

opinion/editorial

Reagan caught too often apologizing for errors

Ronald Reagan, of all people, ought to know that videotape accurately saves what has been said.

Yet Tuesday he issued a statement saying that the Carter campaign had distorted what he said in Detroit Monday, vaguely linking President Carter to the Deep South — which was fine — and to the Ku Klux Klan, which was silly.

Tape shows, without question, that Gov. Reagan said he was glad to be opening his campaign in Detroit, while the president was in the town and state that gave birth to the KKK.

Like so much of what he said in speeches during the primary campaign, neither of Reagan's assertions were correct. Yes, Carter was in Tusculumbia, Ala., but neither Tusculumbia nor Alabama were the birthplace of the Klan.

So Reagan found himself in the awkward position of apologizing for the error, clarifying what he meant and defending an apparently stupid comment. Again. Frankly, the governor does too much of that.

Kennedy tax cut figures, Vietnam, China and now the KKK — and the campaign only officially geared up Monday — all hint that Reagan

seems to believe the electorate is watching a movie, and doesn't worry about the veracity of the actors' lines.

Unfortunately for the Republican nominee and his supporters, the campaign and its parts are well recorded, and the public has easy access.

One must wonder, were Reagan elected, if he would say something during negotiations with the Soviets, Chinese or someone else, and then have to issue an official apology the next day. Or if he would have to clarify his statements? Or defend them and say the tape lies?

Would he ask Congress for a major economic or defense program, and then after hearing reaction, revise it?

Would he have his facts straight for the annual State of the Union message?

Reagan's statement implying that the president, who has almost naively fought for human rights, was favoring the Klan is not sufficient to vote against the ex-actor. But he has similarly misinformed things often enough that one must question his ability to understand evidence and facts.

Columnist finds his entire life is contained in his hip pocket

I suffered a harrowing experience the other day that could have made my life miserable for a long time.

Police could have arrested me had I been stopped for a minor traffic violation. I would have been denied several student services at UNL. I probably could not have written any checks at local stores and might have suffered a serious financial setback.

val swinton

I wasn't convicted of rape or treason. I lost my billfold.

It sounds silly, but it isn't. For in my wallet is my driver's license, and without it

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I can't legally drive. In fact, all forms of identification are in there, and with no ID, I couldn't write checks for groceries or books, I might be denied service at local bars since I'd have no proof of age, and I'd be denied several services at the university that require a student ID.

And if an unscrupulous person found my wallet, that person could take my charge cards and spend me into financial oblivion (a process that, with my budget, would take about three minutes).

It's scary to think that I, like many others, carry my entire life in my hip pocket.

Without my wallet, I couldn't prove who I am, where I work, that I'm a student. AAA probably would refuse to tow my car, I couldn't get into Big Red football games, and worse yet, I'd have to pay cash for all those non-necessities I love to charge.

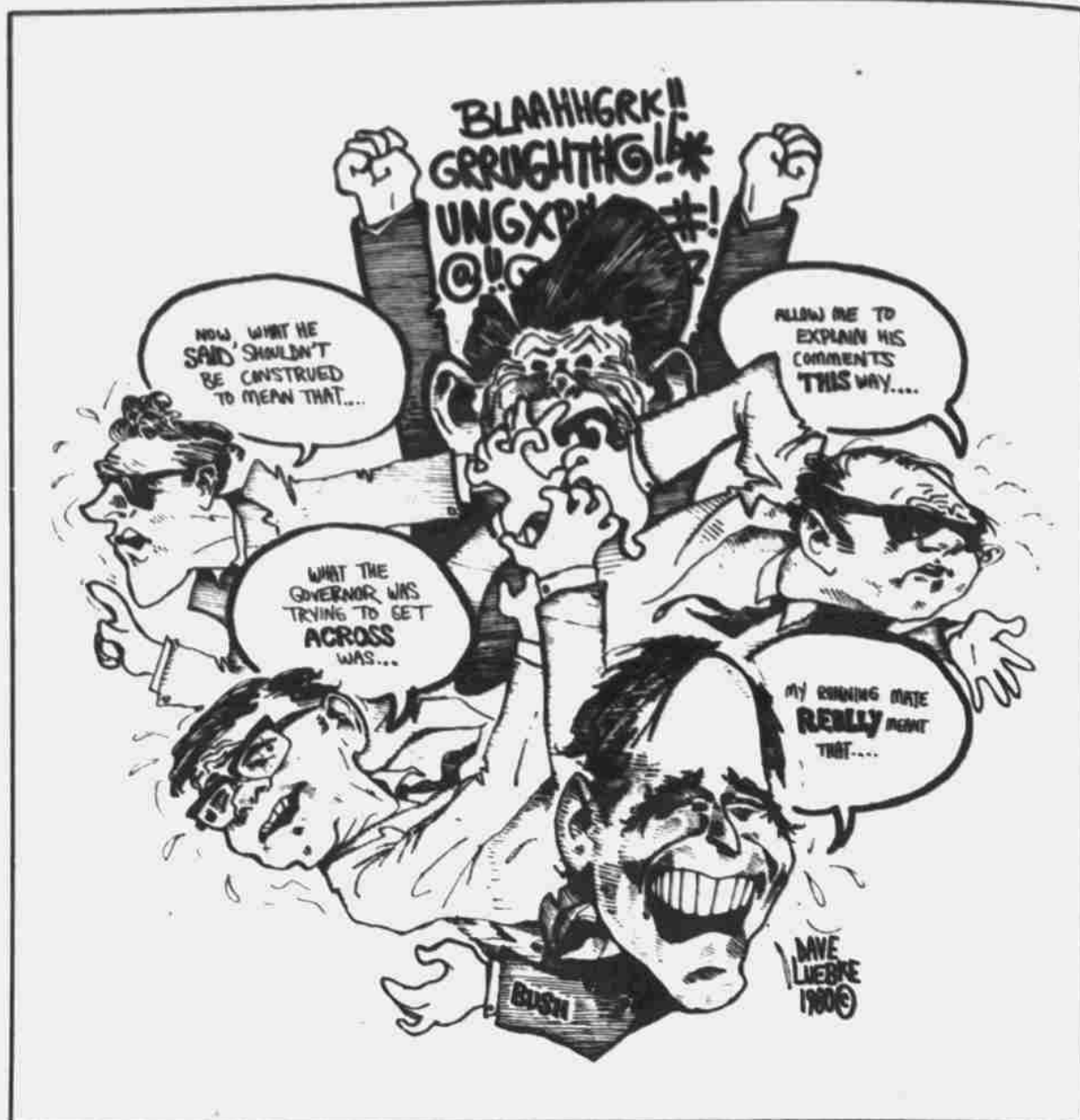
Without that eight-inch strip of cowhide, life as I know it would cease to exist. I'd have no way of proving I was a living, breathing human being with an established place in our democratic society.

