

Daily Nebraskan

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## Priorities on line

Recommendations reflect student needs

**G**ov. Kay Orr and the Nebraska Legislature recognized last week what the true priority should be for the University of Nebraska-Lincoln -- its students.

The Appropriations Committee on Thursday advanced \$6.6 million in requests from the University of Nebraska into the 1989-1991 budget alterations bill with the money requested by the NU Board of Regents for needed instructional equipment and computers for university students in the College of Engineering and Technology.

The committee did not recommend inclusion of \$400,000 for 1989-90 and \$1.2 million for 1990-91 for instructional equipment outside of the College of Engineering and Technology. But the \$825,000 the committee and governor did recommend will go a long way toward alleviating the computer shortage problem at UNL.

According to Roy Keller, chairman of the Department of Computer Science & Engineering, almost all UNL departments are short on computers. The shortage results from Orr's veto in 1989 of NU's request for instructional equipment, he said.

"UNL's equipment replacement and improvement is not financed by the state, and we made a big proposal to obtain some of the funding needed," Keller said last month. "Upper administration is now trying to get some of the funding back."

The regents and NU central administration succeeded in part of that effort with Orr. The Appropriations Committee followed the governor's budget proposal that did include money for instructional equipment in the College of Engineering and Technology. The rest of the Legislature is likely to follow suit.

Although other departments on campus are short on equipment, the most crucial need was in the engineering college so it can maintain accreditation.

Appropriations Committee members did not grant \$1.4 million for asbestos abatement in Burnett Hall. If the hall is not an immediate health threat, the committee was right to put equipment for the engineering college and Department of Computer Science & Engineering above an administrative concern.

The computer science department has suffered the consequences of a lack of equipment. The number of graduates decreased from 87 in 1987 to 65 in 1988, department statistics showed.

It's no wonder UNL has problems attracting computer science majors when it has an outdated Harris computer system with 160 students vying for time on 16 lines into the mainframe.

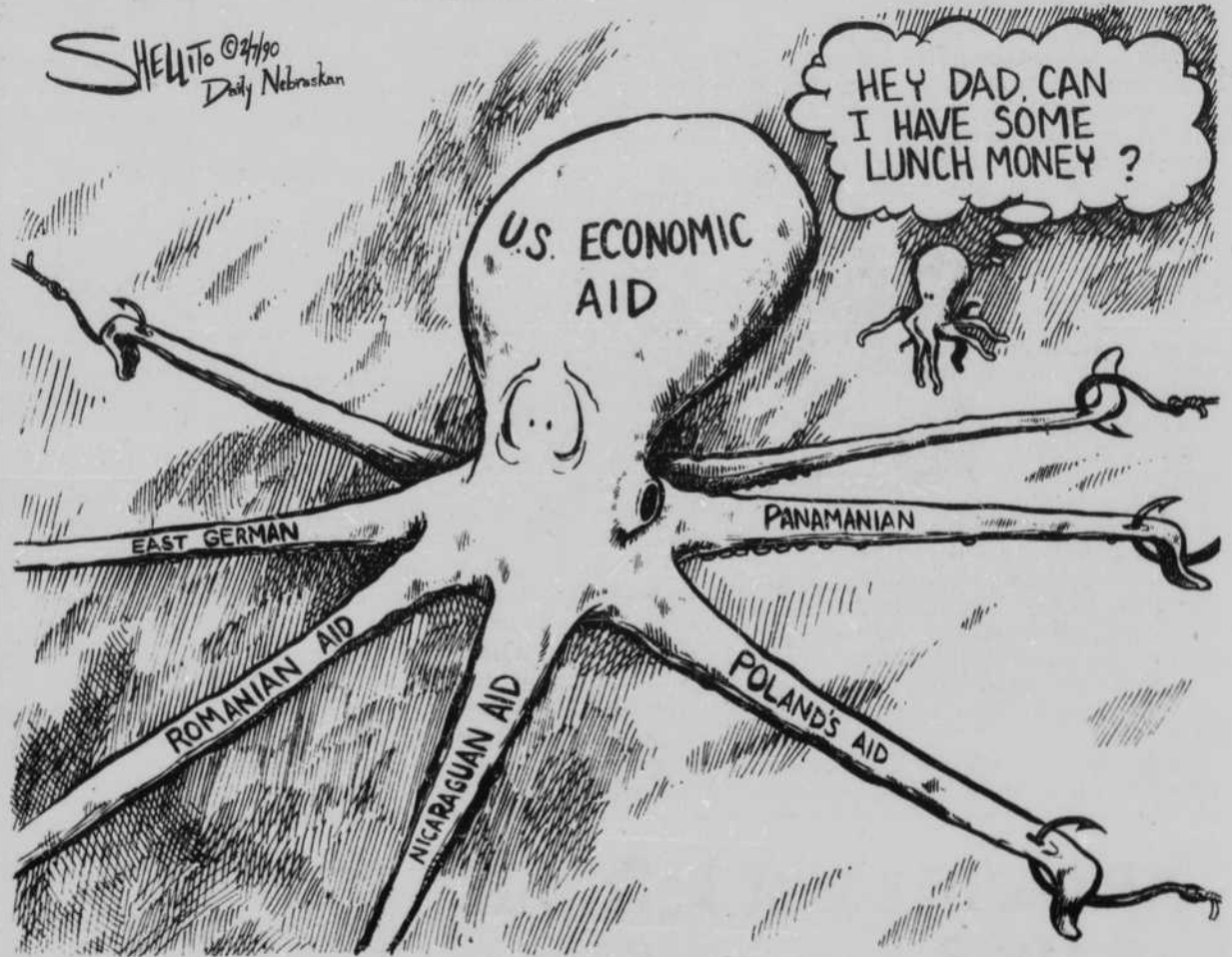
More of these students are using personal computers on campus, increasing competition for computer time in other labs with personal computers.

