

Editorials
Commentary

We hold these rights

In explaining this week's denial of coed visitation, Regent Richard Adkins said extending such a privilege to foreign and graduate students (and not to all students) would be unfair.

And he is right. All students should have the right to decide for themselves how they will live.

But the significance of the denial is not in the uniformity of rules governing the various classifications of students. The importance is the Regents' attitude towards granting privileges to students

AT THE RISK of a debate in semantics, a "privilege" may be defined as a thing bestowed from someone to someone else; a "right" is that which public consensus holds inherent to all persons, regardless of race, creed, age or educational status.

Any Nebraskan has the right to a high school education.

And any high school graduate has the right to attend the University.

WHEN A PERSON exercises this second right, he does not forego his right to associate with whom he pleases. And he does not give up his right to make decisions for himself on personal matters.

Therefore, Regents, do not consider coed visitation and similar freedoms to be privileges. They are rights.

The only thing not yet settled is when the students will wake up and demand those rights.

The sooner the better.

Ed Icenogle



COUP DE GRASS

The scars of black Americans

by Ernest Boynton
Reprinted from Engage magazine

I consider myself an American. But the big question is: What does America consider me? Here's why I ask.

Back at the time when I graduated from grammar school in New York City, I was the only black boy in my class. But I wasn't unknown. I had been honored for turning out the best English composition.

My folks weren't rich, but at graduation time I convinced them I had to have a new suit and new shoes for the big graduation dance. Seems I was nearsighted.

Two days before it was to come off, the principal called me to his office for what I thought would be congratulations of some sort. He had something else in mind. Without preamble, he "requested" me not to attend the dance. "Some of the parents might not like it," he said. "I'm sure you understand." Understand what?

A few months later, at a high school in Arizona, I was again "requested" — this time not to go in the new swimming pool at the time scheduled for freshmen boys. Instead, I was asked to join a dozen black boys I didn't know and take swimming at a special time — after school.

I never did swim in that pool. And it left a scar. The fact that I did win the job of editor of the high school weekly didn't cushion the hurt.

There may be worse things than being barred from a graduation dance, or kept from swimming with classmates. Losing both arms, maybe. Or having a bank fail with all your money in it. Or being told you've got cancer.

But you couldn't have proved it to a teenager who had read the Constitution and believed what it said, who had often stood at attention in the school assembly to "pledge allegiance to the flag . . . and to the Republic for which it stands . . . with liberty and justice for all." It shook me.

And after many, many years it still shakes me. I don't go around breathing fire about it, but can anybody imagine I've forgotten? I can't. Not ever.

And I'm not alone. Roughly 25 million native-born Americans are like me — carrying unhealed

scars that shouldn't be there. They're not visible, but they're there, deeply ingrained; and they carry their own built-in, unpredictable fuse.

Such scars are not congenital. Nobody's born with them, and white kids don't get them. But if you're black, they simply start coming at an early age and you have to live with what they do to your nervous system. And once they start festering you're a walking bomb, dangerous to yourself and everyone around you. The American way of life makes these scars — the American way of "We don't serve colored, hire colored, loan money to colored, cut colored hair, want colored next door, in our church, school, club, swimming pool, home and not even in our town."

And because this is the American way, one of two things will happen soon: The American way will get rid of what causes scars, or the nation will have a blood bath. There are no two ways about it. No alternative.

The most frightening thing about all this is that millions of white Americans do not seem to realize the monumental danger of trying to maintain the status quo, doing business as usual and not only ignoring the old scars, but adding fresh ones every day. In aggrieved tones they ask, "What's wrong with these people? What do they want?"

Any black kid over 10 — in or out of the ghetto — can give the answer in a few words: "The same things you want — equal opportunity, equal justice, equal enjoyment of the things our ancestors worked for."

But nobody listens to black kids. The usual bromide is "Whack them over the head. Shoot them."

I'm not alone in being scarred. I'm not alone in my willingness to bury a past in which black hands helped to make a rich nation — and haven't been paid off. Millions like me want a better future for all Americans.

But the question is: Are there millions of white Americans who feel the same? Enough to avert catastrophe? Enough to convince black kids — already scarred — that from here on they will get a fair shake?

They, too, want to be Americans.

Rejuvenating the Greeks

University of Nebraska fraternities, stagnated by decades of reactionary tradition, have finally acquired the means to rejuvenate the Greek system.

By approving several crucial amendments to the pledge education contract, IFC has assumed the power to effect urgently-needed improvements. The next step, of course, is to secure the signatures of the houses.

In effect, those fraternities which sign the contract will be agreeing to progress in exchange for a strong rushing point. The houses refusing to sign will be admitting the demeaning nature of their pledge programs.

The final step will be enforcement of the document. By supporting the contract, the IFC has promised to move the fraternity system ahead. And IFC will be breaking its bond if it tolerates "gentlemen's agreements" to not prosecute contract violators.

