

opinion/editorial

Alcohol abuse policy is needed

Regents' ban on campus drinking will stay

Few issues on campus are as hotly debated as the policy of not allowing alcohol in UNL residence halls. Recently, a residence hall president called for revision of the policy which would allow students to drink in the halls.

Revising the alcohol policy to allow for consumption of alcohol in the halls, fraternities and sororities is a bad idea for several reasons.

First, and foremost, is the fact that state law does not allow anyone under the age of 20 to obtain alcoholic beverages. Remembering that the residence hall population is dominated by people under 20 years of age, it seems ridiculous to think that any policy will be adopted that openly encourages violation of state law.

No one would deny that easing the policy would make liquor more available, but the facts are that alcohol is so easily available to those students seeking it that the current policy has little effect.

Those who would like to see the policy changed argue that because the policy is so hopelessly unworkable, a new policy is needed.

Let's be realistic folks. Does anybody out there really think the NU Board of Regents would allow liberalization of this policy? The regents have for too long held to their "in loco parentis" philosophy and are not going to

change on this issue.

Past stories and letters to the editor have contained results of surveys taken on alcohol use on campus. The results of an alcohol questionnaire distributed through the residence halls show that 88.9 percent of the respondents drink and that 74.7 percent of them drink on campus.

That probably isn't news to anybody. It doesn't take a survey or a Gallup Poll to tell people that alcohol is both used — and abused — on campus.

The argument that lessening the policy would result in more people drinking responsibly cannot be proven by facts. It is a guess, and a hopeful one at that.

Richard McKinnon, RHA adviser and assistant director of housing, estimates that half of the discipline problems in the halls are alcohol-related. Much of the vandalism in the halls is the result of drunk students. It may be hard to catch those people but it's senseless to change the policy to make it more difficult.

Allowing drinking in the halls, fraternities and sororities would also give students the chance to use the Abscam Defense. Faced with the charge of taking money for political favors, many congressmen responded by saying, "Don't blame me. I was drunk."

What those congressmen and everyone else must realize is that despite use of alcohol people are still responsible for their actions. Drinking, in any amount, should not be an excuse for wrongdoings.

Currently, the student assistants are the "police" behind the policy. But they certainly do not want to be. There is little enjoyment in confronting a student about a possible alcohol violation.

It is difficult to expect students with drinking problems to go to their SA and ask for help. Ideally, that is one of the many jobs they are there for. But it might be more realistic to expect them to go to an outsider because of the complexity of the issue.

Students who think they need counseling are encouraged to visit any of the following places for help: the Mental Health Clinic at the University Health Center, the Counseling Center in Seaton Hall, the Educational Psychology Clinic, the Psychology Department Clinic and for referral service, the Lincoln Council on Alcohol and Drugs.

We don't need grandiose ideals on what to do with alcohol or risky experiments. What we need is to realize the damaging effects of alcohol abuse. Only then can we formulate coherent policies to limit its damage.



letter to the editor

Peace needs defense

The column by Roger Nimps concerning U.S. military policy in Western Europe was typical of past Nimps editorials in its unreasonable condemnation of the Reagan administration. In light of the violation of Swedish territory by a Soviet nuclear spy submarine it should be obvious that the real threat to peace in Europe is the Soviet war machine, not U.S. defense measures.

If Western Europeans are ever subjected to the holocaust of nuclear war, it will be from Soviet nuclear weapons, not American.

The United States has never, does not, and will never have even one nuclear weapon aimed at any target, civilian or military, in these European countries. The threat comes totally from the Soviet Union and their puppet states surrounding Western Europe. There would be no nuclear threat there if it were not for the Soviet missiles aimed at these people.

These people, are in effect, protesting the only thing that stands between them and the bloody, brutal oppression which

would follow a Soviet invasion and which has always followed the installation of every Communist regime in world history.

It should be obvious to these people and to their pacifist sympathizers in the United States that the real danger comes not from their American protectors, but from the Soviet Union, which already has millions of Europeans virtually under armed guard behind the mine fields of the Iron Curtain living under far worse economic conditions than their neighbors in Western capitalistic societies.

The invasion of Afghanistan by the Soviets, as well as the incident with the Soviet nuclear spy submarine should be clear enough evidence who is not sure who the enemy is.

