

Election '88



Doug Carroll/Daily Nebraskan

Above: Democratic vice-presidential candidate Lloyd Bentsen speaks with supporters following Wednesday's vice-presidential debate in Omaha. Above right: Republican vice-presidential candidate Dan Quayle speaks with panel member Tom Brokaw of NBC and Brit Hume of CBS after Wednesday night's vice-presidential debate in Omaha.



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UNL students gather to watch debate

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mining who would be a better vice president.

"I think that the debate gave me a good chance to see the vice-presidential nominees for who they are," said Erin Malone, a junior advertising major. "So far, the public has not heard from the vice presidents."

David Hrdy, a fifth-year biology major, called the debate "just a media event."

"One candidate is trying to look better than the other," he said. "They don't show who they really are."

A few students felt that the debate had caused them to favor one party over

the other.

Hrdy, a registered Republican, said he is now in favor of Bentsen because he feels Bentsen showed that he deserves the office more.

Freshman psychology major Cherie Cooks, who watched the debate in the union, hails from Bentsen's home state.

"I'm from Texas and my loyalties are split as to who I'm going for," Cook said.

But no consensus on the winning candidate was found among students.

"Well, I'm a strong Democrat and I think Quayle is winning it," said Anne Stratker, senior social work

major. "I think Bentsen has been put on the defensive. I think there has been a total turn around in the debate. Quayle is coming out on top."

But Lisa Twiestmeyer, a senior journalism major, disagreed.

"My opinion had already been made up before I watched the debate," Twiestmeyer said. "I think Bentsen has blown Quayle away in every aspect. Quayle has not even responded to the questions asked by the panel."

But Jay Anderson, senior business major, said he thinks everyone makes up their own minds.

"It depends on their own judgment," Anderson said. "That's just part of living in America."

Protests at Civic mostly pro-Bentsen; anti-Bentsen marchers at Red Lion

By Lee Hood
Senior Editor

OMAHA — About 200 students, activists and homeless took advantage of the national media given to the vice-presidential debate Wednesday to voice opinions on housing, Republican Sen. Dan Quayle's record and the rising cost of living.

The protestors, the majority of who favored the Dukakis/Bentsen presidential ticket, waved signs and banners across the street from Omaha's Civic Auditorium as press, politicians, and debategoers filed into the building.

Bus Sen. Lloyd Bentsen of Texas, the Democratic candidate, also took some lumps. According to The Associated Press, the largest single protest was staged in front of the Red Lion Inn, where Bentsen was staying. About 100 anti-abortionists stood with signs and pictures of bloody fetuses protesting Bentsen's pro-choice stance on the abortion issue.

During one of the earliest pro-

tests of the day, a manure spreader was dragged behind the pick-up truck of a man protesting Quayle's controversial entry into the Vietnam War.

The man drove along downtown streets around 11:30 a.m. with anti-Quayle signs. According to Omaha police officer J.F. Jepsen, he "got his media coverage and left."

Volunteers and residents of the Dorothy Day House, 301 N. 20th St., set up a soup line across the street from the debate to feed hungry passers-by and "to raise consciousness for the homeless," a soup-line worker said.

Staff member Susan Beth Daddio served soup, fruit and cupcakes as single mothers, stray people and other activists watched activities around the auditorium.

College Sally, a religion teacher from Omaha Mercy High School, said she drove by the debate to see "what was going on."

She stopped at the protest site and ended up staying to help soup-line volunteers.

Sherman Butler, a deaf-mute homeless person, said through an interpreter that he came to the debate because he was jobless and wanted decent housing.

Susan Steider, a senior University of Nebraska-Lincoln history major, held a sign resembling a postcard addressed to Quayle saying "Having fun, Dan. Wish you were here."

