

Chairman's role remains the same

By Kent Warneke

Robert Raun was chairman of the NU Board of Regents when UNL students protested the Vietnam conflict.

He attended regents meetings when UNL students took little interest in the regents' decisions.

During his 14 years as a member of the regents, Raun has helped make decisions that have directly affected UNL students. With his election as the chairman of the regents in their last meeting, Raun returns to the position that he had in 1970 and 1971.

While the issues and problems facing the regents have changed through the years, Raun said he feels that the chairman's role has remained basically the same.

"I enjoy being chairman," Raun said. "Although there

is extra work that goes along with the position, it's well worth it."

Minden native

The Minden native, was first appointed to the regents in 1966 when Val Peterson resigned to run for governor of Nebraska.

During those first three years, Raun said, being a member of the board was largely a ceremonial position. Enrollment at UNL was expanding, federal funds were relatively easy to come by and costs were very modest—most of which has changed, he said.

"During 1970 and 1971 when I was chairman, student protests were at their height," Raun said. "I could predict that by the time the meeting was over I would have a headache."

As chairman, Raun said, he needs to remain neutral on all matters, controversial or not, and conduct a fair meeting.

Fair opportunity

"Even if I disagree with the opinion being expressed, I have to give fair opportunity to everyone," he said.

Raun sees the matter of finance as the pivotal issue and concern for the regents in the next year and with costs rising, he sees no easy solution to the problem, he said.

The 1951 UNL graduate said he hopes for an adequate budget for university needs, which would include a reasonable pay increase for faculty members.

"Politicians might say that our budget request is unreasonable, but I hope not," Raun said. "Only time will tell."

Raun will be advocating cooperative efforts with other quality institutions so that trading between neighboring schools will become more common. Each school has its own strong programs and if students can be helped to find the strongest possible program in the area, then cooperative efforts are well worth the time involved, he said.

"We have one and a half million citizens in Nebraska and we cannot feasibly offer everything for everybody," Raun said. "So I'm going to work on cooperative efforts to try and lower our costs."

Feasible idea

Raun said the idea is feasible because it would enable more funds to go to strong programs instead of being spent on weak programs.

Three of Raun's five children are attending UNL and he feels that they help him to get reactions on certain issues. At one time all five children were attending UNL and he said that when tuition prices increased, he was as concerned as anyone.

Student representation on the Board of Regents in 1974 was the result of a lot of work. Raun said he supported the matter because he thought it would be a perfect solution to students' claims of lack of representation.

To be as effective as possible, Raun said an ASUN president should do his homework concerning the agenda, be prepared for meetings and enter into debate.

As a farmer and a graduate of UNL's ag college, Raun said that he has taken special interest in agricultural matters and that he would continue to do so.



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