"In general, we have only one-half to two-thirds the amount of equipment that we'd like to have," Keller said. "And with students who need to use these computers a lot, we have a definite need for more."

Last year, the Legislature appropriated money for the instructional equipment but did not have enough time to overturn a veto by Orr.

This year, the governor and Appropriations Committee are putting their priorities in the right order. Hopefully the rest of the Legislature will follow through on that commitment to students and allocate more money for computers.

-- Victoria Ayotte  
for the Daily Nebraskan



## Demons present new problems

Methods must be established to punish innately bad offenders

**I**t's almost spring and, for once, we've got a bigger problem than winter fat and ASUN elections.

Oh sure, you won't be able to get to class this week without being accosted by well-dressed, nitrous-oxide freaks soliciting buttons in an array of offensive and unnatural colors.

And sure, Spring Break is almost here and you still can't fit your big toe into the slinky swimsuit you bought last November when you started the exercise program that ended a week later when Oreos and Sugarbabies went on sale at Super Saver.

But these are mere unpleasanties, my friends. There is something much worse than politicians and fat.

Yep. It's demonic possession. John O'Connor, a Catholic Cardinal, said Sunday that the rare rite of exorcism has been performed twice in New York City just this year. Also, a Dec. 12 article in the San Francisco Chronicle stated that Pope John Paul II recently increased the number of exorcists in Rome.

And here's the real stinker. According to the Associated Press, police in Indianapolis last week asked a priest to pray and sprinkle holy water in a house after they saw a radio, a vase and other objects inexplicably move.

The police had been called to investigate a possible burglary after the resident came home and found smashed dishes, windows, a lamp and eggs. A 14-year-old relative who had been staying there was believed to have been involved in devil worship, authorities said.

Maybe I'm overreacting, but I get terribly nervous when law enforcement officials begin calling priests to solve burglary cases. Besides the fact that this is a blatant mixing of church and state, this also is an extremely dangerous precedent for criminal investigations. Just imagine:

OFFICER: "Mrs. Smith, we believe your cat has been placed in the tree by demons. We'll contact the

proper religious authorities. Goodbye."

Or:  
FRIEND: "Joe, don't try to drive home. There's a lot of cops out there, and I think you've had one too many demons."

That last one didn't make any sense. Let me try this again:

OFFICER: "Hold it right there or I'll squirt ya!"

Get it? Water gun? Holy water? Anyway, it seems unlikely that a group of police officers would all lie about seeing normally inanimate objects move on their own, let alone a radio and a vase.

The last logical explanation is that they have a new kind of mandatory



Bob Nelson

drug test for police in Indiana:

DOCTOR: "Officer, you've tested positive for every hallucinogenic on Earth except LSD."

OFFICER: "I'M MELTING!!!"

DOCTOR: "Maybe, but you're not fit for duty. Drop two tabs and call me in the morning."

But what if the police, the cardinal and the pope are telling the truth? All these people hold truth in pretty high regard. This leaves me with only one conclusion.

We have a demon epidemic on our hands.

I suppose that, like all epidemics of this nature, we must establish a method whereby we can punish the holy living crud out of the offenders -- those being the demons.

Let us use the Indiana case as an example.

First, we must make sure that demons actually are responsible for moving the radio and vase. Second,

we must establish whether or not moving a radio or vase is illegal, and third, we must institute a fair punishment and rehabilitation program for the guilty demon.

The problem of guilt is an easy one to solve. Radios and vases, as inanimate objects, do not move on their own. Therefore, the vase and radios were moved. If they were moved and the police officers didn't see what moved them, then the vase and the radio must have been moved by a demon.

Is it a crime for demons to move things? I say yes. Because demons are evil, anything they do is evil. Crime is evil. Therefore, if they move a vase and a radio, they have committed a crime.

Should they be punished or rehabilitated? I say they should be punished. Demons are innately bad. They can't be rehabilitated. There is no such thing as a good demon. Therefore, they should be exorcised.

Now some people would say the demon in Indiana was not there by its own choice. They would say that the devil-worshipping metalhead conjured the demon and that the demon is not to blame. The demon wouldn't exist without the want for a demon, they would say.

They would say that the problem stems from the 14-year-old who conjured the thing. They would ask, "Why the hell did the kid need a demon?"

Well, I could do the demon and drug parallel for days. We've got more important things to worry about. For God's sake, there are police officers asking priests to exorcise demons.

I guess this story just messed with my Big Picture. Where is the Law and the Order when demons are included in a society?

Worst yet. What if the demons aren't Catholic?

Nelson is a senior news-editorial major and the Daily Nebraskan editorial page editor and a columnist.

## letter

The Daily Nebraskan welcomes brief letters to the editor from all readers and interested others.

Letters will be selected for publication on the basis of clarity, originality, timeliness and space available. The Daily Nebraskan retains the right to edit all material submitted.

Readers also are welcome to submit material as guest opinions. Whether material should run as a let-

ter or guest opinion, or not to run, is left to the editor's discretion.

Anonymous submissions will not be considered for publication. Letters should include the author's name, year in school, major and group affiliation, if any. Requests to withhold names will not be granted.

Submit material to the Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St., Lincoln, Neb. 68588-0448.

## editorial

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Brandon Loomis, wire editor; Jana Pedersen, night news editor.

Editorials do not necessarily reflect the views of the university, its employees, the students or the NU Board of Regents.

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According to policy set by the regents, responsibility for the editorial content of the newspaper lies solely in the hands of its student editors.