



## Student participation ignored in proposed bylaws

The proposed UNL Bylaws have at least one major flaw—students too often must fill the role of spectators.

Instead of participating in several important campus decisions affecting them, students evidently should be content to sit back and watch the faculty and administration wield their authority.

For example, the University president must ask a Faculty-Senate committee for its approval before he names an acting UNL chancellor, according to the proposed bylaws. No mention is made of seeking students' approval.

Another example is the Academic Planning Committee, which recommends changes in UNL's education, research and service programs. Before these changes are made, the Faculty Senate must approve methods to be used, the proposal says. Again, students' views are overlooked.

The proposed bylaws also say faculty and

administration should work together on a continuing basis to plan UNL's academic future. Shouldn't students help with this planning as well?

Yet another example of the forgotten student is the Research Council. The council, which promotes research at UNL, should consist of eight faculty members, according to the proposal. Graduate students, although they do a large part of the research at UNL, are not on the council.

The bylaws proposal does say that students, as well as faculty and staff, should be on the Fee Allocations Board. The board decides how students fees should be spent.

However, the proposal does not say how many board members should come from each of these three groups.

Because the fees are paid by students, students should have the most say in deciding how they are spent. The bylaws

need to state the number of students who should be on the board to insure they continue to have the greatest representation.

These examples point to a prevailing attitude held on campus—the belief that students should not have much to say about the quality of education here.

UNL Chancellor James Zumberge will present the proposed bylaws to the Board of Regents in November. He now is reviewing the changes campus groups have suggested.

Hopefully, Zumberge will agree with the recommendations made by ASUN executives. They would put students on several faculty and staff committees and would require that students be consulted before many campus decisions are made.

A university's main goal is to educate students. Those students should help decide just how they want to be educated.

Jane Owens

## Nation has postcrisis optimism

nancy stohs

### second thoughts

After long anguish over the Vietnam War, student unrest, race riots and whatever else we pass off to the Decadent '60s, topped off by the Watergate crisis, I'm more than glad to see a big smile return to America's face.

"The American psyche has been under great strain," said noted psychologist Dr. Mindover Matter, who handled the strange U.S.A. case for years.

Matter just released a book about the country and the 16 or so conflicting identities it divided into in the '60s and early 70s—college students, over-30s, blacks, bigots, hippies, VFWs.

"But the patient is fully recovered and back to its old self," he assured me. "Now it just thinks it's one person—Polyanna."

So once again we can don our rose-colored glasses, put up homecoming displays, read Horatio Alger's biography and join Optimist International.

But I don't know . . . it seems it's harder to be an optimist these days.

Without something like an unjust war or a corrupt national leader to protest, we seem to be suffering withdrawal symptoms.

College students, the intellectual force behind the new movement, have named it "negative positivism."

Nightly, all over the country, they gather at the bars with their W.I.M. buttons (What's It Matter) to discuss the latest minor crises that haven't occurred and what they're not going to do about them.

When I arrived at a UNL bar, they were beginning a beer chugging contest over how many problems they could deny in one gulp (denying of course that the alcohol and cigarets were harming their health).

"I win! I win!" screamed one contestant, who just finished off inflation, busing, kidnappings, and world hunger as Communist propaganda plots.

"Not with a dirty word like that, you don't," said a colleague. "You're disqualified."

He turned to me. "That's what we call a Fordian slip. You see, inflation doesn't really exist, so Ford's "WIN" plan can't either."

He told me he's a judge for a select club that meets weekly to practice the art of negative rhetoric. "For example, you can't say, 'I'm not worried about rising crime, because that presupposes its existence, and people get uptight,'" he said.

Their leader is a guy named Doubting Tom, a real professional who has it in for anything negative, so much that someone else has to subtract the checks in his checkbook.

Last week he was arrested for placing a vertical beam against all the horizontal road blocks in the city to make them into plus signs.

One time I noticed students just sat around smiling at each other, feeling optimistic, until someone interjected, "Don't you think it's about time we don't do something about the energy crisis that doesn't exist?"

"What more can't I do?" asked someone. "Already I'm driving 75 miles per hour on the interstate, leaving my lights on all night, playing my stereo along with my radio and TV."

In one corner a poker game was turning to national issues.

"I'll see your disbelief in fuel shortages and raise you 50 more over rumors about our weakening prestige abroad," one player said. "And I bet we all come out richer in the end."

I was pleased to see my peers so interested in world affairs—whoops, uninterested in un-affairs.

That's why I'm almost ashamed that when the old TV violence subject came up, and they commented how relieved they were to have the war and Kent State behind us, that I brought up items I'd recently read: slaughtering of innocent people in a bakery holdup; Boston junior high students attacking each other over integration; inmates setting fire to a prison building.

And yet I wondered: Is reacting with such complacency now that several extreme crises are over, really so wise when just as serious—though less obvious—problems persist? Problems that maybe don't affect us so directly, or singly as a nation?

But one prolific student, with the inspiring aura of a preacher, assured me: "Don't worry, man. Don't you know it's better to live than to believe?"