

# Stadium addition — Is now the time?

Is Nebraska football more important than the energy crisis and skyrocketing inflation?

Not surprisingly, but by listening to some people at UNL you'd think the answer is yes.

NU Regent Robert Prokop says now is a good time to build a \$6.4 million addition to UNL's Memorial Stadium.

Now, when \$1 a gallon gasoline prices are a reality, if there is any gas at all, the value of the dollar has fallen to a record low with not much hope for it to climbing back up—he says now is a good time.

According to Prokop the energy shortage probably will not affect Cornhusker football fans. "They're going to come to the games anyway," he said.

But, is now a good time when the University budget is already bitterly strained? Students at UNL pay the second highest tuition in the Big Eight; Faculty salaries are the second lowest. 2000 students last year were refused admittance into the College of Business Administration because there weren't enough funds to hire professors.

And now is a good time?

Prokop said if there isn't an addition, what do you tell people who want tickets?"

## Energy crisis: everyone points at everyone else

It is finger pointing time in Washington. Everyone is blaming someone else for the country's energy problems.

President Carter points his fingers at the Congress which has rejected or substantially altered almost every energy proposal he has sent to the Hill. Carter also yells at the large oil companies for taking excess profits in a time of crisis.

The Congress points its many fingers in untold number of directions but they seem to center on the president and the oil companies. They say Carter has failed to provide adequate leadership in the crisis and his plans are unworkable.

Some Congressmen also blame big oil but they go even further than Carter and chastise the companies for withholding gas from the marketplace to raise the price and for conspiring to exploit the American people.

The oil companies, of course, blame the government for the energy crisis and in particular criticize government controls and regulation on energy.

## I. kent wolgamott

They did however, win a victory when Carter began phased decontrol of domestically produced oil on June 1.

But the oil companies claim they need even more money and higher prices to produce the energy the country will need into the eighties and beyond.

The public is left in a state of confusion as to what is going on and blames all three, Carter, Congress and the oil companies.

Upon closer examination all three claims have some merit but each participant in the debate must also be held responsible for the action they take in dealing, or failing to deal with the crisis.

In 1977, Jimmy Carter sent to the Congress a comprehensive national energy proposal. It contained, among other things, a crude oil equalization tax, intended to raise the price of domestically produced oil to the world level and at the same time gain money for the government energy research, but Congress said no.

He also wanted to continue price controls on natural gas, but the Congress acted in just the opposite way, raising prices lifting controls on new natural gas.

Earlier this year the president sent up an emergency gas rationing plan. After negotiation with Senate leaders that body narrowly passed the plan. However, the House rejected Carter's plan and then rejected a plea by the President to draw up their own plan.

And Carter's decision to decontrol oil is being opposed by some Congressmen, however they are not expected to be able to muster enough votes to reinstate controls on oil.

The Congress rejected the crude oil equalization tax as an unnecessary burden for the oil companies and consumers.

It deregulated natural gas to increase production according to members which supported that step.

The House rejected the gas rationing plan because it was thought to be inequitable, favoring one area of the country over another.

And the opposition to the decontrol decision results from a fear of higher prices to the consumers, especially in

If the addition is built, what will students be told?

Will they be told that a \$6.4 million addition to their stadium is necessary? Or, in the interest of being economical, a \$6.7 million new stadium—away from campus—would be better?

And then there's a question of who will actually pay for this illustrious addition.

Administrators assure students the burden will not be placed on them. But students never wanted a new stadium or addition anyway.

And although administrators claim students will not have to pay, they have still failed to secure a bond rating for the facility and it is quite possible that an extra \$300,000 will be tacked on the bill when the bonds mature.

And what else is quite possible is that the stadium won't make enough money to pay the bill, and students will be forced to reach in their pockets anyway.

This vicious circle between the regents and the students is not new. Board members, in the past, have continually ignored student requests on

alcohol, visitation and funding of speakers programs. The regents claim they are to represent taxpayers and not just students.

Frank Lauer's ad encouraged Nebraska citizens to write their regent requesting a new stadium. He stated: "Let your voice be heard. It's your University and your football program!"

Agreed, taxpayers are a vital part of the University. But the university is not for the taxpayers. Their requests and wishes should not supersede the welfare of students who attend the university to obtain an education. Especially if their requests are for better recreation facilities when it is the quality of education at UNL that needs the help.

The decision is now in the hands of the executive board of the legislature. So far only Sen. Donald Dworak, who is not on the committee, has made any attempt to thwart action on the addition.

He realizes the energy crunch is very real and knows it does not exempt Cornhusker football fans. And possibly, he is the only person involved who is speaking for his constituents.



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the northeastern states.

They say, and they are correct, that Carter does not follow up his proposals with adequate lobbying pressure on the Hill.

They say, and properly so, that the proposals have flaws. But, the Congress has not proposed any alternative solutions nor have members gone out of their way to work with the President to find an acceptable compromise.

And it seems the parochial nature of the Congress and especially the House of Representatives has come to the fore, as Congressmen defeat sound proposals out of fear of voter retaliation.

Meanwhile, the oil companies are sitting back and getting rich. Company profits for the first quarter of this year were up dramatically from the same period a year ago and the price of oil products continues to go up.

But, they say they still do not have enough money to obtain the hard to get petroleum necessary to increase domestic supply.

However, they are not hoarding oil to reap profits but to prepare for the winter heating oil demand and to recoup from last winter's depletion of their stock.

But, the oil companies offer few solutions to the energy crunch except the simplistic, give us more money and we'll give you the energy philosophy they have espoused for years.

Carter has attempted to deal with these problems in many ways but has generally failed to win approval of his ideas by either the Congress, the oil companies or the public.

Beginning his push for the energy package, he called the energy crisis "the moral equivalent of war" and he was correct.

But his followup has hardly been the decisive action expected of a president in wartime.

Carter accepted the butchered results of his plan from the Congress and labeled it a victory.

His Department of Energy is disorganized and slow even for the federal bureaucracy.

He has not convinced the majority of the people or the Congress that strong action in the energy field is necessary.

But he has tried.

And what of the public? What have the people done about the energy shortage?

Until very recently, nothing.

With 80 cent gasoline, tourism travel is decreasing and Americans are using less gas, but only because the price is high. (Remember the crude oil equalization tax.)

But polls show the country still does not overwhelmingly feel there is an energy crisis or shortage.

The problem does exist and will continue to exist.

Our political leaders must take action and the people will have to change our pattern of energy use.

Postponing decisions as is the current method of doing business, especially in the Congress is merely prolonging the inevitable.

The President and the Congress must begin to work together on this problem. Finding acceptable solutions and then selling the solutions to the public.

They must hold the oil companies accountable for their actions and profits and take the necessary to keep the government in control of energy policy not the energy companies.

And the people must cooperate in solving the problem by conserving energy wherever possible.

It sounds simple, but it has not proved to be, and with the entire House, and one third of the Senate up for election next year, such cooperation will be slow in coming.

For the statesmanlike decisions which one needed in this area are much harder for politicians to make when they can be thrown out of office for making them.

So, the stalemate will go on, and the accusations will be made, but we should realize.

It's everyone's problems and everyone's fault.

## letters policy

The Summer Nebraskan welcomes reader comment and will publish letter and guest editorials that are signed and capable of verification. The editor reserves the right to condense letters, retaining the writer's point. Timeliness and clarity of writing will be considered.

Letters should be received by the Summer Nebraskan Monday prior to the date of desired publication.