

opinion/editorial

New look, other changes may help defrost icy days

The Daily Nebraskan begins a new semester amid snowdrifts and sub-zero temperatures. Perhaps a rousing "welcome back" would be unwise at this time.

We can't do anything about the weather but maybe the few changes we have initiated in the Daily Nebraskan for the upcoming semester will lend just a hint of warmth to our readers.

The Daily Nebraskan has undergone a slight facelift in the form of a new nameplate and related titles which we hope will make the newspaper stand out with a reinforced identity.

We also have created a new position, the Daily Nebraskan ombudsman, whose responsibilities lie,

first and foremost, with the readers. The Daily Nebraskan may well be the first college newspaper in the nation to have created such a position.

Jim Kay, who has been selected for the role, will be responsible for handling complaints from readers and sources as well as for criticizing the Daily Nebraskan when it fails to adequately cover the news.

The position of ombudsman is a direct result of criticism from various activities on campus and in the community who feel the Daily Nebraskan has not dealt with them fairly.

In addition, a new name will appear weekly on

the opinion/editorial page. Mary Jo Pitzl, presently attending the University of Bordeaux in France as part of an exchange program, will write a weekly column. Her column will deal with everything from culture shock to food and should provide new insight into the "American in Paris" experience.

The new changes at the Daily Nebraskan probably won't help your car start in the morning or make the long walk from Selleck to the 501 Bldg. at 7 a.m. any easier but we hope that, at the very least, they will help take your mind off these wintery inconveniences until the first thaw.



"NORMALIZATION IS HELL!"

Communist China recognizes value of 'the real thing'

Undoubtedly the most momentous news story of 1978 was the decision of the People's Republic of China, whose citizens comprise almost a fourth of mankind, to recognize one of the West's two great superpowers, Coca-Cola.

The significance of China's normalization of relations with Coca-Cola after a 29-year hiatus cannot be overemphasized. Ever since the West's other great superpower, Pepsi-Cola, formed an alliance with Soviet Russia in 1972, many observers felt that Coca-Cola was on the brink of losing the unending battle for men's stomachs.

innocent bystander

At that time, the signing of a Sino-Cola pact seemed beyond the realm of possibility. Mao Tse-tung, himself, in his Little Red Book, had excoriated Coca-Cola as "the opiate of the running dogs of revanchist capitalism." And even the thought of a young Red Guardsman ever crying out, "It's the real thing!" boggled the imagination.

Thus we see that the recognition of Coca-Cola signifies vast changes not only in the Chinese hierarchy, but in world affairs as well.

Clearly, the primary motive behind Peking's surprise move was to weaken the power of the Soviet Union and its ally, Pepsi-Cola. With hundreds of thousands of Pepsi-Cola-drinking Russian troops stationed along its western borders, China naturally feared the dominance of either.

More obscure is how the decision reflects the current power struggle among the Chinese leadership. Obviously it is yet another slap at the image of the Great Helmsman and all he stood for. It is further proof, if proof were needed, that the Gang of Four — none of whom ever touched Coca-Cola — are still in disfavor. And it strongly indicates that a new group of pragmatists, interested in technological progress rather than the revolutionary puritanism of Chairman Mao, have taken over the ship of state.

For, say what you will about Coca-Cola, it is certainly not the drink of wild-eyed revolutionaries who are more given to red wine, pernod or Orange Julius.

But which pragmatist? Here most analysts agree that Vice Premier Teng, at 74, has won yet another victory over 56-year-old Premier Hua, who is unquestionably more a member of the Pepsi generation.

What does the future hold? Despite initial elation on both sides, the alliance may be in for trouble. For while it is true that most things do "go better with Coke" one of those things, most experts agree, is not Chinese food.

Therefore, if the Chinese are now willing to renounce tea and rice wine to achieve hegemony with Coca-Cola, they may also be forced to give up sweet- and-sour spare-ribs and Peking duck.

But that is the price one must pay these days for technological progress through liaison with the West—that and a chain of golden arches stretching along The Great Wall.

In our next analysis of historical trends, we will discuss the reasons behind the abject failure of such decadent Western European powers as Perrier water to conquer third-world countries like Bangladesh. (Copyright Chronicle Publishing Co. 1978)

Regents stress football over books

The 1974 Encyclopedia Britannica, that container of all knowledge worth knowing, sums up UNL's contribution to American academia in one sentence.

"Over the years," declares the Britannica, "the University of Nebraska football team has attained national prominence, and no single subject holds the attention of Nebraskans as the plight of the 'Cornhuskers.'"

michael gibson

That's it. No "Harvard of the Plains," no mention of how the NU Board of Regents plans to "maintain" our reputation for undergraduate excellence. But encyclopedia readers need not worry how the 1979 edition will read for the regents have already seen to that.

By a 5-3 vote Saturday, the regents approved a 9,000 seat addition to Memorial Stadium at a cost of \$6million.

The vote was not even close, as only Scottsbluff regent Robert Simmons opposed construction. In fact, Regent Robert Prokop of Wilber proposed that a new 105,000 seat stadium be built at the University's new Lincoln Airport campus.

Points against

The arguments against the approved addition were many. How can a university whose business school must turn away students for lack of funds to hire teachers (and an engineering college that may be soon forced to do the same) in good conscience spend \$6 million on recreation, not education?

Furthermore, the new addition, to be built (complete with elevators) on the stadium's east side, will be almost as tall as Oldfather Hall, and the projected cost of \$575 a seat doesn't even include binoculars.

More importantly, the regents assumed that demand

for additional tickets will be as constant as are tuition increases. But new NCAA limitations on the number of football scholarships each school may award are designed to weaken traditional football powers, making it difficult for Nebraska to continue its 9-3 seasons. And when a losing season visits Memorial Stadium, how many fans will continue to fill it?

Nevertheless, the regents approved the addition because the people of Nebraska want it. But how many will get it?

No one has decided how the new 9,000 tickets should be allocated among the tens of thousands of Nebraskans who have been denied a chance to see the Huskers.

Scarcity severe

That scarcity, of course, is most severe for the typical middle-class Nebraskan, who after helping his son or daughter pay the second-highest tuition in the Big Eight, can't afford a scalper's prices.

Yet the odds are slim that the regents will direct those 9,000 tickets to be sold, not as season tickets, but for each game on a random basis, thus insuring equal access for all Nebraskans. Indeed, if the regents were serious about helping all Nebraskans to see the games, season tickets would be sold the same way, instead of being handed down through generations or bestowed upon business firms.

Better yet, perhaps the regents could sacrifice their privilege of purchasing up to ten tickets a game (not to mention the two press box seats they each receive free gratis) for the cheapest 110 seat stadium addition on record.