

# Democrats Burrows, Kerrey vie for nomination



Photo by Dave Bentz

## Bob Kerrey

Editor's note: This is the first of a two-part series about Nebraska gubernatorial candidates in the 1982 primary elections. The Republican Party candidates for governor will be published later this week in the Daily Nebraskan.

By Pat Higgins

State government in Nebraska has to be well-managed to solve the problems of the economy, Bob Kerrey, candidate for the Democratic nomination of governor, said in an interview Wednesday. Kerrey, a Lincoln native, said he sees a lot of unused potential in the state.

"I don't know whether or not Gov. (Charles) Thone sees the potential," Kerrey said. "It is important that political leaders in the 1980s are willing to take risks."

Americans should not abandon the dream of a society that is both free and accessible, Kerrey said. He said Nebraskans who are facing despair should not give in because it seems there are solutions to their problems.

"Timid leaders aren't going to be successful," Kerrey said. "We have to get on to challenging Nebraskans to find the solutions to the problems."

Kerrey said that the main influences on his political

philosophy have been the poor, the weak, and others who need help. Nebraska should not try to prosper on the backs of the economically disadvantaged, Kerrey said. He said that the plan should be to help poor people move up from poverty. "The government can't afford to be isolated from the disadvantaged," Kerrey said.

A decorated Vietnam veteran, Kerrey said he learned much from the experience.

"Being hospitalized taught me that it is hard to share pain and loss because it's your own and difficult to experience," Kerrey said. "What I concluded from that time is that even though I am well fed and comfortable today, I know how the hungry and out-of-work feel."

Kerrey said disadvantaged should work with the advantaged because of the latter's imagination and innovation in business.

"I want to marshal the prosperous who have been proven successful in managing resources," Kerrey said.

Difficulties with the state budget aren't the real problem, Kerrey said. He compared the process to Plato's myth of the cavemen watching the reflection of fire on a wall as the reality is much different. Budget documents aren't that difficult to put together, Kerrey said. He said that budgets should be based upon the needs of the state.

"The mess with the budget can be handled," Kerrey said.

Government must work with the people. The solution is to recruit better people to run the government, he said. A government estranged from the populace doesn't believe that problems can be solved.

"I believe that I am the candidate of choice because I can manage well and I want to present a challenge to the people to do better," Kerrey said.

Thone has good intentions, Kerrey said. Because Thone has been a "hard-working public servant for close to 20 years," Kerrey said he did not wish to criticize the governor personally.

"My main disagreement with Gov. Thone is his selection of personnel," Kerrey said.

"This state needs both Democrats and Republicans to make the government work the best. Gov. Thone has not appointed Democrats; he has appointed only loyal Republicans. A lot of talented Republicans have not been brought into government such as Mayor Bob Phares of North Platte who is a proven administrator."

"There is a parallel between business and government," Kerrey said. "I was not successful just because of myself. It was because I recruited people to work with me who were willing to take chances."

Kerrey said the state government does not need to be reorganized but that it needs to be turned outwards toward the people. Farmers and business people should be involved in pulling together with the government, he said.

"I want to tell the 15,000 state employees to go out and solve the problems of the state," Kerrey said. "This is a process that will take time and there will be some failures, but the people of this country know that they are stronger working together."

The Vietnam War and Watergate have led to suspicions of government by the people, Kerrey said. The best that can be said about Ronald Reagan's New Federalism is that it provides for local control, he said. Grass-roots organizations working for the elderly and disabled are an idea favored by Kerrey.

"Ronald Reagan didn't invent the idea of local control," Kerrey said. "It makes me nervous to hear him talk about it as his own invention. However Reagan has struck a chord with people because they are frustrated with the government."

Kerrey said he is optimistic about his chances for winning the governor race.

"It has gone from being a solid wall against me till now it is on an uphill struggle," Kerrey said. "The obstacles are beginning to diminish."

