

No excuse for closed doors at fees meetings

There's something to be said for closed doors. They keep out drafts and sometimes dust and dirt.

There's also something to be said against closed doors. They can keep public business away from the curious eyes of the public—and keep dirt in.

Nebraska recognized this darker side of the door issue. It's answer? LB325 passed by the Legislature in 1975:

"It is hereby declared to be the policy of this state that the formulation of public policy is public business and may not be conducted in secret.

"Every meeting of a public body shall be open to the public in order that citizens may exercise their democratic privilege of attending and speaking at meetings of public bodies. . ."

Apparently NU does not share the state's insight. The university is getting set to produce its own version of a recent television movie—"Student Fees: Behind Closed Doors."

The University Wide Task Force on Student Fees plans to close its meetings as they review and prepare a report for NU President Ronald Roskens.

Hans Brisch, NU assistant vice president for academic affairs and chairman, says the committee will meet behind closed doors because it will be faster and will allow a free range of opinions to be expressed.

We challenge this closed door policy of the committee. It seems to violate the spirit if not the letter of Nebraska's open meetings law.

To further quote pertinent portions of the law: "Public body shall mean. . . governing bodies of all political subdivisions of the State. . . (or) advisory committees of (those) bodies."

We believe this includes the task force, in effect an advisory body to the NU Board of Regents.

Technically, NU may have a loophole; "This act shall not apply to subcommittees of such bodies (like the NU Board of Regents) unless such subcommittees have been given authority to take formal action on behalf of their parent body. . ."

Technically, it may be a loophole. But ethically the university should be committed to the principle of the law.

The law clearly outlines that principle. By the law, meetings are defined as "for the purposes of briefing, discussion of public business, formation of tentative policy, or the taking of any formal action."

Further, the law outlines that meetings can be closed only by a vote "if a closed session is clearly for the protection of the public interest or for the prevention of needless injury to the reputation of an individual. . ."

According to the law, meetings only can be closed for "(a) Strategy sessions with respect to collective bargaining, real estate purposes or litigation (b) Discussion regarding deployment of security personnel. . . or (c) Investigative proceedings. . . of criminal misconduct."

There is no question that student fees are public business. Chairman Brisch's reasons for closing the meeting do not fall within the guidelines of the law for closing meetings. Indeed, the excuse of speed should not outweigh the right of the public to know.

Officials contend that students will not be denied vital information from the meetings. But who is determining what information is vital?

It's like having football games played before 76,000 empty seats and then depending on the coach to reveal the outcome. In the fees case, however, the football game involves money and the game is public business.

The legal community can decide if NU is violating the law in this case. The public can be sure, however, that it is getting cheated.

There is no valid excuse to close the meetings.

editorials

Raid buries myths about terrorism; corner turned

Washington—It is always dangerous to say a corner has been turned. But it certainly seems so after last week at Mogadishu, a capital most people couldn't even pronounce until terrorists put it on the map.

Not only did the West Germans stage their spectacular and most welcome Israeli-style raid, showing that terrorists are not invincible, but the victims finally reacted the way victims are supposed to react.

In place of the old terrorist-victim syndrome, which saw victims identifying and falling in love with their captors, we saw a realistic appraisal of the kidnapper-murderers. The potential victims—unromantic, at last came off the plane calling the terrorists "sadists." No more, no less.

from the German experience?

Two Cultures

A West German intellectual recently put it clearly.

Of Germany today, Prof. Peter Glotz, West Berlin's Senator for Science and Research, said, "It's as if there are two cultures, a culture for the universities, in which most of the students read only left-wing magazines and newspapers, and a second culture, in which people rely on the (conservative) Springer newspapers and German television for all their information."

This indeed is the strange breakdown in Germany, historically an apt weathervane for health in the Western world. What has happened since the '60s is that, through the "Gruppenprinzip," or group principle which gave students an equal voice with faculty in universities, the anarchist Left has taken over.

This, plus considerable unemployment among the young, has created a country of two societies, two ideologies, virtually two nations.

