

Editorial

Graduates must remember lessons learned

UNL will churn out another 1,000 or so graduates Dec. 22. For many of those graduating, their diplomas will mean a comfortable job selling Bibles, then a promotion to district manager, a house outside of town, a wife, two kids and a new car.

Nothing is wrong with that. American life is based on that sometimes elusive dream.

However, when the homogeneous student body that is UNL retires to its home, it tends to forget some of the most important lessons learned.

Suburban life has its pressures, and many of those pressures are too much for

some folks to handle. In comparison, life in the slow lane is fairly comfortable.

Graduates, please don't forget the handicapped people you met in your classes. If you took the time to listen to them, you found out how difficult life can be in a world designed for people who function without aids.

Don't forget the foreign students who came to this country to learn. Don't forget their opinions on world events. Most of you probably won't be exposed to those types of views ever again. You don't have to agree with what they believe. Just remember what they had to say.

Remember also the number of different religions practiced on this campus. Apply this to the world outside your office and your living room, where Moslems and Christians, Catholics and Protestants say they may not be able to survive in the same world.

Remember the seemingly eccentric professors who challenged you to consider Freudian symbolism, the true nature of man, the origin of the universe. They're not as strange as you think. They believe what they believe because they have intensely studied their subjects for years, sometimes decades.

Minorities probably will not be a part of many of your lives from now on. Remember how easy it was to live and work with people from all races and the things they had to say about working their way from the bottom because of cultural biases.

Remember the homosexuals, bisexuals and others who didn't practice straight heterosexuality. Their lifestyle may be repugnant to you, but they deserve to be heard.

You are educated people now. Be tolerant. Go in peace.

— Jeff Browne

Daily Nebraskan Senior Editor

Lawmakers pinch pest-control pennies to kill cockroaches

For one group of small-business men, there are two kinds of problems on Capitol Hill: congressmen and cockroaches.

The sad truth is that congressional offices are overrun with roaches. They're more numerous than lobbyists — and almost as nervy.

Yet the exterminators hired to fight the wily critters often find their hands tied by the very lawmakers and aides who should be supporting their efforts.

Jack Anderson and Joseph Spear

The result is that the Capitol, and the Senate and House office buildings make up a luxurious, marble-clad roach motel. The insects slither across senators' desks and secretaries' file cabinets with an insouciance bordering on arrogance. It's almost as if they know the budget for congressional cockroach control is a pitiful \$24,000 a year.

Our reporter Scott Barrett talked with Gene Budowski of Entech Inc., the exterminator that currently holds the unenviable contract to keep the buildings and grounds of the congressional complex free of vermin. It is, he said, an impossible task for a number of reasons.

The big problem, not surprisingly, is the \$24,000 budget. Budowski said a more realistic figure would be anywhere from \$60,000 to \$75,000 a year. But the lawmakers who approve trillion-dollar federal budgets insist on pinching pennies when it comes to pest control.

Another thing that bugs Budowski is the uncooperative attitude of congressional staffers. They balk at letting his crew move books and papers so the rooms and furniture can be sprayed properly. "It's very frustrating, because it's so simple," he said.

Then — and this may come as a surprise to readers beyond the Washington Beltway — there's the problem of staffers who eat lunch at their desks, instead of at fancy gin mills, as legend dictates. Leftover tuna fish sandwiches, plus opened bags of munchies stashed away in desk drawers, provide more than adequate nourishment for the armies of little six-legged guerrillas deployed on Capitol Hill.

Although regular spraying is the only effective way to deal with roaches, Budowski said, the contract calls for spraying only in response to complaints of infestation. Also, he said, another contractor handles the restaurants and cafeterias, and there's no

coordination between the two assault teams.

As for the great outdoors, where Budowski's firm is responsible for rat control, there are other problems just as touchy. Entech must use environmentally safe rat poisons, and take care that, for example, no tourists' pet dog drops dead behind some TV correspondent doing a standup report on the Capitol lawn.

Budowski said the congressional extermination contract is a "prestige account" — but he won't do it again, thanks.

Hello-goodbye: Officials at the Federal Emergency Management Agency obviously believe that planning for natural and manmade disasters is a sensitive business. They recently installed a new telephone system that will monitor all outgoing calls automatically. An internal memo explains the effect this will have on employees:

"The system will impact personal calls from government phones. Each local and long distance number called will be recorded on a printout and sent to office managers, who will be required to certify each call was official government business..."

"Calling to say you will be home late could result in a fine or separation from the job."