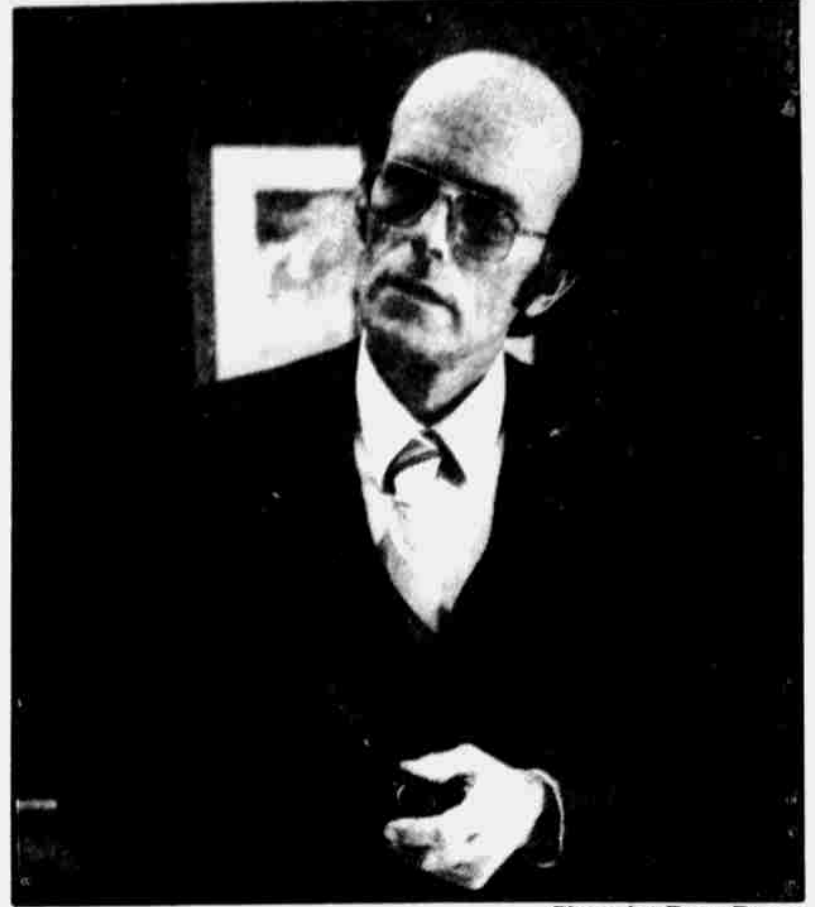


Photo by Dave Bentz

## Bill Burrows

By Pat Higgins

An increase in the tax on corporations and on individuals making more than \$50,000 a year would help solve Nebraska's financial woes, said State Sen. George W. "Bill" Burrows of Adams. Burrows, a candidate for the Democratic nomination for governor, said an increase in the state corporate tax would bring Nebraska up to par with other states.

Banks and insurance companies that are reaping benefits from high interest rates should pay their fair share, Burrows said. He said it is obvious that Nebraska's general fund has been in serious trouble for the last year and a half.

"The state has been spending about \$9 million a month more than it has been taking in since the fall of 1980," Burrows said. "Because of the declining economy and the federal tax cut, it was obvious that the general fund was in trouble through simple arithmetic."

Burrows has served two terms as a state senator in the Nebraska Legislature; if he loses the primary for governor, he will be out of elective office after this year. He describes his philosophy as that of a populist, moderate Democrat. If elected governor, Burrows said he would look first at the state's financial problems with compassion for the disadvantaged. A coalition of farmers, labor and small business people must be formed to offset the power of corporations, Burrows said.

"I feel that corporations dominate this Legislature in Nebraska and also the (U.S.) Congress, Burrows said. "Gov. Thone has failed to veto many measures that are disastrous to citizens but benefit corporations."

Burrows cited the bill removing the limit on interest rates as an example of corporate power in the Legislature. The major problem with the Legislature is its lopsided party representation; the Legislature has 32 Republicans, 16 Democrats, and one independent, Burrows said. The Legislature in January of 1981 was organized as a partisan body in fact, if not in name, with Republicans controlling all the major chairmanships, Burrows said. The change to blatant partisanship is part of the reason Burrows is seeking the governorship, he said.

"The Legislature is frustrating, but my major reason for running is Gov. Thone's commitment to a 15 percent tax rate," Burrows said. "That rate will give us an ineffective state government."

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