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Alger sees many shapes of world

By Barbara Lutz

Instead of seeing the world through rose-colored glasses, a specialist in international relations said people should view the international situation like a billiard ball, funnel, pyramid or onion.

Chadwick Alger told a UNL international conflict class Thursday "we (Americans) are up to our necks in international relations, but we don't know where in the world we are."

Fifteen students in 209 Oldfather Hall thought they knew where they were, but Alger originator of the "Columbus-in-the-World" project said although they may not realize it, residing in Lincoln gives them connections world-wide.

Technological advances in transportation and communication have made cities like Lincoln, and Columbus, Ohio, closer to European cities, at times than to towns in their own state, he said.

For example, an international bank in Columbus can make a transaction with a bank in Buenos Aires, South America sometimes faster and easier than with Portsmouth, Ohio, less than 100 miles away.

World-wide connections in Columbus or Lincoln are analogous to a billiard ball, funnel, pyramid or onion, Alger said, in his report "Columbus-in-the-World."

Billiard balls

The United States, the U.S.S.R., China, and sometimes Japan and Western Europe are like billiard balls bouncing around on the table of world issues, he said. In the funnel theory, President Carter and Cyrus Vance are at the narrow end and the masses are at the large end.

Alger's pyramid theory places local government at the bottom and international government at the top. The onion theory, Alger said, the masses are in the middle covered by skins of local, state and national governments before reaching international government.

Alger's three and one-half year old "Columbus-in-the-World" project designed to show people there are global links to home communities, so people become aware of international activities in their own cities, he said.

Alger is a professor of political science at Ohio State University and the author of "A World of Cities" or "Good Foreign Policies Begin at Home."

World connections

Instead of being separated from international issues, Alger said communities like Lincoln have world connections through universities, the Catholic Church, World Council of Churches, the YMCA, banks, insurance companies, medical institutions, sports, the arts, agriculture and other organizations.

Alger admits citizens are often skeptical when he talks about their international participation. "They say Cyrus



Photo by Bob Pearson
 "Columbus-in-the-World" project originator, Chadwick Alger.

Vance spent all his life learning about the world, how can I have an impact," he said.

Looking at a world map people don't see the Catholic Church, International Telephone and Telegraph or General Motors, Alger said. "It looks like the actors on the international scene are nations."

"But, we know 75 per cent of the blotches have little influence or resources compared to Exxon or General Motors."

Early, snowier winter predicted by Douglas

Nebraska residents can expect an early winter which will be cooler and snowier than normal, according to Arthur Douglas, UNL geography professor.

His predictions are the results of a study conducted by members of the UNL Geography Dept.

Temperatures will be cooler than normal, but not cooler than last winter, Douglas said. Southeast Nebraska is in for more snow than last year.

The members base their conclusions on ocean temperatures which control the jet streams of North America, current temperature trends and a contingency table analysis. The tables are used to examine and compare the weather for the past three months and provide a basis for future predictions, he said.

Although they call for an early winter, no forecast about the length of the winter has been made.

"We don't make predictions that far in advance," Douglas said.

In the past, the members have had a good record of accuracy, he said.

"We predicted last winter to be especially cold," he said. They also forecasted the end of the drought and expected heavy summer precipitation.

The group that conducted the study includes Douglas, a graduate student and an undergraduate student.

Salaries are paid with the money from subscribers to the prediction service.

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