

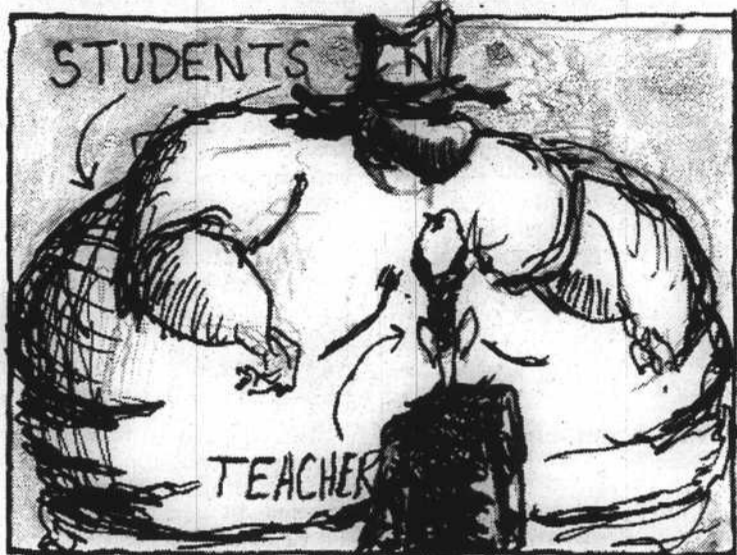
OPINION

Wednesday, March 27, 1996

Page 4

Daily
Nebraskan
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Bret Gottschall/DN

Higher learning

Education can't be cut for property taxes

Property taxes are an issue that no one likes to talk about.

Figuring levies and dealing with boards of equalization have given Nebraskans enough headaches in the last few years.

Most Nebraskans are content to tune out property tax talk, but many state residents are angry. The state's lawmakers are under the gun to do something about taxes that property owners feel are too high.

Nebraskans should not switch channels or turn the page when the future of the state's education is threatened by the property tax debate. Property taxes fund public schools. Public schools educate the state's children. Thus, the future of Nebraska is affected.

Nebraska is consistently near the top of the nation in standardized test scores. Teachers are an obvious cause of Nebraska's educational success. The state ranks sixth in the nation in teacher to student ratios.

In tinkering with property taxes, the Legislature is talking a dangerous game for the state's education.

In debate Monday, Sen. Don Wesely of Lincoln, a traditionally liberal senator and chairman of the Health and Human Services Committee, fired the first shot. Wesely said Nebraska's education system is top heavy and needed to reduce the number of administrators.

We agree with him on this point. Wesely took things one step further, however.

He said an area in Nebraska's educational system that also could be cut was the number of teachers the state had on the payroll.

We could not disagree more.

In the same breath, Wesely highlighted something the state should be proud of — enough teachers to care for each student individually — and then said because of this we could afford to cut the number of teachers.

Nebraska school children would only be hurt by cutting the number of teachers. Slashing the hands that shepherd Nebraska's future is a sad way of solving property tax problems.

Wesely's amendment was withdrawn, but the Daily Nebraskan encourages senators to learn from these words: Cut taxes, but beware the consequences.

With public outcry at a deafening level, the Legislature has to do something about property taxes. It does not, however, need to harm the state's educational system.

Editorial policy

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Letter policy

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 or reject all material submitted. Readers also are welcome to submit material as guest opinions. The editor decides whether material should run as a guest opinion. Letters and guest opinions sent to the newspaper become the property of the Daily Nebraskan and cannot be returned. Anonymous submissions will not be published. 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: Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St. Lincoln, Neb. 68588-0448.



MEHSLING @ DAILY NEBRASKAN

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Catholicism ... take two

It surprises me that a publication as left-wing as the DN would attempt to write an informed article about Roman Catholicism. I was not surprised, however, by your stance concerning Bishop Fabian Bruskewitz's recent announcement.

