

Editorial

Student government leaders show incompetency

Oh, the arrogance of it all.

In Tuesday's edition of *The Rebel Yell*, we told you about the six members of UNLV's student government, and two "guests" who escorted guest speaker Kim Peek and his father to dinner.

John Pida, your student body president, explained that Peek, who is a megasavant and the model for Dustin Hoffman's character in the movie *Rainman*, enjoys interacting with students and his father requested the dinner as part of the contract. It should also be noted that Peek's appearance at UNLV was gratis.

The concept of a dinner for a guest speaker who gave a free speech to the students of UNLV is not an objectionable one. As a matter of fact, it's an acceptable practice in academia.

But what is objectionable, unacceptable and unconscionable is that the leaders of student government would deem it appropriate

to spend \$227.72 of your tuition money to dine at Cafe Michelle, and take two of their fraternity brothers along.

And King Pida was the epitome of arrogance, poor judgment, greed, and no class by ordering a rack of lamb at a cost of \$25, double the price of everyone else's meal. Even the guests of honor had the good sense and good grace to order meals the average UNLV student could afford.

And don't forget, Pida was quoted as saying, "I won't apologize for this."

Pat Smith, your senate president, runs a close second to Pida by having the gall to say he didn't "recall" whether or not Pida asked him for approval for the expenditure. Not only did Smith not take responsibility for this glaring faux pas, but he maneuvered free dinners for two of his fraternity brothers. He gets double points off for not having class enough to own up to his lapse in judgment.

And he expects you to vote for him again?

CSUN senate secretary,

Dineen Barkhuff, defended the presence of the fraternity brothers at the dinner by citing their constituency.

Well, the last time we checked, we're all constituents of student government. Perhaps Barkhuff was referring to a Preferred Constituency List.

We have a suggestion for the entire student body:

As soon as you finish reading this, call Smith and find out how you, too, can be placed on the Preferred Constituency List, and once a member, how do you get your free dinner at Cafe Michelle?

And make sure to stipulate the following ground rules:

Since the Cafe Michelle dinner was paid for with money that came out of your pocket, the dinner student government treats you to must come out of their pockets.

And, demand since you pay their monthly salaries, your dinner cannot be paid for by money they earn from their "service" in student government. Nor can the money to pay for the dinner come from

student government funds, because that's your money, too. You don't want to be taken twice.

Now we must ask each of you a question: Is this the type of leadership you want to reelect to student government?

Today is the final day to vote in the primary for executive board offices. Pida, thankfully, had a rare lapse of conscience and decided not to run for re-election.

Smith, however, is once again putting his hat in the political ring and is running for re-election as senate president. Since Smith's only opponent in the race is Joe Laxague, you won't find that race on the primary ballot, either.

But, you will find Smith out and about campaigning for the candidates in this election he supports. Think twice before you vote for one of his cronies. Remember, birds of a feather flock together. Make sure you make the right choice in this election.

In the upcoming general election, you will have your final choice to make about

Smith. Unless you exercise your power to vote this career politician out of office, you can count on yet another year of irresponsible leadership and mispending of funds.

Smith has spent four years in the learning lab of student government. One would hope during his tenure he would have learned from his mistakes and would have gotten it right by now.

That, obviously, is not the case. What he has learned is how to not take responsibility and how not to own up to his mistakes.

He has also learned the art of manipulation and selective recall.

If this is the type of leadership you want in the executive offices of student government, don't complain the next time you come out of Lucky Supermarket toting a bag full of Top Ramen as you pass him dining on your money at Cafe Michelle. Because you paid for it, and you asked for it.

Candidate promises free meals at Palace Court

In light of our incumbent student body president's recent withdrawal from the upcoming primary elections, I am writing this letter to urge all of you to include me as a write-in candidate.

Until recently I felt completely under-qualified for the position of student body president. I suppose I had never really checked out the duties of office. Recently I have learned of a couple of programs enacted by our current trusted servants upon which I could

really build. The first of these I call the Constituent Free Meal Plan, though I am unsure whether this is the official title.

It appears our student body president, John Pida, and our student senate president, Pat Smith, have decided that our tuition money, which provides student government with its funds, can be best spent by taking their government cronies and fraternity brothers out to dinner at Cafe Michelle.

When approached about the

subject, the response was something along the lines of everyone attending the dinner was a constituent.

So, I immediately called this girl I have been wanting to ask out in my anthropology class to invite her to Cafe Michelle, not mentioning who will pick up the tab as that would be in poor taste.

As of now I have been unable to contact anyone regarding the time and place of the next scheduled Constituent's Dinner, but when I do, I will announce it so that you may also attend with a significant other of your choosing. Note, this person must be a constituent of student government (taking at least one unit at UNLV).

Another program I was unaware of was Travel Around the Country in Style on the Student's Dollars. What a great concept. This one appears to allow our trusted leaders to go to Washington, D.C., under the guise of representing the needs of students, and spend the time partying and driving around in rental cars, furnished again with, you guessed it, your money.

I may not be qualified as my vision is limited. I would have only thought of one car for all who could fit into it. Now I understand the program entitles Pida and Smith to individual vehicles. Which would excite me beyond all belief, but again, my limited vision

Guest Column

TREVOR HAYES

would have hindered me to nothing more than a GEO Metro.

Our leaders decided that they could best represent the views of our student body by driving a Ford Explorer and a Lincoln Town Car, while the others on the trip were forced to take taxi cabs, also on student government money.

By learning from the example of the Pida administration,

by a small number of special interest groups to which he/she has promised special favors to or is a member.

I belong to several clubs and organizations on campus for which I can create special budgets, and those students who promise to cast their ballot for me can negotiate their own deal. Last year Pida was elected with well under 500 votes, so I think we can do it.

The true beauty in this plan is that it requires absolutely no action from you, the student.

All I ask is that if you have not voted in previous elections, keep up the good work. You will receive your own special rewards once I am in office.

Those of you who regularly vote: Remember which candidate will fill your pockets and your stomachs for the next year as you enter the polling booth.

I understand that by the time this is published we will be in the final day of voting. This may be the biggest obstacle to my campaign. So if not elected, I would like to extend an invitation to those fortunate enough to fill these seats to call me anytime, especially if one of those difficult director positions become available, such as elections board. I am as willing as the next person to receive a tuition waiver for 24 credits and a check for \$400 a month to not show up during elections.

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Do not despair. It is not too late to get me elected. The trends of the past seem to be that the candidate is elected

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I now feel comfortable with leading this student body into the future. My first acts as student body president would be to change the location of the Constituent's Dinner to the Palace Court at Caesars Palace, reserve a limousine to transport me to and from school and have at my disposal a special golf cart equipped with stereo, television, heating and air-conditioning to take me from my limo to my classes.

Trevor Hayes is a staff news writer for *The Rebel Yell*.

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