

opinion/editorial

Religious speaker policy too vague



An irresistible force swept into the Nebraska Union Wednesday evening—and promptly met an immovable object.

Josh McDowell, Christian activist, returned to UNL after a five-year absence to speak on the physical evidence pointing to the resurrection of Jesus Christ. And, as it is wont to do, history repeated itself.

Angry students have charged that McDowell violated university rules.

According to those rules, "University facilities will not be available for any organized event or activity if one of the essential features is religious worship or testimony in any of its various forms."

Some students contend McDowell gave testimony, McDowell counters that he stopped short of doing so, and UNL administrators, caught in the middle, say they're not sure. Although officials in charge of student affairs on the three NU campuses are reviewing religion policy, they currently are unable to say whether or not McDowell broke the rules.

Perhaps they never will reach that decision. The definition of testimony is subjective enough that what is testimony for one is intellectual argument for another.

Jim Raglin, director of public affairs for the

office of the NU president, said there would be no violation of NU policy if McDowell's speech was an intellectual discussion of religion. McDowell agreed to discuss the intellectual side of religion, but the problem which surfaced Wednesday is that religion springs more from the heart than the head. Efforts to separate the two are doomed to failure.

The university policy toward religious speakers is too vague to be workable. It also may be indefensible from a legal standpoint.

It is clear that the university's policy toward religious speakers and the content of religious speeches on campus are incompatible. The university must either change the rules or change the speech. The first option is the better of the two and the current policy should be modified or abandoned.

As long as the Josh McDowells receive no student fees, they should be welcome on campus. Those who do not wish to hear them can stay home.

We realize that university administrators were treading the line separating church and state when they made the rules, but in retrospect, aside from some overzealous advertising, the Josh McDowell speech was relatively harmless.

Mike Sweeney

Got a beef about the DN? Ombudsperson will listen

By Liz Austin

Well, the editor didn't take any "unexpected" stands, so it has really been a calm week at the Daily Nebraskan.

Complaints this week have been fairly minor, but the minor things are important too, especially to the reader making the

ombudsperson

complaint. The ombudsperson office is designed to handle complaints, so readers with criticisms are encouraged to contact the ombudsperson.

The complaints also have been fairly arbitrary. They range anywhere from a complaint about a factual error in a story to disagreement with a movie review.

With any factual error the Daily Nebraskan will print a correction if it learns of the mistake within a reasonable period of time.

But a review is a different story. Many

readers were upset because they apparently liked a movie that the Daily Nebraskan reviewer did not.

A movie review is the opinion of the writer and is not meant to be taken as the gospel truth. If they write as if they are an expert on the subject, it is because they actually are. After all, isn't everyone an expert on their own opinion?

Of course there are things in the Daily Nebraskan that offend some readers that never occurred to anyone on the staff. These things are not done maliciously and the best thing that can be done is to have them pointed out to the staff, so that more thought can be put into it if the same issue comes up again.

Other complaints stem not from what is in the Daily Nebraskan, but what is not. The Daily Nebraskan does its best to make sure all campus organizations get equal coverage and usually does a good job.

However, sometimes it misses things and this is usually because it was unaware of the event.

In other words readers should let the Daily Nebraskan know if it is missing something.

Perceived 'rift' between blacks, Jews misread

WASHINGTON—Just last fall, newspapers were running stories on the new "black-Jewish rift," a supposed falling out of old allies in the aftermath of Andrew Young's removal as U.S. ambassador to the United Nations.

william raspberry

It now turns out that the "rift" was more figmentation than fragmentation—at least so far as blacks are concerned.

The first survey by the newly formed Data Black Public Opinion Polls Inc. reveals that black Americans remain more favorably disposed toward Jews than toward virtually any other American minority except Hispanics, and even then by only a slight margin.

The question, asked of 1,146 black Americans between Nov. 23, 1979, and Jan. 2, 1980, was: "How do you feel about each of the following groups (Irish, Italians, Jews, Hispanics, White Anglo-

Saxon Protestants)?" Possible choices were "very favorable," "somewhat favorable," "neutral," "somewhat unfavorable," "very unfavorable" and "not sure."