Who's news?: Lew Lehrman, self-made millionaire and unsuccessful New York gubernatorial candidate, is in the running for a seat on the Council of Economic Advisers. He is one of President Reagan's favorite conservatives, but he apparently stokes the competitive fires within another Empire State supply sider, Republican Rep. Jack Kemp.

During the Republican convention last summer, a Kemp aide advised Lehrman and several of his aides to remove their fire-engineered suspenders because it made Lehrman appear to be setting himself up as a cult figure.

— Rep. Tony Coelho, D-Calif., according to our sources, wants to become the financial czar for the Democratic Party. He is making his bid from strength: During the 1984 campaign, he raised millions for the party's House candidates and is given much credit for minimizing Democratic losses.

— Sen. John Glenn, D-Ohio, is privately lobbying for a seat on the Armed Services Committee. He is already a member of the Foreign Relations Committee and, according to the rules, he cannot be a member of both. But Glenn wants an exception for him on the grounds that he would make an ideal "liaison" between the two panels on arms sales matters.

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Political salary cuts 'nonsense'

There comes a time in everyone's childhood when you realize how the world really works. This happens when you're about to be punished, and a parent says, "This hurts me more than it hurts you." Nothing is quite the same after that.

Now we have the latest variation on this theme, and it comes from the Reagan administration. After the president proposed a 5 percent pay reduction for all federal workers, the Cabinet agreed to go even further: It would take a 10 percent cut. Talk about hurt!



Richard Cohen

Not to be outdone in the sacrifice department, House Minority Leader Bob Michel (R-Ill.) and Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole (R-Kan.) said the idea was so wonderful it ought to be extended to Congress. And then President Reagan, Andy Hardy-ishly, suggested an even better idea. He, too, would take a pay cut. Golly! There goes New Year's Eve in Palm Springs.

This means that among those who will now join janitors and secretaries, clerks and drivers in the ranks of the suffering, will be Donald Regan, the former chairman of Merrill-Lynch, Cap Weinberger and George Shultz, both former Bechtel executives, and, of course, George Bush, who during the campaign forgot that his father was a millionaire and declared himself a self-made man.

The list of the new poor will include numerous millionaires in Congress, most of whom will feel no guilt about imposing the new austerity ethic on their less-wealthy colleagues. The latter will, of course, suffer silently. In Washington, hypocrisy is just another name for the sword: You live by it; you can die by it.

Even for politicians at budget time, the Dole-Michel-Reagan pay cut proposal is epic political nonsense. It's symbolic of how showmanship and symbolism now passes for substance in Washington. The idea is to appear fair, as if fairness means treating rich and poor the same. When you compare the wealth of a man like Donald Regan with that of a clerk who's supporting a family on a civil-servant paycheck, the point becomes obvious. But take a look at the rest of what the president is proposing — the budget freeze. This, too, is unfairness disguised as fairness.

The idea of an across-the-board budget freeze is to create something like a fiscal Battle-of-Britain atmosphere: We are all in this together, and who knows where the bombs will land. But we know precisely where the bombs will land. They will land on the food-stamp program, Head Start, low-income fuel aid, Aid to Families with Dependent Children, rent subsidies, child-nutrition programs, black-lung benefits and scores of other programs whose recipients are the poor or the handicapped.

The president's budget proposal, though, has no bombs tar-

geted at most of the middle class nor any of the rich. To save them a tax increase (and to satisfy an ideological compulsion to trash the federal government), programs are either being cut or frozen or, in some cases, eliminated. Among them are some that ought to be junked and others that should be reduced. But to suggest that it is fair to take the good and the bad, the essential and the frivolous, and cut them all is both ridiculous and an abdication of responsibility. It's the president's job to decide what's worth keeping and what's not and to find ways to pay for what's important.

Of course, in one area the president has done just that. The defense budget, as bloated as it is, has so far escaped the knife — even analysis. In the end, Congress will have to cut it too. But in the meantime the president's reluctance to recommend cuts in defense says a lot. For him there are two budgets — one for defense, which is sacred, and one for the rest of the federal government, which is all junk. Do with the junk what you will — and don't bother him with the details.

The sort of fairness the Reagan administration proposes with its budget freeze and pay reduction proposals is precisely what Anatole France has in mind when he said, "The law, in its majestic equality, forbids the rich as well as the poor to sleep under the bridges, to beg in the streets and to steal bread." Oh, Anatole, you've never been to Washington. In the name of fairness, the bridge program was cut.

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