

Economy needs democracy, says labor activist

By Charles Flowerday

The man accused by the *Wall Street Journal* of "terrorizing businessmen" with his "corporate campaign" against the J.P. Stevens Co., told a student conference Saturday night that life is an equal sharing of power.

Labor activist Ray Rogers said that groups backing the labor movement, the civil rights movement and the women's movement must not be afraid to enter into a struggle for power with the powerful.

"You must confront power with power — otherwise you are only pursuing a lesson in futility," Rogers told students attending the ninth annual National Students Association Conference at UNL.

"Concentrated economic power transforms itself into concentrated political power," Rogers said. This leads to social inequities, he continued.

Breaking up this "equation" will lead to a greater and more equitable distribution of power in this country, Rogers said.

Hard to build power

Rogers acknowledged that building the "people power" to counter these inequities is very difficult, demanding much time, energy and hard work.

Rogers began a career in social activism as a VISTA volunteer in the Appalachian Mountains.

From there he started a private political campaign working with the United Mine Workers. He played a major role in the Farah strike and boycott after that.



Photo by Ole Gronli

Ray Rogers

The Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America concluded their boycott of Farah with a successful contract settlement and merged with the struggling Textile Workers Union in 1976. The newly-formed Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union then inaugurated a consumer boycott against the J.P. Stevens Co., a multi-national textile firm.

Rogers was called in to launch an unorthodox corporate campaign designed to complement the boycott.

"Why is it something can be in the interests of 99 percent of the people and yet 1 percent can get their way?" Rogers asked in explaining his campaign.

Financial isolation

"They get power because they control and manage the money supply," Rogers said. He said his strategy in the Stevens boycott was to isolate Stevens from the financial community — the banks and insurance companies which supported the company with massive infusions of capital.

His problem was how to pit one corporate power against another in the divide and conquer strategy, he said. Interlocking boards of directors of large national banks, insurance companies and other corporations were connected with J.P. Stevens through the company's board of directors or through multi-million dollar credit relations.

His campaign focused on bringing those companies into the Stevens struggle, which none of them wanted, Rogers said. By disrupting stockholders' meetings, running alternate candidates for directors, and by picketing such major firms as Metropolitan Life, New York Life, Sperry-Rand Corp., and Avon, Rogers got the firms to use their influence on behalf of Stevens' workers.

Rogers' ultimate goal, he said, was to totally alienate Stevens from the financial community.

"I knew Stevens could not survive in a vacuum," he said. Once these corporations realized that their own images and credibility were being damaged by being dragged into the Stevens conflict, he said they would pursue their own interests by trying to exert influence over Stevens.

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Student leader criticizes educational reductions

By William Graf

"The commitment to accessible, affordable and quality education in our country is rapidly eroding," said Janice Fine, national chairperson of the United States Student Association.

"It is obvious that in the White House and our congress, education is clearly a secondary concern," Fine said at a news conference called by student leaders from across the country participating in the Ninth Annual National State Students Association Conference at UNL this weekend.

"Presently, cutbacks in the Pell Grant program will eliminate 500,000 middle income students and reduce the maximum grant award for the neediest students to \$1,800, down from \$2,200 as proposed by the Carter Administration," she said.

And if an additional 12 percent — \$2 billion — is cut from social service programs, as Reagan has asked, "it will virtually eliminate all students above the poverty level from the program (Pell Grant) and reduce the maximum award for the neediest students to \$1,670," she said.

Education too expensive

Rick Mockler, UNL student body president and

member of the Board of Directors of the Nebraska State Student Association, said the NU Central Administration last spring predicted hundreds of Nebraskans would be "priced out of an education" by federal budget cuts already approved by Congress.

In view of further cuts, increasing tuition and the implementation of laboratory fees next semester, hundreds more will be priced out of an education, he said.

