

Editorial

Tuition increases warranted as students' 'fair contribution'

Nobody is surprised anymore when the NU Board of Regents raises tuition rates. It has become an annual event on this campus and students usually accept the increases with little or no dispute.

But the increase planned for 1984-85 may create some controversy. At their July meeting, the regents gave preliminary approval to budget guidelines that call for a 10 percent increase in undergraduate tuition at UNL and UNO.

Students are paying \$34.50 for each credit hour this year and if the 10 percent increase gets final approval, they will be paying \$38 an hour next year. For a student taking 15 credit hours, that means tuition will rise from \$517.50 per semester to \$570.

A 10 percent increase may seem out of line to some students, especially since the cost of living has remained relatively steady in recent months. But considering the financial condition of our state government, we find the tuition hike acceptable.

No one likes paying higher tuition. But no one likes watching UNL's academic standing continue to decline, or its professors continue to be among the lowest paid in the nation.

Anyone who has followed the news lately knows the fiscal plight of this university. NU's academic standing has slipped and will continue to do so until

sufficient funding is provided.

That additional funding cannot and should not come from the state's already over-burdened taxpayers. Asking for more appropriations is an easy way out, but considering past successes before the Legislature, it seems unrealistic.

In fact, we question the logic of asking for a 13 percent increase in state funding, as the regents have proposed for next year.

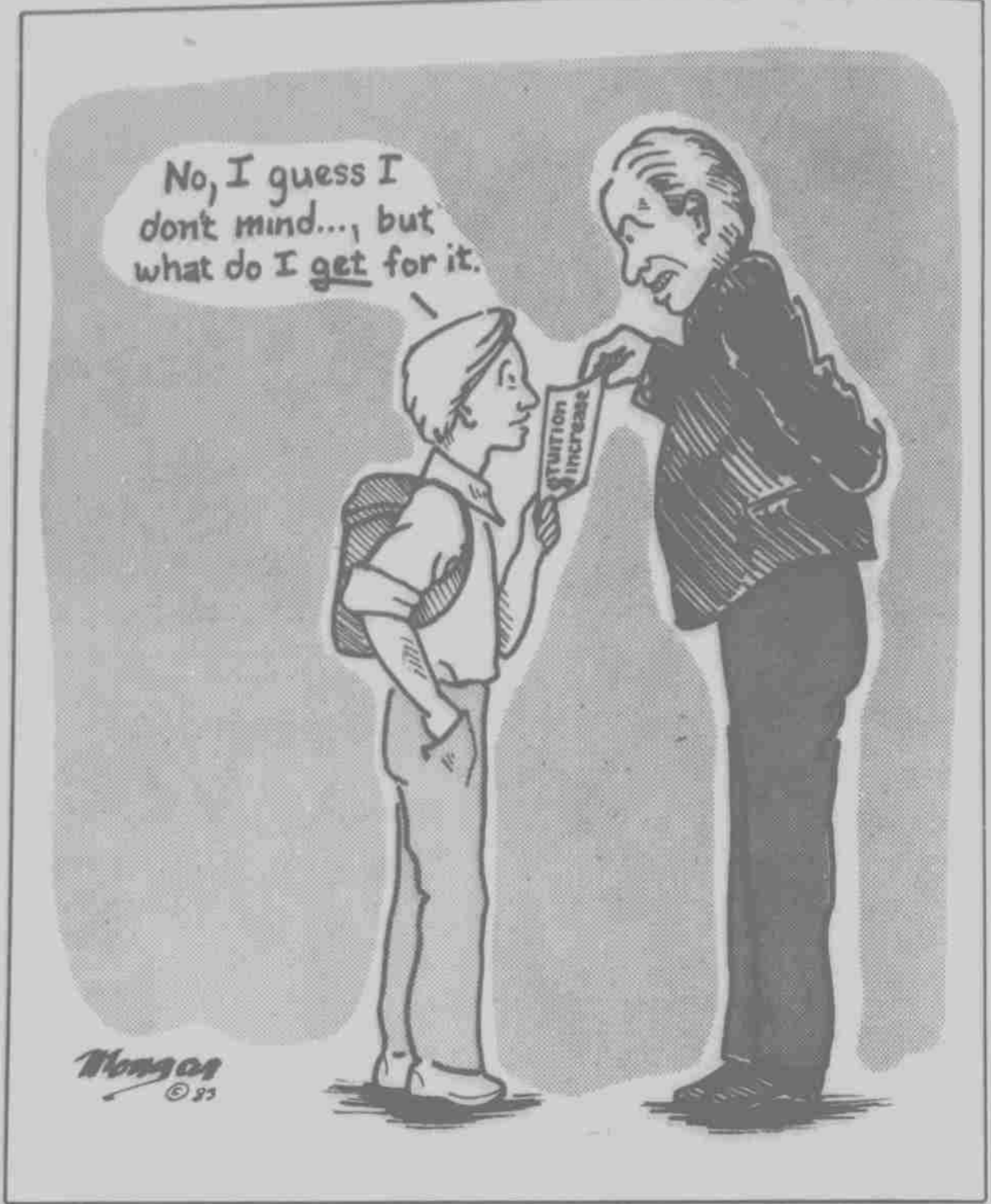
Nebraska residents already are paying more taxes than they've ever paid before. The state cannot afford to make that tax burden even bigger in order to provide additional funding for the university.

