



"It's all well and good for these conservationists to worry about air, but people can't live without money."

Think it out for yourself

"Every man is a creature of the age in which he lives; very few are able to raise themselves above the ideas of the times."

Voltaire was so right.

He knew—even in the eighteenth century—how being stuck with one name, a single national citizenship and one calendar year at a time can restrict clear, objective thinking.

Without the perspective of a historian or an international citizen, we seem to get stuck in intellectual ruts when it comes to evaluating world events.

The prescription needed? A complete lift away from our familiar roles and environments (USA, 1974, college student and all.

That's THE REASONING USED BY Watergate reporters who dig into Andrew Johnson's impeachment for extra depth in their articles, or critics who draw parallels among Presidents. It's often the motive of the world traveler. And it's also the purpose of this column.

For five or ten minutes each week, I want to give the reader a different seat in the stadium, a different pair of lenses or a different era in history in which to "live" temporarily and view his world. To show him yet another side.

I don't want to preach. Or state an opinion and say, "This is the truth—believe it." My primary goal isn't to change minds at all, but to set a few rusty thinking cogs in motion.

For, ironically, despite all the talk about a free-ruling press and the openness of contemporary American society, there seems to be one, ever-growing, uniform mind, a kind of "national consensus."

For instance, Gallup would publish that, according to a national sample, 53 percent of "the public" opposes recent escalations of the Vietnam War. Soon that figure is climbing to 65 percent . . . then 75 per cent.

Pollsters cite inflation as the number one national public concern, and next week inflation is everyone's concern, and complaints about grocery bills multiply.

Someone remarks, "Politics has always been corrupt. Nixon just happened to get caught—why should he and not the others be punished?" Pretty soon people all over America are shaking their heads and agreeing.

Agreeing with the popular ideas of one's time and society is a nice way out of mental dilemmas; one doesn't have to think that way. But it's also a danger to democracy.

That's why I'm not going to feed you distinct opinions to adopt. That's why my one message all semester will be "Make up your own mind."

No editorial conclusion, even after hours of deliberation, rewording and polishing, is final and not disputable. There's always another side to the story, always a possibility something will sprout up to overturn the entire line of argument.

We found that out with Watergate.

So, when reading "Second Thoughts," expect just that—second thoughts and not final opinions.

However, I must admit to one exception to this philosophy. That's my unflinching belief in democracy and freedom as the only civilized way to run a healthy, stable society.

The desire for freedom and self-government is deep in man's soul, like his second nature, and I'm convinced that no alternative organization of society can outlive the problems of our time.

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Arts series varied

For the last two years, UNL's Performing Arts Series has helped disclaim the often-held belief that Nebraska is a "cultural wasteland."

The series will return again this year with an impressive list of performers and season tickets still priced unusually low.

For \$7.50, students can attend five performances by world-famous artists, including Jacques D'Amboise, an acclaimed dancer with the New York City Ballet and a choreographer for ballet and the Broadway stage.

Other performers scheduled to appear on campus are Itzhak Perlman, a violinist from Israel; the Loretto-Hilton Mime Company, comprised of two mimes who studied in Paris with the teacher of Marcel Marceau; the Syntagma Musicum from Amsterdam, a Renaissance Music Ensemble which plays on instruments from that era; and Igor Kipnis, a harpsichordist who attracted an overflow crowd to the Nebraska Union Ballroom in March 1972.

In the past years, some of the most exhilarating moments of the performers' visits have been the free informal sessions held in residence halls and Greek houses. During the sessions, a performer might discuss his art, talk about current trends in dance, explain and sing selections from an opera, answer students' questions or elicit audience laughter with his wry wit.

Persons who do not buy series tickets are missing a chance to see top-quality performers at a bargain price and to inject a bit of cultural exposure into their lives.

Coffee pots 'creamed'

No one can save money, so everyone can save money. Or something like that.

Last month, individually or departmentally owned coffee pots were prohibited on UNL premises. Campus vending machine operators had threatened that unless they received more business they would have to raise the price of a cup of coffee from 10 cents to 15 cents. Under the terms of the vendors' contract, other coffee dispensers are prohibited on campus.

The July 19 edition of the "UNL Bulletin Board," the faculty-staff newsletter, warned that "violations of this contract provision have become more serious recently" and that it is "essential" that such coffee makers be removed immediately.

Department and staff members who have ignored the order should be commended for resisting the clutches of big business.

Richard Gilbert, an engineering professor who heads the Faculty Senate, aptly summarized the situation, saying, "It seems kinda dumb."

Nothing short of a "bust" by a coffee control crew could wrest her coffee pot from her, a staff member at the College of Law said. In such event, she would have to walk down four flights of stairs for a cup of machine coffee. She said that, in addition to spilling it during the return trip, she would accumulate hours of wasted time trekking down and up the stairs.

While some departments have blatantly disregarded the rule, others have been more devious about their contraband.

The School of Journalism has abolished private coffee pots. Instead, signs have been affixed to the former pots saying:

"This appliance is an aromatic humidifier necessary to the health and morale of the staff and students."

Unless departments and staff continue their defiance of the coffee pot ban they soon might find themselves prohibited from bringing brown bag lunches. The vending machines also contain ham sandwiches.

Jane Owens