Ed Icenogle

The Daily Nebraskan is solely a student-operated newspaper independent of editorial control by student government, administration and faculty. The opinion expressed on this page is that of the Nebraskan's editorial page staff.

Jaw-jaw better than war-war

by FLORA LEWIS

Paris — The North Vietnamese delegation here is no longer shy. Apart from official appearances, they do see foreigners, including American correspondents, without much fuss. And with as full a display of scented oriental courtesies as of firm adherence to Hanoi's stand.

Eleven months of talks in a western capital have made some difference. The North Vietnamese delegates, unlike the Viet Cong representatives who only arrived last November, show a degree of relaxed self-confidence in dealing with an American visitor.

"How is your health?" the spokesman asked first, his bony, taut-skinned face opened in a widely demonstrative smile. He offered cigarettes (English), honey and nut candy (Vietnamese), tea (Chinese), and port wine (Portuguese).

"WE ARE not hostile to the United States," he said. "I am not hostile to you."

It seemed a fair beginning. There was the familiar lecture on the "war of aggression" and the sovereign "national rights of the people of Vietnam." That is part of the game, a challenge to match the host's quiet-voiced patience. Eventually, there was an opening for questions.

At my request, there was a long series of dates, places, names offered to back Hanoi's claim that President Nixon's administration has not just maintained but stiffened the U.S. war effort in Vietnam.

That part was business-like, no smiles, no peroration, except for a moment when I asked whether the B-52 raids charged in February might

have been mistakes of pilots who thought themselves over Laos, where U.S. bombing has increased.

"IT MAKES no difference. The U.S. has no right to bomb the sovereign territory of my country . . ." The harsh look again, the tense mouth. But after the renewed flow of rhetoric he went back to details. The low metallic voice did not vary. The eyes behind the rimless glasses were steady.

And what would North Vietnam do if President Nixon ordered bombing in retaliation for the shelling of South Vietnamese cities?

"If the U.S. wants to find peace with respect for the fundamental rights of the Vietnamese people, we can find a correct solution. If not, we must exercise our right of self-defense."

I asked again more directly, and a third time bluntly, would they break off the talks?

"IF THE Nixon Administration is rash enough to bomb again, the responsibility is on the Nixon Administration. If President Nixon intensifies the war in a way which affects the talks, he must accept responsibility."

In other words, Hanoi, like Nixon with his vague warning of "appropriate response," was holding its options open. It wasn't, at this point, about to threaten a walk-out from Paris that would foreclose future decisions. But that was never said. It took nearly 20 minutes worth of other words.

The talk rambled on about negotiations. To the American idea of having talks in separate groups on military and political problems, which Washington thinks might help get bargaining

started, the answer was, "The question of the forms of working together is not a very important one."

Once again came the long, familiar lecture of the conference room. It is tedious and repetitious. My mind wandered. I heard him saying something about "Unconditional withdrawal of American troops" and my attention snapped back.

HAD I UNDERSTOOD quite correctly, withdrawal without any questions? Because in that case there wouldn't be anything to negotiate. The U.S. doesn't need Hanoi's permission to withdraw.

"If the U.S. withdraws, we will create conditions to facilitate it. We will even give your soldiers a red carpet and flowers."

That, I mentioned, isn't what the U.S. most wants. Was unconditional withdrawal still a precondition for real negotiating?

This time he answered very carefully. "On the basis of withdrawal, we can discuss other matters." Condition and precondition were bad words for him. He avoided them.

So it went, for a full two hours. There was a lot more. What did it mean?

MY IMPRESSION WAS that he was trying to say Hanoi does want a negotiated settlement, but it is feeling its way with utmost caution. It is afraid to be considered as negotiating from weakness. But I can't prove that, though other bits and pieces seemed to support it. That's the way the official talks go too. That's one reason why it's so hard to get down a serious bargaining. As Churchill said, jaw-jaw is better than war-war, but it isn't necessarily easier.

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Ex post facto ... by Jack Todd

Boulder, Colo. (HF) — Frank B. Morrison, former governor of Nebraska and husband of Maxine, was sworn in today as President of Colorado University, replacing Joseph Smiley, who was forced to resign due to the generation gap.

Morrison, jowls a quiver a la Mayor Daley and white hair blowing in the wind from the shouts of the demonstrators, told a crowd of 2,000 SDS members, 2,500 cops and 11 dignitaries that he was "proud and happy to accept the presidency of this great University."

"MY WIFE Maxine and I," he said, "feel that anyone who can survive Terry Carpenter and March in Nebraska can clean up this campus."

"As S.I. Hayakawa calmed San Francisco State, so will I calm Colorado. As Richard Daley maintained law and order in Chicago, so will I bring law and order to Boulder."

"And, as the French emerged victorious at Dienbienphu, so will our administration triumph here."

(Thunderous cheers from the cops.)

Midway in Morrison's speech, 23 SDS members had to be toted out in various stages of shock resulting from prolonged bursts of uncontrollable laughter.

