

Editorial

Denial of USSA funds was a wrong decision

After heated debate last night, the Incidental Fee Committee voted four to two against providing funds for the United States Student's Association. The arguments against USSA funding have merits, yet we believe the arguments for funding the USSA are stronger — the IFC should have provided the USSA its \$9,000 request.

Rob Munion and James Randall, two outspoken IFC members who were against funding the USSA, have criticized in no uncertain terms this national student lobbying group as being detached from the University, and that it is ineffective at promoting student needs on a local level.

Moreover, they criticize the USSA as having left-wing political leanings, and argue that the organization fails to adequately represent student interests at the University.

But Munion and Randall's charges are in themselves politically motivated. Both are conservatives, and they believe that because the USSA's University representatives are Students for a Progressive Agenda members, admittedly a liberal entity, that the USSA itself is liberal-minded.

What they fail to see, however, is that the University's representatives are not the sole voice of the USSA. The lobbying group is a nationwide coalition of student interests, and its agenda is decided by college students from around the country. If the USSA agenda can be interpreted as liberal, so be it.

As for claims that the USSA is detached from University students, the evidence indicates otherwise. The USSA directly affects 4.5 million students nationwide, which includes our University students.

The USSA helped pressure Congress not to make cuts in Pell Grants, an effort that unfortunately was unsuccessful. The USSA similarly failed in its attempts to block congressional redefinition of independent student status. But it was successful in modifying provisions affecting Guaranteed Student Loan repayment deferment. The latter was no small achievement in light of the budget-cutting mood in Congress. Many University students receive Pell Grants, thereby making charges of USSA detachment moot.

Furthermore, the University's two representatives, Caitlin Cameron and Katy Howard, have had audience with Sen. Mark Hatfield. This kind of representation cannot be matched through letter-writing or phone call drives. University students need this kind of legislative input if meaningful improvements in the student condition are to be realized.

We believe the \$9,000 the USSA requested is a legitimate request, even though the bulk of budget outlays would go for travel and lodging. When on the road, USSA representatives have virtually no time for recreational pursuits, nor should they. The vast majority of time representatives spend away from the University is performing the task at hand — working to better student status locally and nationally.

The IFC acquiesced to vocal objections by two of its members, and decided not to fund the USSA in order to avoid a deadlock vote. The USSA now has the opportunity to appeal the IFC's decision. It is our hope that the IFC will change its ruling, and award the USSA the funds it deserves.



Opinions

I am responding to Dean Backus' letter "Film Review" (ODE, Jan. 19). Dean continuously criticizes Sean Axmaker's review on the twelve best films of 1986. Dean felt that Sean was a pro at being boring, confusing, and irritating.

I think Dean is being unrealistically opinionated towards Sean. Dean briefly described nine movies he personally preferred that Sean had failed to list in his film review. I consider a few of the movies mentioned not worth seeing a second time, much less on the top twelve list for 1986. Furthermore, "Restless Natives," "Desert Bloom," and "Parting Glances" were three movies Dean mentioned that my friends and I have not heard of, but that is his opinion.

By listing only twelve of the most popular movies in 1986, Sean should not be expected to list everybody's personal favorites. Individual tastes in movies are different and movie reviewers do their best to base their reviews on box office sales and, of course, personal opinions.

I feel that Sean Axmaker does a good job and people like Dean

Backus should lay-off on some of the harsh criticism and give him a little credit where deserved. I am sure even the best film reviews receive criticism because nobody is perfect.

Kim Rath
Business

Jewish establishment. He was subsequently executed by crucifixion.

Ron Rousseve
Counseling Psychology
Professor

Crucial issues

In last spring's election at the University, the student body gave a strong vote of support to the U.S. Student Association (USSA). USSA is the largest and oldest national student association that lobbies for student needs and interests in Washington on a national level.

Recently we have witnessed the most frightening budget cuts in STUDENT FINANCIAL AID proposed by the Reagan Administration. Major cuts in Guaranteed Student Loans are already in effect this term! It is absolutely essential that we as University students support efforts to protect access to higher education. The efforts carried out by the ASUO to participate in this positive process are very commendable. As a student dependent of financial aid, these are exactly the kind of priorities that I expect my student government leaders to work on.

As shown in last spring's student election, support has been given to the ASUO to work on these crucial issues. I implore the IFC to resolve their tie vote and support the student mandate for continued funding for USSA.

Bryan Moore
Spanish

Open forum

As a member of the University faculty who has long defended the "open forum" role of the liberal, secular university in a pluralistic society, I was delighted to read Bert Tryba's letter (ODE, Feb. 6). Mr. Tryba indicated that the University's mission is an educational one, not that of uncritical proselytizing. Accordingly, he wrote that "it is vital that secular views that challenge the claims of theistic religions" be represented in campus discussions of, for example, Jesus Christ.

I have previously acknowledged my current philosophic stance as that of "post-Christian agnosticism." Although reared in a Catholic family and educated in mostly church-related schools, I now seriously doubt that Jesus was more than human. On the basis of the available historical record and dispassionate philosophic reflection on the nature of the human condition, I have come to believe that there is no substantiated evidence to support the contention that Jesus was other than a human being.

What follows is my brief, secular humanist agnostic view of Jesus: The son of a carpenter, Joseph, and his wife Mary, the person called Jesus probably lived in accord with his Jewish ethnicity. Following his baptism by John the Baptist, he began a charismatic ministry in Galilee — imparting a number of teachings which may have deviated from the "conventional wisdom" of his time.

Near the end of his short ministry, Jesus was delivered to the Roman authorities in Jerusalem by a faction of the

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