When one tries to apply the old idea that poverty or desperation, or even a poor distribution of income, causes people to careen to the Far Right or Far Left, it just doesn't stick. Indeed, these young Leftists of the New

Terror in Germany maniacally resent the bourgeois decency of modern-day Germany. In another era, they would have been fanatic Hitler Jugend.

Demystification

It is important for all of us, therefore, that these processes of demystification go forward in Germany, both in terms of the terrorists themselves and in terms of the kind of society they want to achieve.

These are not misunderstood or abused youth; they are spoiled youth. These are not youth who have had no power in their society; they are youth who have had too much power, too early. Although the organized Left originally encouraged them, they are not even a serious Left, they are a darkly frivolous infantile Left.

These are not people fighting for a just cause. These are not the victims of poverty. Indeed, they are the rotting product of too much middle-classness, which, while more than occasionally boresome, is hardly the justification for mayhem.

These are the real lessons of Mogadishu, and they are lessons the rest of the Western world would do well to assess.

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Another myth was laid to rest: terrorists don't fear to die. They have not feared to die so far because virtually none of them have died. Now it is a new chapter.

Yet, in this wholesome process of demystification, in a world I suspect if finally fed up with terrorists and the way they use the decency of decent governments against them, there are other, new questions that demand demystifying.

Why this siege of terrorism in West Germany, one of the more healthy democratic societies?

What is the relationship of the traditional Left to the sheer anarchism of groups like the terrorists of the Baader-Meinhof gang? What can the rest of us in the West learn



letters to the editor

The column by Dennis Onnen about Coach Cipriano (*Daily Nebraskan*, Oct. 21) was amazing in several ways.

At first we thought he was seriously trying to defend Coach Cipriano's winning record which is padded each year by small school patsies. Or, we thought he was defending Cipriano's great defense consisting of "who can hold the ball the longest."

It was then when we realized it was October, the middle of the football season, and his column is called 4th and 20. What a relief, he doesn't know anything about basketball anyway.

Sid Dinsdale
Mary Hefti

Puzzle problem

That's it, *Daily Nebraskan*. You have finally managed to enrage the masses of students who normally don't know or care what is going on. You have forced us unrepresented and normally meek students to take arms and stand up for our rights.

If one more issue comes out without a crossword puzzle, we shall be forced to organize even further and take any action, I repeat, any action necessary to ensure our beloved crossword puzzles are in each and every issue. This is your last warning *Daily Nebraskan*, we mean business.

Students for Equal Representation of Crossword Puzzles (SERCP)

Editor's note: Sorry, we don't like to leave the puzzles out either. Part of the problem is a cut in student fees this year for the *Daily Nebraskan*. We have to run a higher percentage of ads to make up the lost revenue. That means less space for important news and features this campus deserves. We promise we'll try hard not to let it happen again.

Walk-on woes

"They turn out in hopes of making the big time. For most, it is little more than a dream."

So says sports reporter Jim Kay about walk-on basketball players (*Daily Nebraskan*, Oct. 19). Is making the varsity basketball team "little more than a dream" for walk-on hopefuls at Nebraska?

Maybe. However, I find it hard to believe that there aren't people on campus who have the ability to make the varsity basketball team, while there have been many walk-on football players.

Why? Because football coaches take a prospective athlete and develop that person to his full capabilities as a football player.

This has not been done at Nebraska in basketball. The coaching record of Joe Cipriano during his 14 years at Nebraska is proof. If one takes into account the equality of teams Nebraska plays year after year, one finds that Cip's record at Nebraska (roughly .500) is less than mediocre.

It also may be noted that in those 14 years, Cip has yet to win a Big 8 Conference basketball championship.

As yet, Nebraska does not have "big time" basketball. Cip has had his chance. Let's use the new Sports Complex to its fullest potential and give it what it deserves: a good, solid basketball team.

We have good and potentially good basketball players, now let's get a basketball coach capable of using and developing that talent.

Mark A. Nastase