Jews and Hispanics were tied for the most favorable responses (41 percent), though 11 percent recorded negative feelings about Jews to only 6 percent negative responses toward Hispanics. Thirty-eight percent described themselves as "neutral" toward Jews, compared to 37 percent for Hispanics.

As to which minorities blacks thought were most favorable toward them, Jews led Hispanics by 35 to 33 percent. Blacks liked WASPs least of all the groups and also thought they were least well-liked by WASPs. In every case, blacks said they liked other minorities more than they felt they were liked by them.

But blacks, according to the survey released last Thursday, make a distinction between their attitudes toward American Jews and their support of Israel and its Mid-East policies.

For instance, when asked which country or group they most supported in the Middle East conflict, 22 percent of the

The present system of filling U.S. military ranks is working smoothly and effectively. It would be unwise to abandon that system in favor of the creation of another government bureaucracy-selective service.

The all-volunteer army is a success. The goals set by nationwide recruiters have been met until only this past year. According to Staff Sgt. Jim Vanderslice of the Lincoln Army Recruiting Office, this past year that goal was missed by only 1 percent. The other military forces boast similar figures.

This 1 percent miss on filling military enlistment goals does not merit action being considered by President Carter. His planned Selective Service program would cost American taxpayers \$10 million, according to U.S. News and World Report. Do the recent developments in Afghanistan merit this?

Hardly. The last time Afghanistan was in the news the U.S. Ambassador had just been murdered and a pro-Soviet regime installed. That action, in 1978, resulted in little response by the Carter administration other than a cutoff of American foreign aid. Last month when the pro-Soviet Amin

government was about to fall, the Soviets honored an economic and military treaty signed in 1978 with their Afghanistan ally.

While the invasion of one country by another cannot be condoned, Afghanistan is little loss to the United States. Afghanistan was a USSR satellite before the invasion and remains one today. The invasion of Afghanistan did not signal the loss of a U.S. ally.

It is true that more men are needed in the military. However, registration is not the answer. Military recruiting goals should be raised. These new goals easily could be met. The beginning pay being offered by the military begins as low as \$5385.60 yearly. Even when benefits such as housing, food, clothing, retirement and job training are added, the figure is increased only to the Navy's self-professed \$8500.

According to the U.S. Bureau of the Census, the average American male with less than eight years TOTAL education earns \$9500. High school graduates with any college more than double the figure. If military pay increases are implemented so the military is competitive with the civilian world, higher recruiting goals will be met.

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respondents named Egypt. Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization were tied for second at 11 percent, followed by 7 percent for other Arab states. Twenty-eight percent were unsure of their sympathies.

In short, it appears that what was widely read as a rift between blacks and Jews is nothing more than a difference of opinion on specific policy questions.

Interestingly, these nuances in black opinion may never have been revealed through the more popular public opinion polls. For while most of the pollsters make a point of including blacks in their samples, the total number of blacks in their surveys is too small to provide more than the most general of conclusions.

Indeed, it is that very shortcoming in most polls that led to the creation of Data Black, a joint venture of groups headed by Dr. Kenneth B. Clark, a psychologist, and Percy Sutton, Manhattan Borough president.

Other responses in the first of the quarterly surveys planned by Data Black reveal a tendency of black Americans to see themselves in two distinct lights: as blacks and as Americans.

For instance, asked what they considered the most important problems facing the United States today, the respondents listed Iran at the top, followed in order by inflation, unemployment and energy. But unemployment was seen as the No. 1 problem facing black Americans, followed by racism, job discrimination and housing.

Similarly, the survey indicates that blacks think Jimmy Carter is doing a good job as President (though they don't rate him quite as high as do white Americans), but the overall response was negative when the question was how well Carter is keeping his promises to blacks.

The survey also found that blacks are somewhat less supportive of legalized abortion than are Americans generally, with only 19 percent holding that abortion should be legal under virtually all circumstances.

But despite the relatively weak support of abortion, nearly two-thirds of the respondents favored the use of government funds to pay for the abortions of poor women. This is higher than most comparable national figures.

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