

Finnegan heats up district race

Democrat works to inform voters of his message

By Jeff Zeleny
Staff Reporter

Although polls reveal that Gerry Finnegan is trailing Rep. Doug Bereuter in Nebraska's 1st District congressional race, Finnegan said one poll indicated that voters simply didn't know what he could do for them.

Finnegan spoke Friday during a press conference at his Lincoln campaign headquarters. He said he wanted to alert voters that he would work hard to rein in governmental spending. But until now, people haven't heard his message, he said.

Finnegan said a poll conducted during the week of Oct. 12 showed that 62 percent of 305 surveyed voters supported Bereuter, a Republican. But after they heard Democratic challenger Finnegan's message, he said, 21 percent supported Finnegan, and 31 percent were undecided.

Finnegan said the poll was conducted for his campaign by Robinson and Muenster Associates of Sioux Falls, S.D.

The poll indicated that voters were ready for a change, Finnegan said, and he will provide it.

"We have a country in serious trouble," he said after the press conference. "The largest issue is the deficit."

"We have a congressman that simply isn't addressing the issues," he said. "He accused me of running against the system — I am."

Getting his message out is crucial during the final stages of the election, Finnegan said, but campaign finances are an obstacle.

"One thing I need to get out, (is that) it is a very close race," he said. "If I'm able to get out the issues and abuses that have taken place, I will win this race."

"I have the resources to get the message out," he said. "The question is if I have the resources to get the message out to (the) entire 1st District."

He and Bereuter debated last Thursday. They are not scheduled to appear again together before the Nov. 3 election.

Finnegan would like to debate Bereuter again, he said, but Bereuter "doesn't want any more contact shoulder to shoulder."

During the final week of the campaign, Finnegan will begin advertising on television and radio, he said, but not as much as his opponent.

"We've got to accomplish more in our 30 seconds," he said.

Finnegan said Bereuter did not own

a home in Nebraska and was the fifth most-traveled U.S. representative during the 1989-90 congressional session. He also said Bereuter wrote 39 bad checks during his 14 years in office and spent only 91 days in the district this year.

David Shively, Bereuter's campaign manager, said in a press release issued after Finnegan's press conference that all of Bereuter's foreign travel related to congressional committees.

About 48 percent of Bereuter's foreign travel is paid for by national foundations and universities, Shively said.

Shively also said it was common for congressmen to not own homes in Nebraska.

"Representative Bereuter found the cost of two mortgages and maintaining two homes was too much," Shively said Sunday. "The congressional sessions typically stretch out over a 10- to 11-month period."

Shively said Bereuter spent about 90 days in the 1st District each year. But that shows Bereuter's commitment to his constituents — he maintains a 98 percent voting record, Shively said.

Finnegan said he wasn't accusing Bereuter of any specific wrongdoing. He is bringing up only small issues, he said, but they are things voters should know about.

"It's another brick in the wall," he said. "He has built a sizable wall that he will have to scale — I'm not going to let him off the hook on that."



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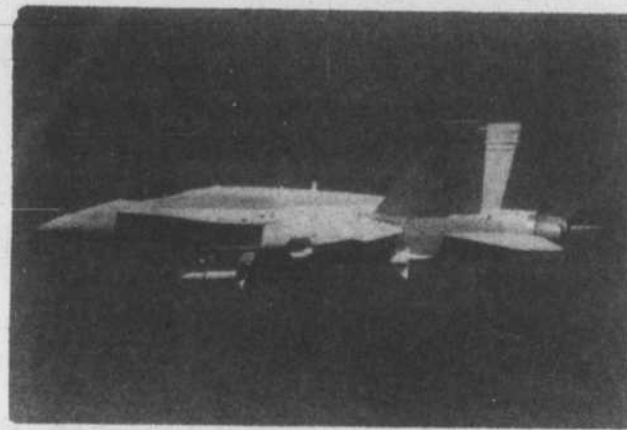
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Group confronts interracial issues

By Susie Arth
Senior Reporter

A group of about 50 African-American students, faculty and staff gathered Sunday at the Culture Center to iron out interracial problems and blow off steam.

A panel comprised of two UNL undergraduate students, a graduate student and a staff member answered questions ranging from the low graduation rates of African-American students to the harsh environment facing African-American freshmen upon their arrival in Lincoln.

The panel's message: Come together as a race and force positive changes on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln campus.

"The reality is that we're going to be in Nebraska, and it's only going to get so black," said Terence Goode, one of the panel members. "Change isn't going to come unless we change

it."

Goode, who works in the Office of Multi-Cultural Affairs, said the easiest way to stimulate change was to become involved in campus activities and learn how to interact with students of all races.

Involvement, he said, will produce beneficial skills, such as public speaking, for later in life.

