

Editorial

Good Samaritans shouldn't do state's work

So many cliches come to mind. Share and share alike, the Golden rule, the Good Samaritan, and all that.

Gov. Bob Kerrey suggested Thursday that Nebraska bankers help pay off depositors' losses from the collapsed Commonwealth Savings Co. with wind-fall tax returns. The returns have been reported at about \$30 million. How convenient. The tax returns come from a State Supreme court ruling, which declared unconstitutional Nebraska's corporate franchise tax law.

In the Lincoln Star, Sen. Vard Johnson of Omaha agreed with Kerrey's apparent act of Good Samaritanism.

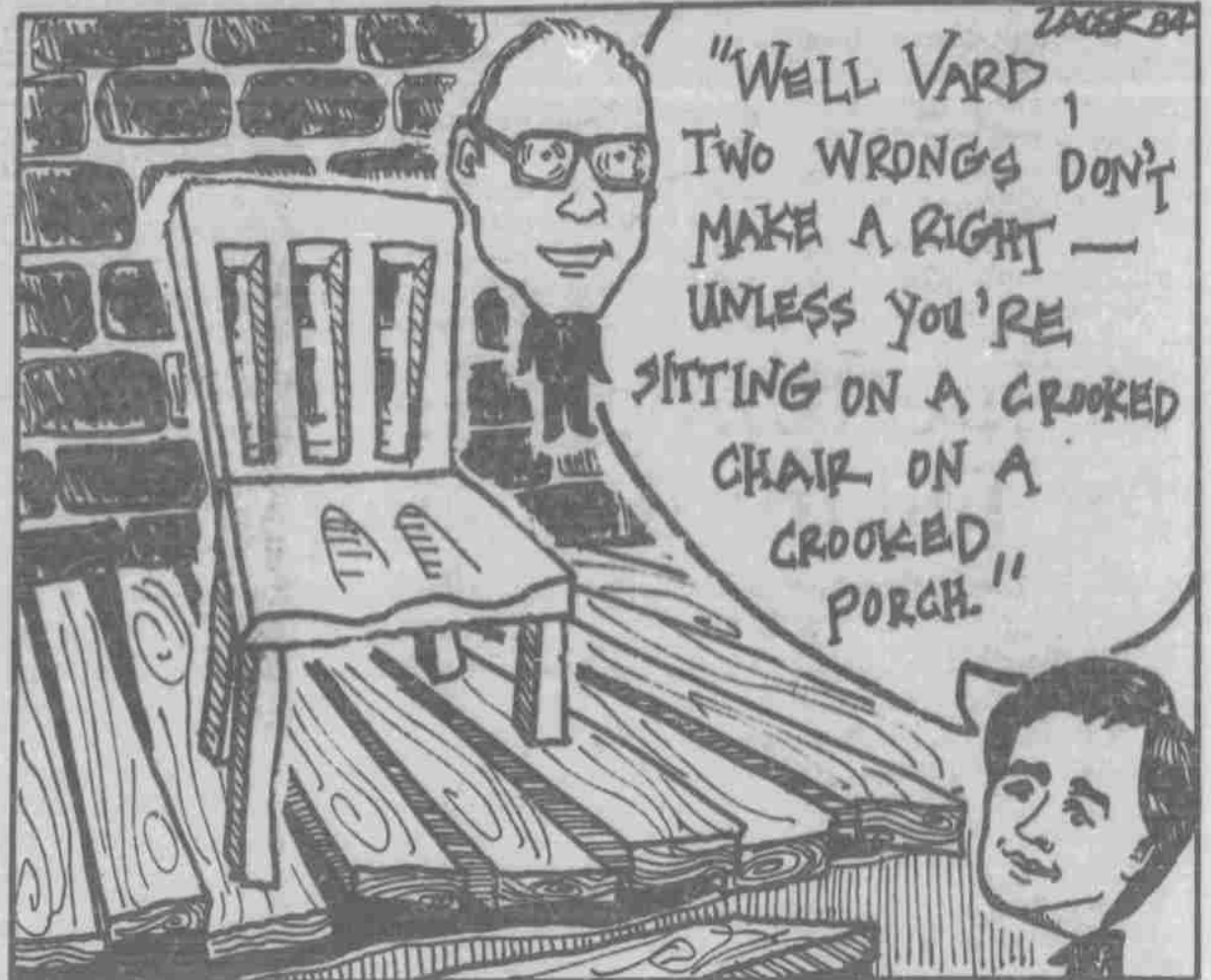
But, there's a little more than good-will behind the reasoning. In the same Star article, Johnson said using the refunds for Commonwealth would be a "reasonable price" to pay for the Nebraska Bankers Association lobbying against a bill that would have permitted out-of-state institutions to buy

failing ones in Nebraska. Speaking in cliches, Vard, two wrongs don't make a right.

