

# Editorial

## Work-study bill deserves student input

The reason governments and parents give students money is so simple it is an adage. Paying for good schooling is like investing in a better tomorrow. Education is hope for nations and children of the future. No formula for improvement is complete without it.

It lives in the American dream and the spirit of the Constitution.

As long as theories and capabilities continue to fail in the face of crises, there will be an evergreen market for fresh ideas and skills. As long as life gets more complex, better people will be needed to administer it.

The president has said that the United States is inadequately stocked with students and teachers in math and the sciences and that it runs the risk of being outpaced. He has called for a new vision that will render nuclear arms obsolete.

That is one signal coming from Washington. Another is that it is less willing and able to make its investment in education.

In the last three years, federally funded National Direct Student Loans have fallen off 50 percent, State Student Incentive Grants 37 percent, Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants 23 percent, College Work-Studies 21 percent and Pell grants 20 percent.

Even though the entire 1965 Higher Education Act is due for re-authorization

next year, Reagan has proposed major alterations in the student aid system for this year.

He says that total assistance will be no less in the new package. "The philosophic shift" is "to return to the traditional emphasis on parental and student contributions."

But it is a bit confusing.

NDSL, the only federal loan program, will receive no new funds. It will depend solely on its \$550-million revolving funds. The government will save about \$180 million at a loss to students of about 250,000 loans.

SEOG and SSIG will be eliminated, saving some \$400 million. Pell, the only grant program remaining, will be boosted some \$300 million. Award values will be increased, but will not match what is now available through a combination of Pell, SEOG and SSIG awards.

The money saved through the changes, about \$300 million, will be redirected to CWS, the only work-study program that will be left after SSIG is gone. The generous 57-percent budget increase is projected to create nearly 350,000 student jobs. But during a time of record post-Depression unemployment, it is hard to see where the jobs will come from. It is hard to know how many institutions will be unable to cover their 20-percent share in the wage.

One ringer in the package will require students to pay, up front, 40 percent of their education costs before they are eligible for grants. The initial cash cannot come from parents, but must come from loans, work-study or employment. Students otherwise eligible for grants will be elbowed into debt. They will compete for NDSLs and CWSs. Some will leave school to take jobs needed to pay for school. It is another mixed signal, as Reagan has also proposed to lower the minimum wage for teenagers.

Stirring the alphabet soup is not only confusing, perhaps illogical, perhaps prohibitive, it will also destabilize the student aid system. As lawmakers in Washington decide on the changes, they will need to hear from us, the students.

Lawmakers in Lincoln need to hear from us, too.

The Legislature has before it the final reading of a bill to create a Nebraska Work-Study Program. Our state senators will decide on LB126 sometime in the next few weeks.

Most states already have some form of work-study program in addition to SSIG, which is a need-based program of matching state and federal funds used to subsidize jobs for college students. If SSIG is eliminated and LB126 not passed, Nebraska will have no work-study program.

Even if we will not know the fate of SSIG until after LB126 is voted on, even if Nebraska cannot afford to also pass LB126A, a bill to activate the program through a \$2 million appropriation, LB126, without the A, is a responsible and reasonable bill that should be approved regardlessly. It should be passed now, while we have the chance.

LB126 combines the potential to improve both the quality and accessibility of higher education and the potential to merge shared interest between individuals, institutions, business and government. It is a good bill, a brave bill. It is concerned with the long-term, at a time when considering the short-term is king.

A lot is poised in the balance. Much awaits decision for government student aid to higher education right now. Right now is the time we may have some influence over what will later impact on us and others like us. Write now. Tell our representatives in Congress and in the Legislature what it is like. Booths are set up today at UNL, through a cooperative effort of ASUN, the Government Liaison Committee and the Nebraska State Student Association, and they are set up on colleges across the state, to aid in our letter-writing campaign.

David Wood

## New fitness plans: Shape up for God and country

"Of Watt and Weight Loss."

First it was Robert Preston singing "Chicken Fat". Then came aerobics, Jazzercise and Richard Simmons. In the last few years, the physical fitness craze has truly swept the nation. Celebrities as diverse as Chet Atkins and Jane Fonda have capitalized on the blossoming exercise mania.

And now, organized religion has gotten into the



Mike Frost

act. Visitors to the Nebraska Union during the past week could not help but notice posters promoting "Believerscise," a fitness program which promises to combine the best elements of Christianity and aerobics; in other words, a cross (no pun intended) between Oral Roberts and Richard Simmons ("Hallelujah! God would love for you to lift those flabby thighs!!")

Actually, Believerscise is just the latest in a long string of physical fitness programs which have been introduced to a hungry public. Many politicians, for example, have devised their own exercise programs, hoping to gain both money and increased name recognition. Some examples:

-The Edward Zorinsky Exercise Guide: "First you jog over to the Republicans, then you scurry to the Democrats, then you skip over to the Republicans, then you dash..."

-The Ronald Reagan Weight Austerity Program: "Especially designed for fat-cat liberals." You will be fiscally fit by 1984, that's a promise. 1985 by the latest. Certainly by 1986 to be sure. An outside chance it may be 1987, but by 1988 you'll be there. And if you're not on shape by 1989, you can get the new George Bush Weight Austerity Program."

-ASUN 'Aerobics: "You don't have to actually do anything, just sit there and say 'I am too exercising.'"

-Rev. Everett Sileven's Guide to Better Health: "Support my Faith Christian School, that's all. I'll see to it that God keeps you healthy."

-James Watt's Rock 'n' Roll Aerobics: "An aerobics program featuring exercises coordinated to Wayne

Newton songs."

(At this point, I need to shift gears and move on to a different topic. However, too abrupt of a change might confuse some readers. Therefore, my segue must be smooth, effortless and unnoticeable. Watch this.)

Speaking of James Watt (smooth, eh?), the recent hubbub over the Beach Boys playing at the Washington Monument has been a dream come true for political humorists. However, I ceased to be amazed years ago by anything Secretary Watt did.

However, what struck me was Nancy Reagan's bitter denunciation of the Beach Boys Ban. Gritting her teeth, Mrs. Reagan told a stunned press corp, "I think the Beach Boys are fine," and then stormed out of the room.

Such blazing rhetoric hasn't been heard since Mrs. Reagan's husband uttered his famous "dirty, rotten burns" assessment of the Polish government last fall. One would think the United House would welcome such terse outspokenness. However, the concern is that Mrs. Reagan's statement was too ambiguous.

Fine, for example. Did she mean they are OK? Or perhaps she meant quite small? Or did she mean fine as in penalty?

Mrs. Reagan has promised to be less outspoken in the future. "Just leave the politics to me, honey," said her husband pecking her on the cheek. Mrs. Reagan, naturally, blushed.

(Now I have to find a graceful way to end this writing. Usually I like to end with some pithy saying or clever pun. However, I can think of none. Yet my ending still must be smooth, effortless and unnoticeable. Watch this.)

See you next week. (Smooth, eh?)



"You can see a laser missile defense system?! Oh! Oh!... PLEASE... CAN YOU SEE ITS BLUEPRINTS?"

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