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## Nelson slams talk show "entertainers"™

By DON WALTON / Lincoln Journal Star  
Friday, Apr 17, 2009 - 07:19:22 pm CDT

Radio and TV talk show personalities are distorting the public debate on critical issues with bias and misinformation, Sen. Ben Nelson said Friday.

Too many Americans "get their news from entertainers (who) tell them what to be angry about today," Nelson said.

Nelson pointed the finger at personalities on both the right and the left during a speech to the Nebraska Public Policy Center on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln campus.

Both Jon Stewart on Comedy Central and conservative radio icon Rush Limbaugh "slant the news to fit their agenda," Nelson said.

Then he added Bill O'Reilly, Glenn Beck and Sean Hannity of Fox News and Keith Olbermann and Rachel Maddow of MSNBC to his list.

"There's a lot of inaccurate and incomplete information out there thanks to talk shows from either the left or the right," the Democratic senator said.

"Facts often get in the way of a good rant," Nelson said.

Far too many citizens who complain about government or a specific issue are doing so with a lack of accurate information, he said.

Citizens need to be "accurately informed and actively involved," Nelson said.

But they won't be adequately informed by "a shouting head on TV," he said.

"Responding to the talking points of either extreme is not the way to enact good public policy," Nelson said.

On other matters, Nelson said most economists believe the alternative to federal economic stimulus spending would be a longer and deeper recession.

Nelson supported an \$878 billion economic stimulus package after helping negotiate \$108 billion in cuts to acquire bipartisan Senate support for the legislation.

Critics at this week's anti-tax Tea Party rallies failed to come to grips with the possibility that the nation could slide toward a depression if action had not been taken to jolt the economy, he said.

And they seemed to ignore the fact that the stimulus plan included middle-class tax cuts that are pumping more than \$9 million a month into the pockets of Nebraskans, he said.

Answering questions from students, Nelson said he wants major union organizing legislation to receive "full consideration," but he did not commit his vote for a cloture motion that would end a Senate filibuster by opponents.

Later, in an interview, Nelson said it's apparent the Employee Free Choice Act will not be able to acquire the 60 votes required for cloture even with his vote.

Nelson opposes the bill in its present form.

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