Public support of NU is important, of course. A strong university provides benefits for the whole state and allows students who can't afford private institutions a chance to further their education.

But taxpayers should not be expected to carry the entire burden of increased educational costs. Students must foot a fair share of the bill.

If approved, the budget for 1984-85 will be just more than \$465.6 million. Even with the 10 percent increase, tuition is expected to account for only 8 percent of that amount.

It is not unreasonable to ask students to pay for that small portion of the bill.



Vietnam haunts even those who didn't go

"The day I turned 19, I went down for my physical and had my first and only experience of Army life. I took with me a letter from Dr. Murphy, my childhood doctor, describing in uncompromising detail the asthma that had been a major part of my life up



Bob Greene

to 16."

Thus begins an article by Christopher Buckley in the September issue of Esquire magazine — an article that should spur millions of members of a generation of American men to question a part of their lives that they had thought they put behind them long ago.

Buckley — the son of conservative columnist William F. Buckley Jr. — describes in the article how he had received a medical deferment from the Army,

and thus how he had escaped going to Vietnam. The article is titled "Viet Guilt," and it addresses itself to those millions of young American men who did not go to Vietnam — and who are beginning to realize, all these years later, that by not going they may have proved something about their own lack of courage.

Enough words have been devoted to the moral issues of the war. The point Buckley makes is that, if the truth were really to be told, most of the men who managed to stay home from Vietnam did not do so for reasons of morality alone.

Young men of my generation got out of Vietnam because of college deferments, because of medical deferments, because of having a "lucky" number in the Selective Service birthday lottery that was initiated toward the end of the war. Three million men of fighting age went to Indochina during the Vietnam War; 16 million men of fighting age did not.

Buckley was one of the men who did not — and I was, too. Reading his article made me realize the truth of the emotions I have been feeling lately about that particular subject.

Those of us who did not go may have pretended that we had some moral superiority over those who did, but we must have known — even back then — that that was largely sham. A tiny, tiny minority served jail terms — the rest of us avoided the war through easier methods. The men who went to Vietnam were no more involved with the politics of the war than we were. They were different from us in only two important ways: They hadn't figured out a successful way to get out of going, and they had a certain courage that we lacked.

Not "courage" as defined the way we like to define it; not "courage" in the same sense of opposing the government's policies in Vietnam. But courage in an awful, day-to-day sense; courage in being willing to be over there while most of their generation stayed home.

When I meet men my age who are Vietnam veterans, I find myself reacting the same way Buckley indicates he does. I find myself automatically feeling a little lacking.

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Used book prices climb past original cost

Nebraska Bookstore should be more accurate when it punches or marks out the prices of books.

Last semester in the bookstore, I bought a copy of "In Our Time" by Ernest Hemingway.

Charles Scribner's Sons published



Bill Allen

this particular edition in 1970.

The used paperback cost me \$3.

On the back cover, the store had tried to clip out (with a paper punch) the original price.

But a dollar sign followed by zero showed the book originally had sold for less than \$3.

So, a 13-year-old used book that originally sold for two something cost \$3 at the Nebraska Bookstore.

Somehow that doesn't seem right.

Mark Oppgaard, manager of the store, said that under the store's billing system, used books always are priced 25 percent off the current new price of the book's latest edition. That means the new price of the "In Our Time"

paperback was \$3.95 when I purchased my used copy, he said.

When I bought the the used copy, I still was saving \$1 off the new book price, Oppgaard said. So, I bought a 13-year-old book for \$3 that originally sold for less than that and because of the genius of a modern billing system, I still was saving \$1.

Somehow that doesn't seem right. After all, a used book is a used book and should sell for less than a new book, or at least less than 75 percent of the new book price.

Siobhon Murner, a trade sales assistant for Charles Scribner's Sons, said the publisher's policy states that the suggested retail price stamped on a book is not binding.

She did agree, however, that charging more for a used book than what it originally sold for is not good business.

Oppgaard said Nebraska Bookstore would buy the paperback for 50 cents.

So, a 13-year-old book, bought for \$3, that originally sold for two something would be bought back by the bookstore for 50 cents, then sold again for 25 percent off the current list price of a new book.

Somehow that doesn't seem right.

Unless you own a bookstore. Of course, it's easy to put all the blame on the big guy, the system — in this case, the Nebraska Bookstore.

Oppgaard said there is no other feasible way, at this time, that his company can handle the pricing and record keeping.

Students might turn to themselves for help.

The ASUN book exchange attempts to reduce book prices, but isn't widely used by students. Whether this is the students' or ASUN's fault is hard to say.

The fact that ASUN provides the exchange but it is not widely used is an example of apathy on the part of students. It also shows the ineffectiveness of the student government in rallying students behind its ideas.

It's a two-way street in which neither side is completely right, but both enjoy criticizing the other.

Or perhaps this column is way off base and no one really cares about the price of books, or even tuition, for that matter. And maybe nobody cares that a 13-year-old used book cost more today than it did originally.

Somehow that doesn't seem right.