

# DECISION '88

## Jury hung on senate endorsement



Kerrey

Brian Shellito/Daily Nebraskan



Chambers

Andy Manhart/Daily Nebraskan



Karnes

John Bruce/Daily Nebraskan

The Daily Nebraskan's endorsement for the U.S. Senate office is . . . is . . . is . . .

The DN editorial board, after interviewing the three candidates — State Sen. Ernie Chambers, U.S. Sen. Dave Karnes and former Nebraska Gov. Bob Kerrey — came up with a hung jury.

The final count: three votes for Chambers, three votes for Kerrey, and one for Karnes. This match ended in a draw, folks.

So, in the interests of informing all the voters about these three men and about what the board was hoping to find in a candidate, the DN has decided to focus the editorial on the beliefs and comments from the candidates that left a lasting impression on board members.

The candidates met privately with the editorial board, and were not allowed to mention their opponents' names while being interviewed. In other words, no mudslinging allowed.

They were asked questions on the following topics:

- How should the government handle the federal deficit? Is a tax increase inevitable? Could we cut programs instead? Which ones?
- What AIDS legislation is before the Senate, and what do you see as future legislation, such as funding for research, protection for AIDS victims and anti-discriminatory laws?
- What's the current status of education? Where can we make cuts?
- What philosophy has guided your political career?
- Should the United States fund the Contra Rebels?
- What are the chances that Congress will review the nuclear-waste compact law? Would you support breaking up the compact system?
- What approach would be most effective in the war on drugs, both domestically and internationally?

Chambers had the best answer to the drug problem question. He said that harsh legislation dealing with drug kingpins and monitoring suppliers from other countries "won't resolve anything."

Instead, Chambers believes that local treatment and education will solve the problem. He added that people must first feel better about themselves before they can deal with a drug problem.

"You won't get that by just saying 'no,'" he said. "People have to have self-esteem, need to see they have a future, need jobs and they don't get jobs because of the way they look," he said. "They can't get jobs so they go to the street, so the (dealers) want them to sell."

Chambers also attacked the recent drug bill passed by the Senate, saying, "the whole bill was political."

Chambers and Kerrey said they opposed U.S. support of the Contra rebels in Nicaragua, but Karnes said the U.S. should continue to back them financially.

Kerrey's reasoning made the most sense. He said the U.S. should clearly state its intent in Nicaragua. He said the Central American policy is "built on dishonesty."

"They lie about what they're doing," he said, "then they complain that they can't support it."

Chambers called the Contras "thugs and criminals." "Supporting them would be the worst thing that can be done," he said. "That shows our type of mentality and national ethics. America is on the wrong side of every conflict."

"The evil empire should be applied to the United States," Chambers said.

Chambers also said the United States should "get out of there" and give assistance to all Central American countries. He

said the United States should stop subverting other governments and cooperate with them to create the equivalent of the European economy.

Chambers and Kerrey also had good solutions to cut the federal deficit. Both said taxes would have to be raised and some programs would have to be cut to balance the \$150 billion deficit.

Kerrey said he raised taxes as governor, and he isn't afraid to increase revenue. He said he understands that many of his decisions as governor were not popular, but he was trying to solve a problem.

"I would go to Washington and do basically what I did as governor: solve the problem and not worry about the political consequences," he said.

Chambers said increased revenue would come from taxes, taxes on wealthy Americans and large corporations who can afford the increases.

But, according to Chambers, much revenue would come from cutting the \$2 trillion defense budget by 20 percent. The cuts would not affect the United State's ability to defend itself, he said.

Chambers said useless military bases in South Korea and in Europe could be closed, and the Star Wars defense initiative should be stopped. Also, the U.S. government could stop spending foolishly on low-quality, high-priced equipment.

The three candidates answered the AIDS and education questions differently.

Chambers said the status of higher education was bad and Kerrey said it was "poor to good."

In contrast, Karnes said the status of higher education was good, based on exams and international job competition. Karnes cited specific plans for education research, student loans and educational savings bonds.

Karnes supported financing of the drug AZT for AIDS victims, but only as treatment. Chambers focused on the human element of the disease, particularly discrimination against those inflicted with AIDS.

Kerrey, meanwhile, said AIDS education in Nebraska was "behind where it should be." He said it was only the second time in the campaign he had been asked about the disease.

When it came to what guided the careers of the candidates, Chambers proved to be the philosopher, and the educator, of the group.

He said he doesn't stick to the norms, nor allow anyone to dictate his opinion to him. He said he listens to others, but makes up his mind on his own.

"The strong shouldn't suppress the weak," he said. "Office-holders shouldn't turn and look away."

Chambers doesn't side-step the issues, as his 18 years of legislative experience have shown. He said he tries to set an example.

"I set my standards up here," he said, raising his hand in the air, "and I help raise others up to it."

Although none of the candidates earned the editorial board's endorsement, Chambers' philosophy of the senatorial position earned the respect of board members. He was straightforward in his interview, untainted by political partisanship.

Let's hope the man who goes to Washington, D.C. will take some of Chambers' ideals with him.

— Mike Reilley and Curt Wagner  
for the Daily Nebraskan

### Candidate Biographies



Bob Kerrey Ernie Chambers Dave Karnes

Age	Hometown	Astrological sign	Education	Experience
45	Lincoln	Virgo	Graduate of Lincoln Northeast High School and University of Nebraska College of Pharmacy	Nebraska governor, 1982-86; private businessman; member of Seals, U.S. Navy; received Congressional Medal of Honor
51	Omaha	Cancer	Bachelor of Arts degree, Creighton University; juris doctorate degree from Creighton College of Law.	State senator since 1970; barber
39	Omaha	Sagittarius	Graduate of Omaha Benson High School and earned undergraduate and law degree from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.	Appointed to U.S. Senate position, March 1987; served on agriculture, banking and small business committees; White House Fellowship (1981)

Graphic by John Bruce; research by Mike Reilley/Daily Nebraskan