

Editorial

NU support drive needs input from students, faculty

"I SUPPORT NU."
ASUN and the UNL Alumni Association have sounded a battle cry against Gov. Bob Kerrey's proposed \$5 million NU budget cut.

In a campaign against the cuts, the alumni association is distributing "I support NU" bumper stickers. ASUN senators also tried to draw support by passing out smaller "I support NU" stickers at Saturday's football game against Colorado.

Public awareness and support will solve NU's budget crisis, and ASUN and the alumni are doing their part.

But they can't win the battle alone.

Students, parents, faculty members and other alumni must voice their university support to friends, relatives and, most importantly, state legislators.

"I support NU" is a call to action. If students and faculty sit idly by, relying on the "big names" at the university — our administrators and representatives — to express the concerns of the entire campus, NU will be poorly represented at the statehouse.

No matter how many times NU President Ronald Roskens denounces the reductions at budget committee hearings, state legislators won't help NU unless more students and faculty show their own concern.

State senators noticed the lack of input from UNL students, said Kelly Kuchta, chairman of the UNL Government Liaison Committee.

UNO and Wayne State have sent students to the state Capitol to react to the recommended budget cuts, Kuchta said. But few UNL students have talked to legislators.

The key to saving the university from irreversible damage is communication between students, faculty and legislators.

People who don't have time to visit the Capitol should call or write their senators. Pester them. Keep reminding them of the university's plight.

Face to face conversations with senators are the most effective, Kuchta said. Students can talk to legislators anytime, whether they are in their offices or on the floor of the Legislature.

The ASUN Office, 115 Nebraska Union, can provide senators' phone and office numbers, as well as background on the proposed budget cuts.

Verbal communication is important, but even students wearing "Go Big Red" sweatshirts who mill around the Capitol will show their support for NU.

The time for passive complaining is over. Aggressive action, such as rallies, marches or simple one-on-one visits with senators will determine the future of the university.



WELL... WE'RE STILL DEADLOCKED... 80 VOTES FOR WHITE ICING WITH CHOCOLATE CAKE AND 80 FOR CHOCOLATE ICING WITH WHITE CAKE.

Several evenings ago I was privy to something of a bull session among a group of high school students. I wasn't really eavesdropping — it was simply one of those animated conversations that no one in the general area can avoid overhearing.

Curiously enough, the topic of this bull session was church and church attendance — or rather the lack thereof.



Jim Rogers

As the typical conversation in such a rhetorical arena is wont to go, the session began with one of the students exclaiming how pitiable it was that her mother was forcing her to go to church the next morning. Another girl then chimed in about how she just never went to church. Each succeeding dissident attempted to express a slightly greater disdain toward church.

The conversation naturally picked up a life of its own and began growing in vitriolity. Finally, one young woman gushed with typical high school exuberance, "I really just hate church."

Well, the conversation continued for a short time until some other event of interest broke up the group. But the image of the young woman exclaiming with such casual glee, "I really just hate church," became a source for continued meditation on my part.

Now, some fashion I can understand the girl's sentiment. She felt her church was boring and irrelevant, and, being caught up in the emotion, she perhaps overstated her case.

But on the other hand, irrespective of how much I can emphasize with the young woman's perspective, the seeming frivolity with which she proclaimed her loathing for a local manifestation of the body of Jesus Christ — her purely unreflective blasphemy — is a sentiment that I simply cannot fathom and which is profoundly grieving.

Yet I believe that this young woman expressed a sentiment consistent with the general American attitude toward worship: Namely, worship exists to serve us, and, absent a totally successful fulfillment of that goal, it is to be discarded along with hula hoops, troll dolls and other unfashionably outdated toys.

Richard Quebedeaux rightfully observes in his recent book "By What Authority" that "contemporary religion in America is... marked by a lack of deep and fulfilling personal relationships — an absence that provides yet more evidence of its superficiality. This deficiency is the direct consequence of popular religion's de facto self-centeredness that maximizes self-awareness and self-development and minimizes self-sacrifice for others. Modern American religion, very simply, doesn't care about doing anything for God. It only wants to use him."

Similarly, a recent Gallup report entitled "Religion in America: 50 years," confirms the notion that most Americans have a "self-centered kind of faith," one in which more people worship and pray because "it makes me feel good" than because it expresses a "need for repentance or the need to do God's will regardless of the cost."

This self-centered posture toward Christian communion has caused numberless more honest fellows to cast a somewhat jaundiced glance in the direction of the church, believing it to

be full of hypocrites — and that glance is not necessarily undeserved.

Nonetheless, I think that the young woman's expressed attitude toward church is both a cause and an effect of religious superficiality. She was the hypocrite, I believe, for being content only to flippantly loathe the church (while affirming some sort of belief in God, perhaps even considering herself a Christian) because it didn't satisfy her "needs," and all the while never first venturing to express the mercy of Christ in service to His body — underserving though it may be for such a blessing. But then, that is the gospel after all, isn't it?

All in all, however, the time for such casual hatred of the church is ending, and this young woman — along with our society as a whole — must honestly face up to the consequences of a culture attempting to live without Christ.

Sober evaluation, rather than flippant dismissal, then is to be called for because, as Italian Christian social critic Romano Guardini accurately argued, "As the benefits of Revelation disappear even more from the coming world, man will truly learn what it means to be cut off from Revelation."

As a result of the emerging self-conscious unbelief, the unbeliever, wrote Guardini, "will cease to reap benefit from the values and forces developed by the very Revelation he denies. He must learn to exist honestly without Christ and without the God revealed through Him... Nietzsche has already warned us that the non-Christian of the modern world had no realization of what it truly meant to be without Christ. The last decades have suggested what life without Christ really is. The last decades were only the beginning."

Rogers is a UNL graduate student in economics and a law student.

Bookie operates on fellow worker

A few weeks ago, something really scary happened to Tom, who lives in a sleepy little Illinois town.

He was flat on his back in a hospital room. His belly was aching, because the doctors had made some extensive repairs of his plumbing.

He was groggy from the pain-killers and the stress of the surgery, so he kept dropping off to sleep.

When he opened his eyes, he saw a man standing at the foot of his bed. At first he wasn't sure who it was. Then his eyes focused.

And Tom groaned. The visitor was a bookie and loan shark. And Tom owed him money.

It's an old story. Tom works in a large factory in Sandwich, Ill., and lives in a nearby farm town of about 1,200. He happened to discover that one of his co-workers, a \$5-an-hour forklift operator, was also a bookie.

So Tom bet on a baseball game. Then he made a few more bets. And he was in for a couple of hundred. Hoping to get even, he bet again and again.



Mike Royko

It didn't take too long before Tom was on the hook for \$1,200. For a small-town factory worker with a wife and a couple of kids to support, that's a serious debt.

Tom asked for time to pay. The bookie said his time was up.

The bookie told Tom that it would be unwise for him to waltz. He said he worked for people "up north," meaning

Chicago, and they were unforgiving.

While Tom was pondering his predicament, he got intestinal pains, the doctors found problems, and they operated.

Which takes us to Tom and his visitor in the hospital room. As Tom described the conversation:

"He asked me how I was. I told him not too good. Then he told me he had to have the money.

"I told him I was very sick and I couldn't pay him right now."

"He told me he was very sorry about me being sick. But he said that business is business and if I didn't pay, they would reopen my incision."

And he got even more scared when one of the bookie's colleagues phoned the hospital room the next day and

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