"MY WIFE Maxine," Morrison continued, "stands ready to take over the presidency at any time, should the strains of running this delightful little school prove too much for me."

Maxine responded with two choruses of "The Star-Spangled Banner."

46 more SDS members had to be carried out.

Near the end of the meeting, it was obvious that Morrison had brought joy to the CU campus. The cops were rubbing their night-sticks in anticipation of the next pot bust. The SDS members were rubbing each other in anticipation of the next pot bash.

Administration aides were moving up and down the halls passing out recordings of Maxine singing the CU fight song.

THE ELEVEN administration dignitaries were stealing away from the campus in their black limousines, already composing letters of application to San Francisco State and Berkeley.

And there, calmly orating above it all, was Frank.

"General Hershey has promised me his full support in quieting this campus," he said.

The SDS members quit laughing. The cops quit rubbing their night-sticks and hauled out their mace containers.

One of the administrators glanced in the rear-view mirror of his black limousine in time to see a great cloud of black smoke spiraling up from the campus and drifting off toward the Rockies.

HE PICKED up his car telephone.

"J. Edgar?"

"Speaking."

"It worked. One down, seven to go."

"Amen," said J. Edgar.

"Over and out," said the administrator.

DAILY NEBRASKAN

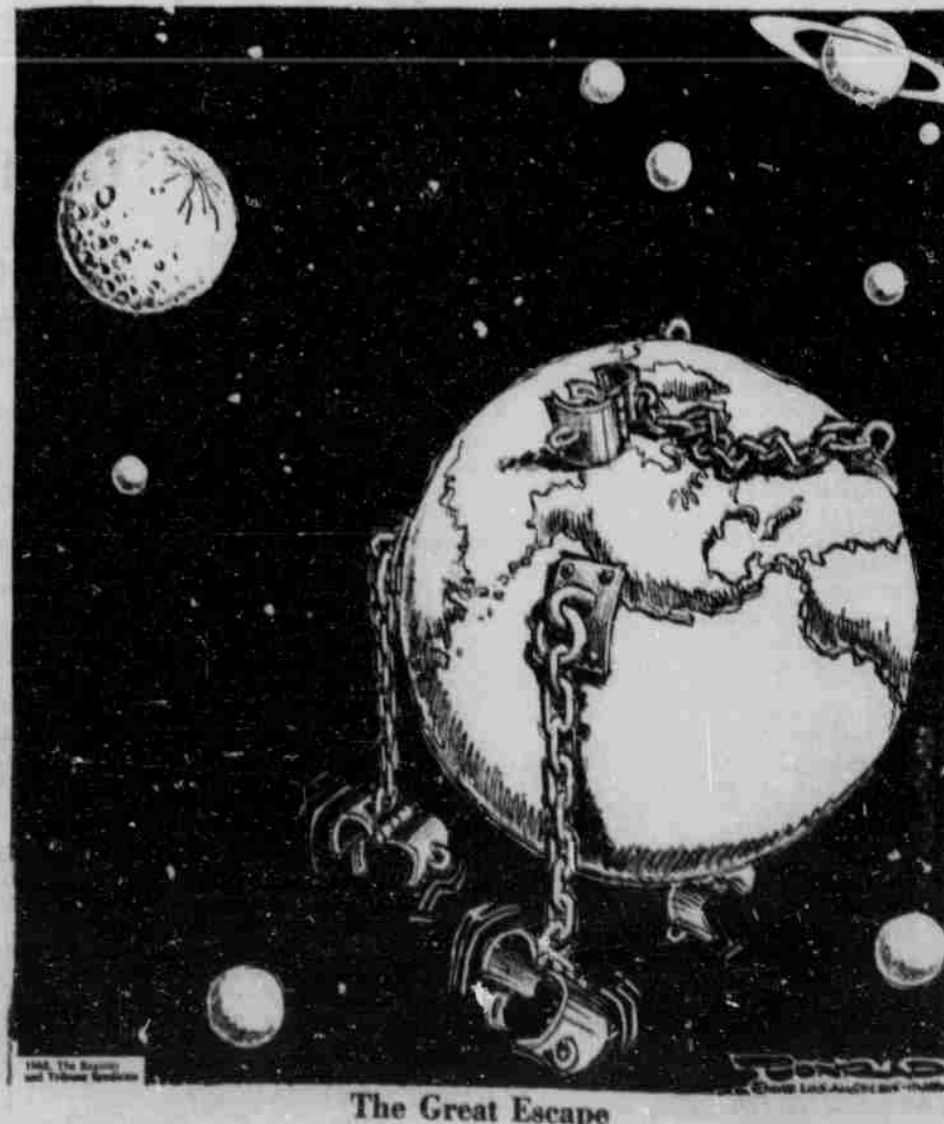
Second class postage paid at Lincoln, Neb.
Telephone Editor: 472-2388 News Editor: 472-2389 Business Editor: 472-2390
Subscription rates are \$4 per semester or \$8 per academic year.
Published Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday during the school year except during vacations.

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