

Governor criticizes DN's 'call for bravery'

In the editorial "Cuts Unadvisable," (Daily Nebraskan, Oct. 9), your discussion of my recent assessment of the dilemma facing Nebraskans in next year's budget, you make no attempt to reference your call for bravery to the facts as they exist in our state. Further, you make the terrible mistake of pitting the needs of the university against the needs of other state programs and local governments (cities, counties and schools).

Let me briefly do two things: point out where your assertions are off the mark and describe for your readers what I believe the State faces next year.

Guest Opinion

You incorrectly state that I said "the entire budget must be slashed by \$48 million." What I have said is that the situation cannot be dealt with by simply cutting budgets. What I have said is that a number of difficult political issues must be resolved. What I have said is that a response that maintains the status quo in government at all levels will be insufficient.

You incorrectly state that my assumption is that NU must be "targeted for cuts again." Then you call for someone brave enough to challenge this misrepresentation. If someone is foolish enough to believe what you say, the result, sadly, will be that the people will be further diverted from a discussion of what needs to be done.

I urge you to inspect what other universities are doing given a general condition of declining enrollments and disinflation. Most institutions understand that it is not wise to build a case for public support upon premises similar to your remarkable statement: "If it takes a wide scope of offerings to achieve the goal of the widest possible opportunity for Nebraska's students, so be it." The logical conclusion of this impossible premise will be a disaster for the university.

I urge you to consider what I have presented to the people for next year's budget:

- The \$871 million which has been

forecast to be available for 1987-88, with a one-half cent sales tax increase on Jan 1, 1987, means there will be \$823 million available for expenditure.

- The current year's budget is \$16 million more than this amount; there is \$839 million currently committed in the 1986-87 budget law.

- There are four major add-ons which are currently required by statute: \$10 million in social services, \$5 million in special education, \$4 million home-stead exemptions, and \$3 million in waste water treatment.

- All state employees, including the university, should get at least a 3 percent salary increase, which will cost \$10 million.

- Dilemmas exist since while there is \$823 million available for expenditure, we have \$871 million already committed (and this is without any additional money for any of the new programs requested by the university and others).

The most important assumption I make is this: Unless we confront the status quo of government and begin an open debate about our priorities, we will find ourselves up against a numerical reality which will force unprecedented reductions across the board. Unless we open up certain sensitive political issues now, we could expect, under the worst case scenario, the following:

Since 50 percent of the budget is aid, 25 percent is higher education and 25 percent is government operations, we could expect a \$24 million reduction in aid to cities, counties and schools; a \$12 million reduction in higher education; and a \$12 million reduction in government operations.

Rather than suggest that this is desirable, I am trying to engage Nebraskans in a discussion of the foolishness of assuming that we can simply reduce the budget by this amount. I am trying to engage Nebraskans in a discussion of what we must do to confront these conditions.

Finally, before you rush to write about the need to stimulate our economy with greater cooperation with the university, let me respectfully ask you to research a few things which we have

done in the past four years that are often ignored. Please inquire about the origin and success of the Technical Assistance Center, the Food Processing Center, the Research and Development Authority and the joint work with Agricultural Extension.

Now that I have vented my spleen a bit, let me suggest a number of political issues which we need to address and debate:

- Special education. This high-growth program serves children with special needs and cannot simply be reduced with a cut. We must enter the arena where children are receiving services, our schools, and ask for help in bringing these costs under greater control.

- Homestead Exemption. Again, a reduction will occur only if we acknowledge there are disabled, aged and veterans who have limited incomes and who deserve this special deduction. We must also acknowledge that the counties administer this program according to law, and that unless the law is changed, they can only do as they are instructed.

- Social Services. In this area we may find ourselves up against our hearts. To change the law which currently requires a \$10 million increase, we will have to be willing to reduce assistance to individuals in rural communities that are temporarily unemployed or to reduce our reimbursement rates for nursing homes and hospitals.

- Primary and secondary education. We have the third highest number of school districts in the nation. We are the only state with K-8 school districts. Nebraskans need to recognize that LB662 is a big step towards the goal of reorganizing these school districts so that they can operate more efficiently and effectively. We cannot simply say that because we like small schools, we will continue on a business as usual course. This is particularly true since states which have reduced the number of school districts (with a state mandate) like South Dakota have still maintained a large number of small rural schools.

- Higher education. Here we face the most difficult challenge of all. Here the desire to maintain the status quo may

be the strongest and the most dangerous.

We cannot ignore demographics or economic data. Enrollments are declining and inflation has been brought almost to zero. Nebraska spends a relatively high amount per taxpayer for higher education but a relatively low amount per student. We cannot continue with the assumption that our answer to access is to provide an institution of higher education within 50 miles of every resident of the state.

We cannot continue to labor under the myth that we will grow our way into an ability to afford more. If Nebraskans want to spend more per student, which I believe is the correct way to achieve excellence, we must reduce the breadth of our offerings. We will need, like many institutions in the Midwest, to make an effort to limit enrollments rather than chasing "full time equivalents."

I am sure that I have said enough for you and others to increase the critical

heat. If you do not ignore facts as you do so, then I welcome the criticism. Nebraskans need to debate these issues and many others (such as an appointed Board of Regents and greater program review, which I support) if we are to avoid the very thing you believe I want.

Finally, you should not fall into the trap of believing that I do not value the university. I will continue to defend our long-standing willingness to spend to achieve educational excellence. I will continue to declare that the economy, the quality of our political and social life and our level of understanding of the world are all dependent upon a strong and exceptional university. I will also continue to express my concern that a simple maintenance of the status quo is a guaranteed formula for deterioration of the quality Nebraskans so desperately need.

Robert Kerrey
governor

Production overshadows product in world of interchangeable firms

GOODMAN from Page 4

care. Who says that a corporation can't be profitable without losing its humanity?

There isn't an X-rated moment in this entire business-school case study. She is more concerned with explaining how her "young ladies" dressed for success at Saks Fifth Avenue, always wore stockings, and carried a basic briefcase to get past the hotel security.

The real heavy breathing begins not with the revelation that her young ladies carried portable charge machines for credit cards in their evening bags and had a beeper when they were "on call." We're talking business techniques.

"I'm not ashamed, because sex is a commodity just like everything else," she said in one interview. "I looked at my job as a marketing job. I was good at it."

This is the modern management cult at its lowest common denominator. Read through the course catalog of an

average business school. Sit through the local success seminar. You hear a whole lot more about process than about product.

With all the fascination on how to manage, there is little said about what to manage. And what not to manage. One of the concerns of American business is that the current class of mobile managers regard one company as interchangeable with another. It's more worrisome when we regard one goal as interchangeable with another.

The bottom line, if you will forgive the expression, is Sydney Biddle Barrows, a success in the commodities market, proudly peddling flesh and properly describing yourself as a self-made woman. Keep an eye out for her. Pretty soon she'll be running management seminars on the Playboy Channel. After all, hustling is hustling.

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Goodwin is a Pulitzer prize-winning columnist for the Boston Globe.

Thingsville

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