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SANTA BARBARA • SANTA CRUZ

DEPARTMENT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES

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As a former Nebraskan, whose roots in the life of the State remain deep, I watch events there with keen attentiveness. Of particular interest to me is the current race for the U.S. Senate between Bob Kerrey and David Karnes.

I am not certain how many Nebraskans know how Mr. Kerrey spent the first months of his time after he left the governorship. Within days he was here in Santa Barbara, lecturing in the classrooms of the University of California. He taught a graduate seminar in state government, and assisted me in teaching the now nationally-known course on the impact of the Vietnam War.

Professor Kerrey was an instant success. Not only does he know both subjects through personal experience, but he also brought intellectual excitement and a passion for truth. All of us found him thoroughly captivating and uncommonly courageous. He gave us not only items to think about, but also compelling ways to inform and direct our lives.

The students requested that he be invited back again, and the faculty and administration have urged him to accept a "permanent relationship," as his time allows. Were he running for political office in this locale, there would be many who would want to assist him.

From our vantage point, Bob Kerrey is an eloquent witness to the truth that Nebraska-life makes wonderful sense. His involvement in the Vietnam War has deepened his compassion and wisdom. While others remain stuck on the controversies of that war, he is far, far ahead, extending the healing as he searches for constructive ways of meeting the challenges before us.

Kerrey's numerous accomplishments here, and in a very short time, make me intensely proud to be a Nebraskan. He will do even more, and the nation itself will take notice, when his range of influence is expanded.

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