

Student lobby urged as preparation for 'crunch'

Frequent complaints are voiced on this campus against the apathy so prevalent in students, particularly in regard to student government, or rather, the lack of it.

These gripes certainly are legitimate. Indeed, we seem to have sunk into a mire of complacency, mirrored by the rise of disinterest and reflected in the overwhelming concern with what happens at Memorial Stadium in that hour-and-a-half on Saturday afternoons.

joe dreesen

smiling grimly

In all fairness, this is surely not something restricted to UNL. It appears to be a nationwide trend, resulting in part from a backlash of the student activism of the '60s. There is no draft to protest against anymore,

and students instead are caught up in matters of practicality, worried about whether they will have a job after they leave school and so on. But how long can, and will, this "complacency" last?

As you look out your window, beyond the University of Nebraska, you will see that things are disquieting, to say the least. Our economy is failing rapidly, despite the childish utterances of optimism expressed by Gerald Ford.

Unfortunately, this campus is not immune to the ever-increasing ills of our economy. For the crux of the matter is, that John Cornhusker, sitting in room 001 in Harper Hall, is soon to undergo a rude awakening. The problem of apathy will be solved because students are going to be forced into concerted action.

How?

When money becomes tight, budget cuts are frequent and unmerciful, particularly in regard to social programs and education. If the economy continues plunging downward, as predicted, our education will feel the

crunch first and probably hardest. Thus, students are going to have to make sure they have a strong and legitimate voice in decisions made concerning university economics.

The best way of insuring this is by setting up a potent student lobby, funded by the students themselves. In effect, it would be a watchdog program, set up to make sure the Unicameral doesn't strip us of everything except our underwear.

This idea has been tried at several other schools with much success. In fact, the student lobby at Berkeley is rated as one of the most effective lobbying groups in the California legislature, which proves it can work.

You don't "need a weatherman to tell you which way the wind is blowing," and it might be wise to be prepared for the storm—in the event it does occur. Even if the economic situation brightens, a student lobby still would be effective in bypassing the ineffectiveness of student dealings with the regents.

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