

# Decision Must Be One We Can Live With

I was the lone internal candidate for the presidency of UNLV. As interviews of the four remaining candidates approach, I want to take the opportunity to talk to you about what I believe needs to be done at UNLV and to urge everyone to get actively involved in the process. This presidency is critical for this university. The next 10 years will be a period of great change and challenge in higher education, perhaps more so than at any time in the last century. UNLV must keep up with the leaders. The school cannot afford to be left behind struggling to find its way.

Here's some of what I proposed to do as president:

▷ Make the students the top priority, including:

- Combining admissions, records, financial aid and the cashier into one department in one building, open from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Thursday with special weekend hours during crunch periods.

- Adding the student body president and the Graduate Student Association to the UNLV president's cabinet.

- Open administrative offices and

Guest  
Commentary

BILL  
ROBINSON

classrooms on the west side of town. I proposed doing this by splitting the cost of the new high school about to be built. The school district and UNLV could then share office space.

- Make getting rid of lines a priority in every department.

- Change the evaluation system and provide incentives for faculty to institute new and interesting methods of teaching.

- Provide 24-hour computer terminals for access to administrative offices.

- Include formal student input into evaluation of student support departments and their personnel.

- Provide forgivable loans to women and minority students to go to graduate school and promise to return to teach at UNLV. If they come back, UNLV pays back their loan for them.

▷ Cut administrative overhead. We have created at least \$1 million in new administrative positions over the past five years with a relatively stable budget. That money belongs in the classroom.

▷ Make every budget of every department public with a one page budget sum-

mary. Want to know what happens to a particular fee? Just ask and you would be able to get an answer.

▷ Get rid of reserved parking spaces, so administrators will have to live with the parking situation like everyone else.

There's more, but you get the idea.

Our future depends on our ability to bring students value. Private businesses and other universities are beginning to offer degrees via computer and the Internet. You can register for a course on the Internet today more hours per week than you can register at UNLV. With that competition, we cannot hope to compete if we continue to treat students as we do today.

We will succeed if we take a business approach with the student as our valued customer, partner with the schools and community college and generally make our people our selling point. The weakness of electronic education is that it can be impersonal and uncaring. Today, UNLV appears all too frequently to be the same. If we are to make it into the next century, we need to erase that impersonal approach.

The next president must have the vision to see the future and the strength to lead UNLV toward it.

Publication record has little to do with the job of a university president. Vision, management ability, strength of character, energy, business sense and strong communications skills have everything to do with it. These things are nearly impossible to judge from a resume and a few hour visit. But, somehow, we must.

It is my hope that the faculty and students of UNLV will carefully consider each candidate in the brief moment of time given us and as much as possible take the future in our own hands.

We must express strongly to the Board of Regents who we think is right for UNLV. It is not enough to sit in our offices or classrooms and just bitch about what is happening.

We may not be able to control our destiny, but we clearly have an obligation to try.

—Bill Robinson is a professor in the UNLV Economics department. He was the only candidate for president from UNLV.

Editors note: Nowonder Robinson didn't make the final cut. He thinks about students. Shame on you!

## Eliminating Welfare Not Effective Solution

Many new theories have erupted recently on how to reform welfare. This can be blamed on a new conservative movement that has taken the

blame of society's woes off the shoulders of the wealthy and onto the stooped backs of the poor.

Let's face it, the current welfare system is inherently full of problems. Images of welfare mothers having more babies in order to get more money come to mind. There is some truth to the notion that the current system supports laziness and crime.

However, when we look at the facts, we see a diversion of blame from portions of society that benefit from governmental programs, that can fight for them to those who cannot. Many stereotypes are simply not true.

Changes have to be made nonetheless, and several states have taken control of their systems and reformed them.

The point is changes are needed, the costs of welfare are minimal compared to several recent events of governmental spending that have gone largely uncontested.

Two very expensive items come to mind.

One is what some refer to as Aid to Dependent Corporations. A great example of this is the government bailout of the savings and loans. So many people became wealthy and lost nothing because of the irresponsible tactics they used. How did the government respond?

Moderately  
Speaking

DAVID  
KANAAN

Much like the sugar-daddy associated with a spoiled child: A few scoldings but in the end covering all debts. Those billions make the welfare budget look like nothing but a

drop in the ocean.

Second, this week the United States agreed to give Mexico \$20 billion in emergency loans that everyone knows will never be paid back.

It seems to be all about specific political priorities that change at a quick rate, and are far more malleable by the powerful.

In Michigan, which in the past has been the poster child for a government coddled poor, the state has instituted reforms over the past few years to eliminate aid to able-bodied adults and to limit aid to 12 months (with 12 months between aid periods).

In this short time, coupled with mandatory skill training courses provided by the state's schools, almost 25 percent of former welfare recipients are working full-time jobs. This is a great start.

At the recent meeting of the National Governors' Association many of these sentiments were echoed. Compromise was initiated by President Clinton and House Speaker Newt Gingrich.

The Republicans favored turning welfare and Medicaid into block grants, while Democrats pushed for coordinating several programs into one (welfare, job training, and housing programs).

Many people still think that there should be no aid at all.

Being a college student or someone from a middle-class background it is easy to forget the times your family or friends helped you out during a finan-



cial crisis.

What we fail to see is that even the best of us fall on hard times. Most of us do have family and friends to bail us out. Some of us do not. Should the government become the guardian for these people?

In some cases, yes.

Should we have an indefinite flow of money to all poor that rewards them for doing nothing?

Absolutely not.

Temporary funds should be made available with mandatory job training and placement. This would go for housing and food as well—a helping hand, not a har-

ness.

One could say that this wouldn't help and the poor would remain poor regardless. This is based on the notion that the poor are so because they are inherently lazy. However, a recent study by the U.S. Census Bureau found that millions move out of poverty each year.

As a nation, we are always ready to help those with an emergency. The Republicans are about to sign a bill providing over \$2 billion to the Pentagon for emergency funding. We even sent money to Kobe, Japan for earthquake relief.

What it all boils down to is what constitutes an emergency?

Is temporary poverty an emergency?

Who is really getting the big bucks?

In view of these questions I think a big deal is being made over a small, fixable program that has become the scapegoat for the irresponsibility of others.

—David Kanaan is an opinion columnist at The Rebel Yell.

**UNLV**  
UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA LAS VEGAS

### Student Senate Meeting Schedule

The Rebel Yell encourages all students to attend UNLV's Student Senate meetings.

Monday, Feb. 13,  
6:30 p.m. MSU 201

Monday, March 6,  
6:30 p.m. MSU 201

Monday, March 20,  
6:30 p.m. MSU 201

Monday, Feb. 27,  
6:30 p.m. MSU 201

Monday, March 13,  
6:30 p.m. MSU 201

Monday, March 27,  
6:30 p.m. MSU 201

## Deadline Approaching

Filing deadline for Student Government positions are next week

The Rebel Yell would like to remind students interested in running for any student government office that the filing deadline is on Tuesday, Feb. 14, at 5 p.m.

Make your voice heard by running for a student government position.

Applications can be turned into the Student Government office on the first floor of the Moyer Student Union