

dear editor

Slow down

Dear editor,

What is it with the teachers of this University? Are they all trying to flunk out their students? Since Governor Exon has proposed a cut in the University of Nebraska budget it seems as if they don't care any more. I thought they were here to teach the students and not cry about how much money they get.

I have heard a lot of complaints from other students that their teachers weren't teaching the material. The teachers are letting the students get the material on their own. I admit that a student should have some initiative but I think it is the teachers place to help the

student along. If the teachers are not going to help the students we might as well pay the students for going to school and get rid of the teachers because they are not doing what they are paid to do.

Are you students going to be the stooges of the teachers? The teachers are making it hard for the students so the students will do their complaining for them so teachers can keep their money. Just don't be a sucker.

To me, it appears that if I want to get an education maybe I'd better check on school budgets and find the happy teachers.

Sincerely yours,

Robert Rauner

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The University: an example of colonialism

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Given the existing relationship of authority, the University occupies the role of a colonial entity subject to the whims of an outside force over which it has no control.

Financially, the University is far from self-sufficient, given its dependence on tax monies collected from people throughout the state. Yet, financial dependence per se may be accompanied by a relationship which stops short of outright colonialism. Colonial rule exists when the major decision makers are alien to the community over which they rule and do not owe the attainment or preservation of their position to internal forces, but, rather, to external forces beyond the confines of the dependent community. Consequently, incentive is lacking to be responsive to the needs and desires of internal sectors, especially when they are in conflict with the needs or desires of the "mother country."

In the system of higher education in the United States, Boards of Trustees or Boards of Regents are elected by population groups that are apart from the university community. The University itself has no voice in the selection of candidates, no ability to influence the outcome of an election, and no ability to remove an incompatible regent from his position of power. In fact, one might argue that overt opposition to a regent from major sectors of the University community will simply serve to strengthen his appeal to his constituency back in the mother country.

Negative relationship

During times of political tranquility in the overall society, the negative character of the colonial relationship may not be apparent. But in times of turmoil, the alien power elite may become highly abusive and repressive. Such a development is often sparked

by the very character of the University. Sensitivity to injustice is often most pronounced within the confines of the University. If the inhabitants of the mother country fail to identify with this sensitivity, they are likely to become indignant and to feel that inappropriate activities are taking place on the campus. The regents will be responsive to the inhabitants of the mother country since they are likewise from the territory of the colonial power; and they will reflect the indignation of their constituents. A failure to so identify would be politically disastrous.

Could the University, like other colonies, gain its independence? Theoretically, this alternative does exist. Total financial independence would promote political freedom; but even in its current state of considerable dependence from a monetary standpoint, local self-rule could be attained.

Movement for change

The major problem perhaps resides with the University community itself. The current inertia and lack of consciousness about the colonial nature of the relationship serves to reinforce the status quo. A recognition of the problem and the inherent injustice in rule by an alien force over which one has no control, would pave the way for a campus-wide movement to work for a change in the existing pattern of authority. Such a goal could unite students, faculty, and administrators, since each of these sectors is victimized by the status quo.

Although recent events on campus related to the repressive actions of the colonial power should serve to awaken an interest and develop a consciousness, they seem to be promoting more of an atmosphere of intimidation. The university community seems to be awed by the apparent power of the colonial regime, and seems to feel a sense of helplessness and despair. Such a development merely serves to

reinforce the unjust relationship. The examples of other colonized peoples must be taken into consideration. Decolonization processes have occurred throughout the Third World during the past two decades. We have seen the awakening of a sense of indignation in the face of abuse of power through unjust structures. Without the reform of the structures, unjust rule is inevitable, since the major consideration of a colonial regime is not to be responsive to the colonized. We must learn from the experiences of independence movements which have succeeded in shaking off the colonialist yoke. Otherwise, we remain easy prey to acts of repression which must inevitably occur whenever an absence of harmony exists between the colony and the mother country.

No procedures

The colonial relationship victimizes the university by promoting an absence of self-respect and integrity. Integrity relates to the presence of set procedures aimed at reinforcing certain principles. The procedures may be drawn up by sectors of the university community; but they may neither bind the Board of Regents nor influence its relationship with the institution. Consequently, neither the administration, nor the faculty, nor the students can count on the application of particular procedures or the preservation of specific ideals, given the fact that decision making lies outside the university body.

Self-respect is undermined, especially during times of political turmoil and a widening gap between the colony and the mother country, because each sector of the campus population is aware of the impotence of all other sectors. Exploited people in the ghetto or in Third World countries often treat each other with scorn, an effect of their apparent feelings of helplessness, together with the fact that they see their own reflections in their neighbors. In a very

true sense, we're all in the same boat. To think of students, faculty, and administrators as mutually antagonistic sectors of the population is self-defeating. The only true antagonism is between the colony and the colonial power. The existence of others merely serves to bolster colonial rule by facilitating the colonial technique of divide and conquer.

Power structures

The recent repression carried out on the University of Nebraska campus by the Board of Regents has served to expose the humiliating relationship between our administration and the Board. The colonial power structure prevents our administrators from remaining true to any set of principles or established procedure. It encourages a natural tendency toward hedging and avoiding strong stands. Nothing is more humiliating than for an administrator to make a commitment or take a firm position, only to be compelled to make a sudden shift once the colonial power makes its conflicting position known. Thus, our own internal hierarchy must be very cagey and evasive in its dealings with us. The net effect is that it ends up serving as the spokesman for the colonial power rather than the colony itself. The faculty, too, are vulnerable to reprisals and are very careful not to rock the boat. Their apparent resignation fortifies the colonial relationship, denies the faculty self-respect, and costs it the respect of the student body. Students themselves have failed to challenge the colonial relationship because they are too intimidated by the internal hierarchical relationship to bother to understand that the colonial relationship must itself be terminated before any internal reforms can be meaningful.

As for those who fail to recognize the colonial nature of the relationship, one recalls the words of Goethe that "None are more hopelessly enslaved than those who falsely believe they are free."