Although all other student leaders spoke of the Reagan budget cuts in education with distaste, Bob Bingham, executive director of the Associated Students of Kansas and chairman of the National Alliance of State Student Associations, said he and the students of Kansas wanted to express their appreciation for the Reagan cuts.

"He (Reagan) has done more to get students organized than any one person in the last decade," Bingham said.

"Students in Kansas are appalled by the Reagan-hood economics, which steals from the poor and gives to the rich," he said.

Student action weeks

The Kansas student association and several others across the nation have proclaimed individual student

action weeks on their campuses. During these weeks, student leaders are urging students to organize letter-writing campaigns to their senators and congressmen as well as organize activities that display their discontent with the education cuts.

No such student action week has been scheduled at UNL, however, Mockler said the Nebraska SSA will make student needs known to state and national legislators.

"I think that we're seeing students in the '70s and '80s organized to work inside the system more," Mockler said. "There is going to be more of a concerted effort politically, working with legislators. That doesn't have the same visibility as taking over the administration building."

"We'll see more of the activism. I can see that with students wanting to organize more rallies. I can also see more of a thrust just on the political level."

Another tactic of the student association is to get students registered to vote and to the polls in 1982.

Joe Sweeney, of the National Student Education Fund, SSA Development project, said Reagan's budget cuts will have one positive result.

"I think you're going to see a significant turnout in the 1982 election," Sweeney said. "It's going to be a real referendum."

'Food fast' aims to nourish handicapped facilities

By Roger Aden

To raise money for the Housing Handicapped Facilities Fund a "food fast" will be sponsored sometime this semester, the Residence Hall Association decided Thursday.

The money will be used to upgrade facilities for the handicapped in UNL residence halls.

Students will sign up to miss an evening meal, with each hall food service then preparing only as much food as is required. The Office of Housing will then donate money saved to the project.

Refunds have averaged 60-75 cents a person in the past, according to Richard McKinnon, RHA adviser and assistant director of housing.

Earlier fasts successful

Harper Hall President Bill Flack said previous food fasts have been successful. Many floors have an off-campus dinner the evening of the fast, he said.

McKinnon said RHA can designate what improvements will be made with the donation. He said he will bring a list of handicapped facilities needs to the next RHA meeting.

RHA President Robin Lynch said she was happy the money is going into the residence halls.

"It's our duty to help improve and enhance the living environment of the residence halls," she said. "I'm glad

we donated it for that purpose."

In other action, RHA recommended that the housing office make a rental supply of easy chairs available to residence hall students. The chairs would be rented on a lottery basis at the start of the 1982-83 school year.

Extra chairs put in lounges

Glen Schumann, assistant director of housing for maintenance/operations, indicated at the meeting that the housing office will follow RHA's suggestion.

Last year the chairs were in Sandoz Hall and the Harper-Schramm-Smith complex. They were removed because housing needed 100 more chairs to put in other rooms, Schumann said.

Schumann said theft and broken chairs contributed to this year's short supply. As a result, the extra chairs that would have been put in rooms were distributed throughout the residence hall system and put in lounges, Schumann said.

RHA suggested that the chairs be rented for \$5 dollars each plus a damage deposit. The rental fee will then be used to replace old furniture, Schumann said.

Schumann said he planned to allocate the number of chairs available to each hall on a prorated basis.

In another matter, RHA members gave McKinnon feedback on a proposed hall-damage policy involving damage done to a public area of a residence hall by an unidentified person(s). Public areas include bathrooms, elevators,

lounges, halls, lobbies, etc.

The proposed policy would charge the floor or hall where the damage occurred if no one has been identified as doing the damage and there is sufficient reason to believe that residents of the floor or building were responsible.

Currently, McKinnon said, damage caused by an unidentified person is paid for by everyone living in the residence halls through room and board rates.

Fedde Hall President Kathy Tighe said the Burr-Fedde complex followed such a policy last year and it worked well. She said the complex had very little damage to public areas last year and attributed that to the damage policy.

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