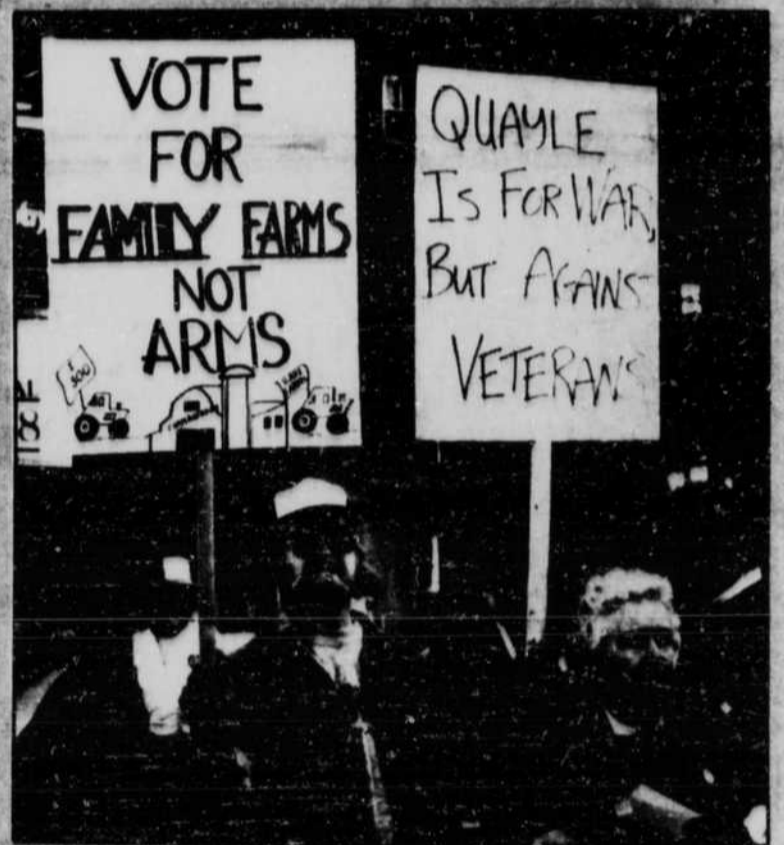
The card's return address was Vietnam.

Steider said that Quayle was irresponsible and has proven that through his controversial "desk job" in the National Guard during the Vietnam War.

"He scares me because he used his connections to get out of fighting," Steider said. "But he doesn't hesitate to send others."

John Perkins, a Vietnam veteran from Omaha, said he went to the auditorium because he is a concerned supporter of "anyone who wants to talk about issues."

"Nobody's talking 'bout the issues nowhere," Perkins said.



Lee Hood/Daily Nebraskan

A demonstrator holds two signs Wednesday outside Omaha's Civic Auditorium.

Downtown Omaha bustles with predebate hype

By Victoria Ayotte
Senior Reporter

OMAHA — Red, white and blue greeted visitors to Omaha's vice presidential debate Wednesday as balloons, banners and 1,500 journalists filled the city.

Downtown Omaha bustled near the Red Lion Inn, the Marriott Hotel and the Civic Auditorium debate site.

Spectators gathered in hopes of gaining a vice presidential-eyeful as candidates departed from their hotels for a pre-debate practice session in the auditorium.

At the Red Lion Inn, about 50 Omahans gathered to watch the departure of Sen. Lloyd Bentsen, D-Texas. Bentsen gave a few waves as the crowd cheered before he departed down Capital St., which was lined with Dukakis/Bentsen posters hung from light posts. Sen. Dan Quayle, R-Ind., stayed at the Marriott Hotel.

"It's exciting to see all the people around," said Cheryl Williams of Omaha, as she stood

across the street from the Red Lion Inn.

Dick Oren of Council Bluffs, Iowa, who works in a downtown Omaha office building, agreed that the debate had brought excitement to the city.

"It's a good idea for a change," said Oren. "I'm interested in it—wondering what's going on next. It gives you something to do on a break."

Some Omahans camped outside the Civic Auditorium with cameras in hand.

"I made an extra trip to town for this," Ellen Rasmussen of Omaha said, as she snapped a photo of the police cars, barricades and limousines outside the auditorium.

Meanwhile, campaigners worked inside the Red Lion and Marriott.

At the auditorium, excitement mounted.

More journalists—local, national and international, poured into the auditorium hoping for seats in the crowded debate hall. Only 260 seats were allotted for the media. A total of 2,660

seats were allotted in the hall for spectators, including an equal number for members of the Commission on Presidential Debates, the Dukakis/Bentsen campaign and the Bush/Quayle campaign.

Steve Gardner, a member of the commission who sponsored the debates, said he thought most of the people in the auditorium would be Nebraskans.

A large number of Omaha police also stood outside the auditorium.

Deputy Chief of Police James Skinner would not say how many extra police officers were required, but said the number was "substantial."

Gardner said about 100 Omaha police and an equal number of Secret Service agents stood guard in the auditorium.

Skinner said surrounding streets were blocked off to allow greater access for police cars, television satellite dishes and the candidate's motorcades. Skinner said there

were no major problems as of late Wednesday afternoon. Police anticipated the biggest problem would be parking.

Omaha city officials spent weeks sprucing up the city, and the effort attracted the appreciation of some of the out-of-town visitors it was meant for.

Reiko Tamura was one foreign journalist who covered the debate. Tamura was on her first visit to Omaha, and said her first impressions of the city were favorable. Tamura is a political correspondent for the Fuji Evening News in Tokyo, Japan.

"People in Japan are interested in the presidential race," Tamura said.

Tamura said that although Japan doesn't spend as much time electing a leader, she thinks the time and money spent in America electing a president is positive.

"Every time, every where, people here are talking about the presidential election," she said. "I think this is good for America."