I don't think that anyone should think the Bishop's announcement was "excessive" in any way. If you take a closer look at his reasoning, perhaps a greater understanding can be achieved.

One of the fundamental beliefs of the Roman Catholic Church is that life is a sacred gift given to us from God. We believe that as humans, we do not have the authority to dictate which babies (or any humans) can live and which should die. We believe that God has made this "choice" before we were conceived. So it follows that we oppose abortion. This is not because the Church doesn't believe in equality for women. Rather, we don't view abortion as a woman's "right." Knowing this, it is logical to ask Roman Catholics to choose between membership in clubs that undermine the values of the Church or to choose to draw closer to God while discontinuing those memberships.

Michaela Dolan
junior
biological systems engineering

'Cafeteria style' Catholicism

In the United States today, it would seem that the one thing we definitely do need is moral guidance. In an age of relativism and make-your-own religion, the Catholic Church has remained a constant source of guidance and stability. Bishop Fabian Bruskewitz recently confirmed this fact by issuing a list of organizations that are incompatible with the teachings of the Catholic Church.

How could I call myself a Catholic, yet be a member or patron of Planned Parenthood? Planned



Bret Gottschall/DN

Parenthood performs abortions and distributes artificial contraception, both of which the Church has always taught is wrong. The Church also teaches the dangers of euthanasia, so how could I, a Catholic, belong to the Hemlock Society? And finally, Call to Action is not an organization that "promotes dialogue among Catholics." It is a group demanding liberal changes within the Church, many of which are heretical. I could not demand changes within the Church that are contrary to dogma, yet call myself a Catholic.

Too many Catholics today prescribe to what has been called a "cafeteria style" religion. They can decide what teachings of the Catholic Church they feel like accepting, and they don't have to take anything they don't like. I assure you, they are not Catholics. If they truly believed that the Roman Catholic Church is the truth, then they wouldn't be trying to "improve" upon it. Therefore, it would only seem logical that because the members of these groups do not accept the teachings of Catholicism, they should not be considered Catholics.

I support Bishop Bruskewitz's decision 100 percent, as all Lincoln diocese Catholics should. He is not the "bad guy." He is simply reminding us that to be a Catholic, we need to accept all of the teachings of the

Church, not just a select few. I thank God for giving the diocese a Bishop who is not afraid to speak out against what is wrong, even if he risks a little controversy.

Karen M. Benes
sophomore
English

Dear old Nebraska U

Look to the skies this week and you will see a gorgeous and awesome sight. Comet Hyakutake is moving toward the sun, and can be seen this week.

I moved to Nebraska last semester after being born and raised in Philadelphia. Since my arrival, I have experienced many spectacular occurrences. On September 20, it snowed IN THE SUMMER TIME here in Nebraska (the first time I've ever seen that). I have experienced my coldest temperature ever (-22 degrees — the coldest temperature EVER in Philadelphia was a mere -11), my coldest wind chill ever (-65 degrees), a day when the temperature did not go above zero (Feb. 2), and a temperature drop of more than 40 degrees in less than 2 hours, all of which are firsts in my life.

On Monday night, I got to see another first ... a comet. In Philadelphia, I would have to drive more than two hours to get to a place dark enough to see more stars than I could count. Here I just drove to the Crete exit of I-80, made a left on the first dirt road, looked up and saw it with the naked eye. You, too, can see it this week. Just go outside the city, look toward the Big Dipper, and there it will be. An Awesome Sight. On April 3, you also can catch a lunar eclipse. If you miss the comet this week, wait until the first week of May, while the comet is returning from its trip around the sun. Take advantage of this opportunity. You won't regret it!

Now all I need to do is see a tornado before I graduate, and my life will be complete. There's no place like Nebraska!

Stephen F. Barth
graduate
meteorology/climatology

P.S. write back

Send your brief letters to:
Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St., Lincoln, Neb. 68588, or Fax to (402) 472-1761, or email <letters@unlinfo.unl.edu> Letters must be signed and include a phone number for verification.