? By inconveniencing innocent motorists, by turning to trashing and violence, you're hurting your own cause. And this wild eyed, radical trucker's strike! The freight industry isn't responsible. Yet you'd destroy the very institution you're a part of."

"Who's a radical?"

"Well, maybe not you, Dad. But are you sure about the leaders of your movement? Besides, you're bound to get arrested. How will that look on your record? What if you want a job in business or government some day?"

"What's it to you anyway, kid?"

"Well, I've got my pride, Dad. And it's going to be hard to hold my head up if my friends at college find out my father is one of those violence prone activists, going around staging sit-ins, trashing and fighting with police. Think of me, Dad. Think of my reputation in the college community."

"I've thought about you for three seconds," said Trucker. "Pack up and move out!"

Mrs. Trucker returned a few minutes later with dinner. "Where's Irvin?" she asked.

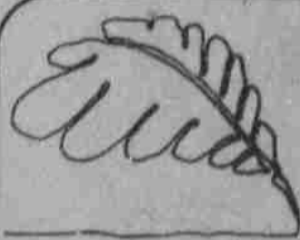
"I tossed him out of the house," said Trucker grumpily. "Imagine that snotty nosed punk criticizing all the things I believe in!"

"Well, I'm sure he'll come to understand us, dear," said Mrs. Trucker philosophically, "when he grows up and has children of his own some day."

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"I'd like to see my lawyer..."



to the editor

Abundantly clear

Dear editor,

Citizens of Lincoln, rejoice in your good fortune! Most politicians manage to survive campaigns and terms in office without ever letting the public know by and for whom their particular government is conducted. But our mayor, Sam Schwartzkopf, by vetoing a bill providing for even minimal funding of the Open Door Health Center on the grounds it is a consumer advocate agency, has made the real source and concern of his government abundantly clear.

It is not for the citizenry as a whole. We are all, after all, consumers. It is not for the small segments of the business and professional community who fear—and perhaps have reason to fear—any program that makes them more open, accessible, accountable and responsible to the general public.

Who or what agency better than the civic government should back a consumer

advocacy agency? Is it our government serving our interests and needs—the interests and needs of all the people and not least those of the most needy and inarticulate—or is it in fact, as Mayor Sam obviously feels, the government of and for the few who fear the people? Let's remember this veto when and if this mayor, who cultivates the common man image, runs again for office.

Larry Doerr

ASUN antics

Dear editor,

If ASUN Senate can get regular publicity by merely passing a resolution asking to have its agenda printed in the *Daily Nebraskan*, maybe the rest of our worthy campus organizations ought to do the same.

That probably wouldn't get us the PR we want, however. Nope, we'd be better off going the old route of turning in requests for "Short Stuff" and thinking through the important things we want to say before writing up press releases.

Too bad ASUN Senate doesn't think through what it has to say and then turn in press releases when it wants to get the news around.

Of course, if it did that, we might never hear from the ASUN Senate again.

Sam Zeleski