

letters to the editor

I must respond to some recent comments made by Renee Wessels that hit me like nails scraping on a blackboard.

I find her complacent attitude on ASUN elections deplorable, especially since she promised upon election that reform would be "top on her priority list" (March 21). Court suits do seem to have become a routine part of our annual elections, but rather than accept it as inevitability, why not try to reform our election system?

Many seem content to experiment every year with different systems in order to comply with a regental mandate of two years ago. Why use a detrimental hit-miss-try again method when we could try instead to change the mandate itself? I have found some of the regents willing to listen; we may get them to act.

Concerning Fund A refunds, Wessels made the brilliant deduction that the low number of students requesting a refund on ASUN fees shows that "most students support having a portion of their go to ASUN." This is somewhat like saying that the low number of people attending LES meetings shows that most people don't care about their rising electrical rates, or that the low number of people who use pizza coupons out of the Daily Nebraskan shows that most students don't like pizza.

I know of many students who don't want their fees going to ASUN, but simply spaced off getting their refund. Most people space off anything concerning ASUN, even refunds. The fact that they had better things to do than chase down 88 cents should not necessarily mean they support the fees or system.

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Issues are religious

Although I am not a student at UNL, I trust that you will allow me the opportunity to respond to your editorial in the Oct. 2 issue, titled "Political Churches Cross Boundary," since I am one of those that you are so quick to want to "strip... of their clerical robes."

Your editorial is filled with misinformation in relation to the Moral Majority, or of the reasons for the positions you attribute to it. You very obviously did not do your homework before you set out to educate your readers. Let me suggest the following areas as examples.

First, the Moral Majority is not an organization of churches, nor are any church bodies asked to become involved. Our church here, as an example, has no direct ties to the organization. You call for the

Threat . . . .

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was no chance for a woman to attain a position of authority in the church.

Not much has changed in this regard, women were and still are considered second-class citizens in religious institutions. Women are still victims of the church's mandates.

The idea that a few zealots now can or should control the lives of many is pompous arrogance. Like prohibition in the 1920s, abortion will not be stopped by laws. Abortions will only go into "speak-easy form," but with more damaging effects.

The rich will find a way to get what they want and the poor will die unjustly.

Christianity has been criticized by many for usurping power in various institutions. The Christian religion has co-mingled with dictators, despots and corporations for an eternity. As many an "underdeveloped"

Black vote . . . .

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Incidentally, not voting is the least attractive alternative. In the first place, there is no way of telling which uncast ballot is an act of protest and which a reflection of apathy. And in the second place, the presidential race isn't the only event in the derby.

Black voters who stay home out of disgust with Carter and fear of Reagan may miss the chance to send a few more blacks and politically-compatible whites to Congress, to the state legislatures and to local courts, councils and city halls.

removal of tax exempt status thus has no foundation in fact.

Second, you lamented admission that abortion can be considered a religious issue but the ERA and gay rights are not religious issue is to speak of your ignorance of the issues involved. Anytime a person's religious holy books speak of an item that is current in society, it is a religious issue for that person. For those who follow the teachings of the Bible, the afore mentioned items are of great significance as religious issues.

Much of our western culture and legal system is based upon the moral teachings of the Old Testament of the Bible; as an example, our laws about murder are based upon the 10 commandments. As to abortion, Many Christians believe, upon biblical teachings, that life starts at conception, and therefore the deliberate taking of the life of the unborn is murder.

The ERA is a religious issue, for it attacks the home and undermines the structure of the family, both of which are taught in the Bible. You lament the church invading domain of the state, but the state has already scaled the wall of separation, as there is much documentation that the various branches of government are already invading the privacy of the local church.

It is conceivable, and most likely, that if the ERA passes, the state will all but destroy the wall of separation by forcing churches to accept women in roles or positions that a given local church may not wish to do. As an example, Baptist churches historically have not been in the practice of ordaining women to the Gospel ministry. But, under the ERA, the courts could easily force a church to do so, if one of its members were to take the matter to court.

Gay rights, again, are a moral issue, for the Bible says much about sodomy or homosexuality, always from a negative viewpoint, and always condemning it. If you want some evidence of this, read the first chapter of Romans in the New Testament, any translation will do, for it all comes out the same.

Sure, the Bible teaches that God is a God of love, and He loves the sinner, but it nowhere teaches that God loves His sin. This is the reason that Christ came into this world, to save and deliver mankind from its slavery to sin.

Now, just because I happen to be a preacher, does not mean that as an individual of this country, I can not speak out on the issues of the day?

Did becoming a Christian, or becoming a preacher strip me of my legal rights? Or, can I not speak out in my pulpit on the moral issues that the Bible speaks about?

country knows: where missionaries go, Exxon oil usually follows.

Christians particularly must not let the fundamentalist movement speak for them. The best of what Christianity offers is understanding and tolerance. Fundamentalists do not speak for those causes.

In 1971, the first year of New York State's liberalized abortion law, Mayor John Lindsay said that more than one-half of the abortions performed there (264,339) involved out-of-state women. Other statistics show that in New York in 1972, there were about 750 fewer hospital admissions of women who had tried self-induced abortions.

In ignoring this kind of evidence, fundamentalists exhibit a concern for the life of unborn that unjustifiably outweighs the concern for the lives of those already living. The pro-capital punishment stance that their platform supports is another curious example of this.

For these reasons, I'd have to agree with the political and civil rights organizations that are backing Operation Big Vote. It is important that the black vote not be wasted.

What I find hard to swallow is the notion that the surest way to waste a black vote is to cast it for a presidential candidate other than Jimmy Carter.

At some point, we have to begin questioning the wisdom of remaining a one-party people in a two-party country. Why not now?

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One of the areas of your failure to do your homework is that the Moral Majority does not support any political candidates, but it is organized to do three main things: encourage people to register so they can vote; disseminate information about the moral issues of the day; and encourage people to go to the polls on election day. I have not publically supported any candidate, nor has this church done so, that for is not our responsibility.

Lastly, I do not understand the double standard you obviously adhere to. Specifically, the actions you attributed to the new left of the 60s and 70s, were widely promoted by men in religious positions, some of them even being put in jail on some occasions. They did so because they spoke out on what they considered to be the moral issues of the day. They had every right to do so.

But, now that someone else comes along with views that do not fit your own,

you say we are crossing over the boundary line. That is a double standard.

Instead of condemning those who speak out on the moral issue of the day, you, in your position representing a free, unbiased press, should be encouraging debate, so that the voting public will know just what the issues are, and can make up their minds as to how to vote based upon their own convictions.

Richard W. Johnson  
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