There's something undemocratic about the notion that our word is no longer proof of who we are. Last week, as I was interviewing people at Gateway Mall as part of a "Man in the Street" story for a journalism class, I was approached by a policeman who demanded some form of identification. The spoken word was not enough—he needed something emblazoned in plastic.

I harbor no grudge against the officer. He was courteous, and after all, only a product of a society that believes plastic cards are proof that the person holding them is all right. And he allowed me to continue my interviews after I produced the required number of cards (two).

And for those of you wondering if I ever got my billfold back—and I'm sure there are many—the answer is yes. A friend found it in his car.

But now I don't know whether to thank him or curse him.



letters to the editor

In compliance with a decision of the NU Board of Regents, students now have the option of applying for a refund of student fees paid into Fund A. Should one refuse to finance ASUN, the only service they will lose is some free legal advice. In exchange, they will receive 86 cents.

Now 86 cents may seem trifling, but add everyone's together and ASUN collects a neat \$20,000 a semester. Do you know where your money is going? Do you care? Perhaps it doesn't bother you that our ASUN president used student money in attending the USSA Conference in Oregon (of which ASUN isn't even a member).

Many people I've talked to over the years see ASUN as a joke. It's time to start asking questions about where your money goes, and if you don't like the answers you're getting, then withdraw your money. Remember also that the questionnaire that comes with the refund application is optional.

Personally, I'm pleased that I now have a choice as to where my hard earned money will go. My 86 cents might be better utilized buying new shoestrings for my tennis shoes.
Diane Walkowiak
Senior, Teachers College

Centennial unique

As an alumni of UNL, the degree of "intelligence" that goes into determining what academic programs to slice as a result of finding deficits never ceases to amaze me.

Ezekial Bahar, Faculty Senate president and a member of the Academic Planning Committee, states in the August 29th Daily Nebraskan that the decision was between Centennial College and the library.

I hope Ezekial didn't strain himself in his "consideration." Those of us who are students of higher education know the unique benefits of the Centennial Educational program. What is a university if it cannot offer students diversity and an avenue for individual pursuit of knowledge? To even consider the library as a potential candidate for reduction of funds is contrary to the purported intent of a university.

Gina G. Washburn

Insidious assumption

Your editorial supporting the draft was based on two assumptions worth examining. The most noticeable is the assumption that the draft is necessary for military preparedness. As long as our soldiers are paid

less than civilians for similar jobs, we can't say we're given the volunteer army a fair chance.

More insidious is the assumption that the greatest threat to our freedom is from without. Of course, there are bullies in the world; to find one, look in the mirror. If only we could see ourselves as other countries see us. And if only the concept of the United States as a superpower was a passe' as that of Isolationism.

Let's not forget what is worth fighting for. Making 19- and 20-year-olds pay the cost of military preparedness is a kind of taxation without representation. A peacetime draft is inherently unfair because no one else is sacrificing.

A too-great level of military preparedness has tempted us before to meddle where we have no right, and to ignore peaceful ways of promoting freedom. Join the army, if you believe in the draft, and spare me the futility of trying to explain what Vietnam taught us besides the importance of drafting equally from various sectors of society.

Marcia D. Elliott

Leap towards war

Against the wishes of the voters, Congress recently passed a draft registration bill and has appropriated 13.3 million of our tax dollars to do it.

One argument used to pass this legislation was that it was only registration, not a draft.

Of course, the only purpose of a draft registration is to draft. Registration is a small step toward a draft but a giant leap toward war.

The only instances in which a draft should be allowed would be in the event of an invasion. Nothing could be more irresponsible, nothing could be more criminal—than to chase after a war in the Mideast, or anywhere else.

If the Carter administration really wants to protect us, why isn't something done about Communist Cuba, now bristling with missiles 90 miles from our shore?

Americans had better realize that there is a war going on right now. It is a war against the American people by the greedy pressure groups and the crooked politicians who misgovern us.

That is the real war, and one that we had better win, or our enemies will destroy us all.

Mike O'Neal