Another way to create change, he said, is to take advantage of African-American faculty and staff at UNL to help solve the racial problems that exist on campus.

Allen McPhaul, a junior at UNL and a panel member, said he was hurt by the disunity African Americans were showing by the recent outbreaks of violence among them.

"That hurts me so much," he said. "When you turn on me, that hurts."

Yolanda Yates, a graduate student and another member of the panel, said she thought the violence was a sign of

some larger, deeper problem.

Yates said she was unsure what the problem was, but she knew the answer was to force African-American faculty and staff to focus on racial issues.

Sandra Smith, a sophomore at UNL and the final panel member, agreed.

"We need to come together and put the pressure on the administration to get things done for us," she said.

Goode said he thought African Americans just were beginning to make progress toward unity and change when violence broke out among them.

"We take one step forward and then we take two steps backward," Goode said. "The people I'm starting to trust the least are my own."

"We need to build character," he said. "We need to stay focused and create that love."

Parking

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"The mood on this campus, obviously, is that there's not enough parking to go around," Goldfeder said.

The parking lot for the new Beadle Center opens to students and faculty today, providing 340 spaces, Goldfeder said.

But, he said, those spots are temporary.

"When the center opens for use, most of those spots will be converted into faculty spaces," Goldfeder said. "So we're not going to see any real long-term solution to existing prob-

lems.

"Even though we might gain a few spaces with the Beadle Center, we're still losing ground."

Goldfeder recently completed a survey of 50 students living in residence halls, sororities and fraternities on the City and East campuses. The survey — which Goldfeder completed on his own during the first two weeks of the semester — included recommendations from the students who were polled.

Two of the most common recommendations called for the construction of a parking garage and limitations on the number of student and faculty parking permits sold.

Goldfeder had proposed the \$10

million garage, to be constructed north of the Power Plant at 14th and Avery streets and west of the Harper-Schramm-Smith Complex on university-owned property.

The four- or five-story building, which could hold as many as 2,000 vehicles, would be paid for by issuing a bond that would be repaid at a rate of \$1 million a year, according to Goldfeder's proposal.

However, because of the board's outstanding bonds, most of the money for the garage would have to be generated by donations, he said.

The earliest UNL could issue a bond for the garage, Goldfeder said, would be Dec. 15, 1999 — the date the other bonds are expected to be repaid.

Payne said he thought the university was on the right track.

"People need to realize there is a diverse culture in Lincoln," he said. "It's a matter of tolerance."

Blank, co-chairman of the committee on multiculturalism at UNL, said multiculturalism on campus must be improved.

"We have to keep trying hard to represent all of the students on campus," he said. "It's tough to keep minority faculty and students on campus because they aren't always comfortable — but we have to keep trying."

Massey said he thought it was important to provide a balanced educational atmosphere for all students.

"We need to work harder to give all students the same experiences," he said. "We need to improve the faculty and provide good, successful programs. Improving the admissions and recruiting process will help, too."

Regents

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could be implemented gradually not only for UNL, but also for the University of Nebraska system.

Tightening admissions standards must be tackled while students are in high school, Blank said, to better prepare them for college and eventually improve student retention.

"I think it's a step," he said.

Massey, an insurance agent, said he thought NU admissions standards should be reviewed. Statistics indicate that the university is admitting students who may have their needs better met by another college or university, he said.

"I don't think we do as good a job as we could do here, because there are so many kids (who) still have no degrees," Massey said.

University budget cuts loom this

year for regents, but the candidates said they would work hard at making the cuts a little less difficult.

"(Budget cuts) are painful," Payne said. "There is really no way to make sure they run smoothly, because they have to be done."

Blank said budget cuts were difficult because they threatened the quality of university programs.

"If I had it my way we wouldn't have them," he said. "We just don't want mediocrity."

Massey said he thought this year's budget cuts would be a challenge, but he thought they were a perfect opportunity to review the university's priorities.

"It's about channeling resources into areas of priority," he said. "We need to identify programs that are underutilized and inefficient."

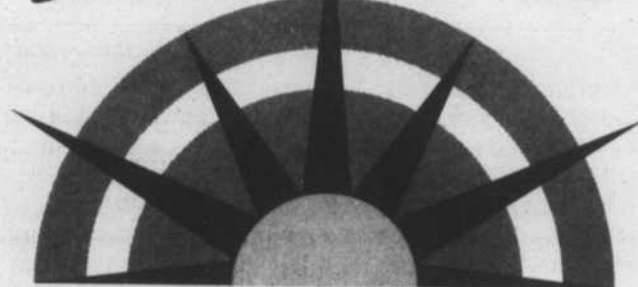
The candidates agreed that awareness was the most important part of improving multiculturalism at UNL.



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