

With a 44-vote margin

Cuca beats Nigro to ASUN top spot

By Shelley Smith

In the midst of cheers and toasts, Bud Cuca, ASUN presidential winner, said he felt like he had just won the state basketball championship.

"I feel like a burst of energy—I'm really excited," he said.

Cuca, with the Students of the University of Nebraska (SUN) party defeated Joe Nigro with the Students Organized for Active Representation (SOAR) party 1,187 to 1,143, according to Electoral Commissioner Nancy Eicher.

Cuca said when he learned he had won the election, he had to ask again to make sure it was true.

"It was noisy, and I heard Nancy (Eicher) say congratulations you're the new student regent, I said 'you mean we won?'" he said.

Cuca said he was not only excited for himself, but also excited for his party which he said "worked awful damn hard" to get him elected.

'A lot to learn'

Nigro said that while he was personally disappointed, he too was proud of his party. SOAR elected over two thirds of its candidates and both vice presidents to the senate.

"I still believe in the SOAR philosophy," he said, and added, "Bud's going to have a lot to learn."

Cuca agreed there are some things he will have to learn about the presidency, but said he felt he has enough general knowledge to learn them quickly.

"Joe has experience that I don't have. But my perspective in the long run, I feel, will be beneficial to the students," he said.

Cuca said throughout his campaign he proposed many ideas that are favorable to students. Now, he said, it is up to him and the senate to carry them out.

"I'm really excited about the changes we can make this year," he said.

"We can really go out and do things for the students and really find out what interests them," he added.

Kissing your sister

Cuca said he felt the main difference between the run off election, and the first election held March 21, was that students had the opportunity to focus on two people.

"They were able to get a better perspective of what each of us was really like," he said.

"The last election was as Bob Devaney puts it: 'a tie in football is like kissing your sister,'" he said.

However, Nigro said he felt the runoff was basically a Greek/Independent race.

"We really tried this year to break out of that syndrome," he said.

"Instead it brought back those (living unit) prejudices."

Cuca said if he could have changed one thing about the campaign he would have changed the ideas some people had that the runoff was a race of living unit factions.

"What I respect most is people. People come first not if they're Independent or Greek or Italian," he said.

The runoff election was necessary because of an NU Board of Regents rule passed last spring requiring senate executives to be elected by a majority vote.

The Hare balloting system was implemented by the Electoral Commission to allow voters to rank their choices. By allocating trailing candidates votes to the leading candidates, the system should have allowed for a majority.

However, because voters marked more than one first, second, or third choice, wrote in candidates, or declined to select a first choice, the system failed.

Nigro led Cuca by about 200 votes in the March 21 election.

Nigro said the regents' rule only alienated students from student government.

"It was hard financially, took me away from my studies, and it turned a lot of people off," he said.

"I won once—usually that's enough," he said.

Building a rapport

Cuca said today as his first day as the ASUN president-elect, he would first contact vice presidents Hubert Brown and Kim Weiland.

"I want to start building a rapport with them. We're all going to need to communicate freely," he said.

With communication to students, and not only to student senators, Cuca said he hopes the senate can become more effective this year.

He praised the senate-elect for having a diversity of views and emphasized the need to relate those views with their constituents.

"That's probably the main difference between Joe and I. I want to work with students and not just student senators," he said.

Open doors

He said he plans to have an open door policy with students, and will urge them to "come to me with their problems."

"Our job is to help the students of the university, the regents and the state of Nebraska," he said.

Cuca also praised Nigro, calling him, "a hell of a person."

"I respect him to the maximum and I hope he remains interested in student government," he said.

Nigro wished Cuca luck and added that he hopes the students don't lose out.

He said Cuca has always talked about being a good listener, and that he should put it to practice when he steps in office.

He also said he wasn't sure if he would remain active in student government.

"I'll never stop caring what happens to students. I really wanted the challenge of leading the students into a new decade," he said.



Photo by Mark Billingsley

Newly-elected ASUN President Bud Cuca.

Diplomat: Nicaraguan rebels failing

By Mike Sweeney

The balance of power in Nicaragua seems to have swung in favor of President Anastasio Somoza Debayle, whose administration has continuously violated basic human rights, a state department official said Wednesday.

Daniel Welter, state department desk officer in charge of day-to-day American-Nicaraguan relations, said the Sandinista National Liberation Front opposing Somoza is losing international support, has failed to gain the confidence of the country's peasants, and is militarily outnumbered by Somoza's national guard.

The national guard put down a month-long Sandinista rebellion in September, using indiscriminate force, Welter said.

Another Sandinista rebellion is almost a certainty, and could come as early as this month or as late as August, the *New York Times* reported last month.

In any new uprising the Sandinistas would be decimated, Welter predicted.

"The national guard eventually has won every encounter with the Sandinistas," Welter said, and the guard's strength has almost doubled since the September insurrection.

If war breaks out again, America will be faced with difficult policy decisions, Welter said. The Carter Administration is concerned about Nicaraguan human rights, but does not want to interfere in the internal affairs of a foreign government, he said.

"Our resources are limited," he said. "We're obviously beyond the point of sending in the Marines."

Complicating future U.S. action towards Nicaragua was a switch in foreign policy set off by the September war, Welter said. Policy changed from one of non-intervention to one calling for mediation when the September war brought reports of the national guard bombing and shooting at towns from the air, Welter said. There were also documented reports of people in city streets "being mowed down (by gunfire) with no questions asked," he said.

Attempts at negotiation fell through, and in February America cut \$2.5 million of military aid and almost all economic aid to Nicaragua.

Americ's response to a new outbreak of violence would probably be an effort to bring about a multi-lateral non-military settlement, Welter said.

Cuba, a country which has aided rebellions in Africa, has "shown restraint" in Nicaragua, Welter said. He said Cuba has given some aid to the Sandinistas, but has not gotten involved militarily, perhaps in hopes of improving relations with the U.S. and perhaps because it does not see the Sandinista revolution as "viable," he said.

America's non-interference policy toward Nicaraguan politics is actually intervention, said Journalism Prof.

Roberto Esquenazi-Mayo in a discussion of Nicaraguan-American relations later Wednesday evening at the Lincoln Center Building.

without outside help, "how can the Sandinistas fight the national guard?" Esquenazi-Mayo asked.

A positive approach to the problem in Nicaragua is to make clear-cut statements of policy, he said.

"Clear-cut open discussion has a great deal of influence," he said. "We should sit down and say, 'We are against Somoza because . . .'" he said his voice trailing off.

Esquenazi-Mayo warned that the continued presence of the Somozas in Nicaragua could result in Russian intervention, resulting in "another Cuba."

Welter said it would take a massive demonstration by the Nicaraguan peasants to depose Somoza, whose family has ruled Nicaragua for almost 40 years.

"What we don't know is the mood of the people," Welter said. "They seem frustrated and fearful. But since January, we have not seen a massive outpouring of anti-government support."

The Sandinistas have garnered most of their support from the upper classes and children of government officials, he said.

"It has not been a peasant movement," he said. The extent of popular support for the Sandinistas is unknown, Welter said. He said about 2,000 people may belong to the movement, while the *New York Times* estimated the national guard has 12,000 troops.

Besides the Sandinistas, Somoza faces opposition from conservatives in government and young business leaders, Welter said.

However, the president has seemed unwilling to compromise, rejecting international appeals for a vote on whether he should remain in office.

"It's impossible to see the mentality of Somoza," Welter said. "He may be saying 'It's me or the Communists—a sort of divine right mentality.'"

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