European pacifists may well succeed in keeping new U.S. and NATO weapons out, but in doing so they would be signing their own death warrants and ours, as well. Freedom isn't free, and if these people aren't willing to do their part to maintain its defense, tyranny will be the only benefactor.

Steve Graz
Ag Honors — Pre-Law

Holiday giving needed daily

There's something about the holiday season that can really bring out the cynicism in a person. Perhaps it lies in the fact that most American holidays are founded in such hypocrisy.

Take, for instance, the recent Thanksgiving holiday. We've all been taught the touching story of the original Thanksgiving, about how the "Pilgrims" sat down to dinner with the "Indians" to celebrate the pilgrims survival of that first long, hard winter. We were all told how the "Indians" showed the settlers how to grow corn and how the first dinner was filled with the spirit of brotherly love and sharing and so forth.

charles

I wonder how Native Americans feel now as they watch the descendants from that first dinner celebrate "Thanksgiving." Boy, talk about biting the hand that feeds you. What did the original people of this land get in return for their hospitality to the Europeans? They were pushed off the land, their culture was destroyed, their history lost and a Nazi-like genocide was inflicted upon them. But here we all sit, every year, with our turkey and dressing, following the great tradition, like everything is fine and dandy.

Of course, there is something to be said about the spirit of sharing with the hungry on Thanksgiving. Many people take time out to donate food for Thanksgiving baskets to the poor. So, on this one day out of the year, the nation's poor are inundated with food, while the other 364 days they're left alone to starve. But at least we can all soothe our consciences and know that we gave to the less fortunate.

It may seem downright unpatriotic to shed light on the fraudulent nature of American holiday traditions. But one can't help but wonder how those who really can't include themselves in these various festivities feel during the holidays. If Native American's are feeling slightly out of place during Thanksgiving, imagine how they must be feeling on Columbus Day.

Imagine having a man recognized nation wide for "discovering" your country — even though you've been there for hundreds, maybe thousands of years already. But this is certainly no more ridiculous than black Americans celebrating the Fourth of July, a day when a bunch of slaveholding Europeans declared that they

stood for freedom and equality for all. How noble of our "Founding Fathers" to initiate such a move.

A person can't help but get cynical about holidays. Here we are with Thanksgiving barely passed and already stores are pushing consumers to spend money for Christmas. Somehow the whole spirit of this celebration gets lost, submerged under the social pressure to buy presents. To reiterate the theme from the cartoon special *A Charlie Brown Christmas*, Christmas is too commercialized.

Then, of course, there's New Year's Eve, everybody's yearly excuse to get drunk and be totally irresponsible for a day. Watch the rise in traffic deaths due to drunken driving. What fun that should be.

There may be some real feelings of thankfulness at Thanksgiving, some spiritual feelings at Christmas, a real commitment to making a new beginning at New Year's and there may have even been some people who really stood for freedom in 1776. But when everyday living doesn't reflect the meaning of the holidays, who can really take any of them seriously?

daily nebraskan

Editorials do not necessarily express the opinions of the Daily Nebraskan's publishers, the NU Board of Regents, the University of Nebraska and its employees or the student body.

USPS 144-080

Editor: Tom Prentiss; Managing editor: Kathy Stokebrand; News editor: Steve Miller; Associate News editors: Dan Epp, Kim Hachiya, Alice Hrnicek; Night news editor: Martha Murdock; Assistant night news editor: Kate Kopschke; Entertainment editor: Pat Clark; Sports editor: Larry Sparks; Art director: Dave Luebke; Photography chief: Mark Billingsley.

Business manager: Anne Shank-Volk; Production manager: Kitty Policky; Advertising manager: Art K. Small; Assistant advertising manager: Jerry Scott.

Publications Board chairperson: Margy McCleery, 472-2454. Professional adviser: Don Walton, 473-7301.

The Daily Nebraskan is published by the UNL Publications Board Monday through Friday during the fall and spring semesters, except during vacation.

Address: Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 14th and R streets, Lincoln, Neb., 68588. Telephone: 472-2588.

All material in the Daily Nebraskan is covered by copyright.

Second class postage paid at Lincoln, Neb. 68510.

Annual subscription: \$20, semester subscription: \$11.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 14th and R streets, Lincoln, Neb., 68588.