Johnson also said he doubted the refunds, if not used for Commonwealth, would be used to benefit savers or borrowers.

Let's hope the association which was supposed to meet Thursday to discuss Kerrey's proposal, doesn't feel too pressured. Although the group's response, if favorable, wouldn't be binding on Nebraska banks, they might feel a little uncomfortable with Johnson's charges that the whole Commonwealth mess could have been cleared up if the association had permitted an out-of-state bank to step in.

Let's hope the state realizes it can't put that kind of pressure on banks. The state shouldn't put the burden of correction on the banks. It wasn't their fault Commonwealth collapsed. The state should take responsibility for the Commonwealth collapse.



Garage, bake sales could help stay deficit

Anyone who reads the papers these days knows that America is in debt. Yes, Uncle Sam owes a lot of money. In fact, by the time you finish reading this column the national debt will have increased by at least a nickel. Of course, most of you won't finish this column. Alas, that debt will still keep climbing, scaling the peaks of financial irresponsibility just like Sir Edmund Hillary.

Faced with this mounting debt, President Reagan wrings his hands and blames Congress. Congressmen shake their hands, all 535 of them, and blame Reagan.

What the country needs is not blame, but solutions. Neither Reagan nor Congress has searched very hard for alternatives to this problem. I have a few suggestions which I will patriotically put forth at this moment:

Garage sales. These are always a good way to make money, and who has a bigger garage than the President of the United States? I'm sure that Ike must have left some of his comic books at the White House when he moved out. And no doubt LBJ left many of his toy soldiers in the White House rather than shell out all that money to have them shipped home to Texas. Reagan himself probably has many old movie stills lying around which he would be only too happy to autograph for his friends and admirers.

Bake sales. Obviously Reagan believes that a

woman's place is in the home. Let's see him bake — uh, back that up. Get Nancy out in the kitchen and tell her to whip up some chocolate chip cookies. Get Sandra Day O'Connor out there baking those famous apple pies of hers. Get Anne Buford to churn out some of her not-so-famous pollution-proof cream puffs.

Ellen Goodman

Reagan is right. The future of this country does lie in the hands of the GOP's women. They can bake our way out of this boo-boo.

Car washes. Everyone believes that dirt and Washington go hand in hand. Well, some of that dirt has to find its way onto the cars of the capital. Who wouldn't be proud to say they had their Honda Civic washed by the President of the United States, the leader of the free world? Although, given Reagan's record on trade, it's quite probable that he would refuse to wash a foreign car.

Still, the sight of Reagan and Tip O'Neil sprucing up a Cadillac would do wonders for the nation's morale and bring us together as a people.

Betting on football games. Aha! you say — those of

you who have made it this far — that's against the law. True, but most people do it anyway. And it wouldn't be the first time we had a president break the law, would it?

But, just to avoid the embarrassing spectacle of having the White House raided by a vice squad, Reagan could have Paul Laxalt, his good friend and the senior senator from Nevada, place bets for him in Las Vegas.

Certainly, this scheme has risks. There's always the chance the national debt could rise rather than fall if the games go the other way. And you've got to pay off a bookie.

But these are desperate times and they call for desperate measures. A big bet on UCLA in this year's Rose Bowl would have taken quite a chunk out of the debt. In fact any bet against the Big Ten in the Rose Bowl is almost a sure thing. Walter Mondale would be well advised to put a plank in the Democratic platform pledging to bet on the Pac Ten team in every Rose Bowl and then press Reagan hard on this issue. Reagan's biggest Achilles Heel is the Rose Bowl and, more specifically, his fondness for the Big Ten.

Lastly, I would urge the president to be frugal. Have him turn off the lights when he leaves a room. Give fewer dinner parties and, when he does entertain, have guests bring a casserole, salad, or bottle of wine. Make long distance calls only after 5 p.m. or on weekends. Remember sir: the money you save today may pay for a nuclear warhead tomorrow.



SORRY, CINDERELLA... BUT ACCORDING TO THE FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION, I DIDN'T HAVE TO TELL YOU WHEN THE WARRANTY RAN OUT...

Daily Nebraskan

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The Daily Nebraskan (USPS 144-080) is published by the UNL Publications Board Monday through Friday in the fall and spring semesters and Tuesdays and Fridays in the summer sessions, except during vacations.

Readers are encouraged to submit story ideas and comments to the Daily Nebraskan by phoning 472-2588 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. The public also has access to the Publications Board. For information, call Nick Foley, 476-4981 or Angela Nietfeld, 475-4981.

Postmaster: Send address changes to the Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St., Lincoln, Neb. 68588-0448.

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