

opinion/editorial

Lofty rhetoric launches Massengale

The formal installation Sunday of Martin Massengale as the UNL chancellor was a time for proud rhetoric and lofty goals about the future of this campus.

But despite the idealism concerning how high UNL should try to climb on the ladder of academic success, there is little indication that any drastic changes are in the making.

Massengale has pledged to be more visible in his job and we applaud his efforts to make himself and his office more accessible for all concerned.

As vice chancellor for the Institute for Agriculture and Natural Resources, Massengale has thorough knowledge of the structure of the university.

That structure is often the subject of many discussions on who has the most power at UNL.

While it is obvious that the NU Board of Regents are the university's governing body, much of regental power is never seen. Too often groups on campus, be it the ASUN Senate or the chancellor's office, probably have to formulate their policy decisions based on how the regents will react to a proposal.

While it may be practical to take into account how the regents will react to proposals, it isn't fair to let the fear of their displeasure influence the decision-making process.

All organizations should have the freedom to make policy recommendations based on the greatest benefit for their group. However, the political jockeying that goes into much of the decision-making process at UNL keeps the university from growing to its potential.

The rift between the NU Central Administration and faculty members is largely a dispute about salaries. Many professors think paper-shuffling administrators are overpaid in comparison to those who teach.

Both groups face budget restraints but faculty members have long been told to cut back and lower costs more often than any other sector of the academic community.

And when faculty members aren't being told to lower costs, the student body is being told to pay more for tuition, laboratory fees and other services.

The business of higher education is costly.

Massengale is correct in emphasizing efficiency as a criteria for his leadership.

The more efficient a university is, the better it will be able to hold down spiraling costs.

Massengale predicted that Nebraskans will continue to support the university provided standards are not lessened and the impetus is always on progress.

Most of the speeches at Sunday's ceremonies were full of the pomp and circumstance that befit the occasion. But despite the rhetoric, Massengale's challenges lie ahead.

Helping to maintain a university the state can continue to be proud of in spite of cutbacks in federal and state support is just one of the battles that faces any university chancellor.

But we wish Massengale luck in his endeavor because the university and the state have too much to lose if the skeptical support of higher education in Nebraska is allowed to continue.

Some Americans oppose S. Africa

The ethnic diversity of the American people sometimes presents problems when it comes to deciding what stand "Americans" should take on certain world issues.

Take, for instance, the recent invasion of Angola by South African troops. If we are to adopt the stance taken by unbiased (ha!) American reporters, then we should applaud Prime Minister Botha for his brave attempts to halt the spread of the "tumor of Communism."

We are told that we should stand behind Botha and his attacks on the "guerrillas" of the South West Africa People's Organization, who represent a threat to our South African "allies."

doreen charles

However, those of us who may not be particularly fond of South Africa's racial segregation policies may not see the situation in the same light.

Despite careful conditioning by the American news media to make us all snarl with fury at the thought of Communist expansion, the idea of South Africa's all-white military using its tactics of murder and suppression to maintain white supremacy in a predominately black country is a little more frightening. What's even more frightening is U.S. support of such a country, in spite of its 20 percent black population.

Support of SWAPO by Communist countries represents a threat to not only South African capitalism but also to the South African apartheid.

However, what SWAPO is really fighting for, liberation of black people and control of black wealth, is hardly mentioned.

It's interesting how those fighting for American economic interests abroad are fighting for "freedom" while those struggling to break the chains of American-supported oppression are "terrorists" or "guerrillas" who must be destroyed.

It's difficult for some people to figure out exactly who is the villain here, as the South African raid is heavily criticized by countries across the world. However the United States maintains, according to a September issue of *Time* magazine, that "the South African action must be understood in its full context of the struggle against SWAPO."

Those who take sides against the South African government and its attempts to crush SWAPO are labeled "Communists." But, how can any thinking person possibly justify supporting such a government and its attempts to not only maintain present racial policies, but to spread its influence to the rest of the continent?

Just who is the "enemy"?

Who maintains the South African apartheid? Not the communists. Who maintains military control over black South African people? Not the communists. Who supports an economic system which is designed to keep blacks economically poor and powerless? Not the communists.

South Africa's attack on SWAPO and its bases in Angola has brought about contradictory reactions as to where U.S. support should lie. Perhaps many claim the U.S. should stick by its "ally" and support its attempts to crush the SWAPO "guerillas."

Perhaps the difference of opinion lies in just which "Americans" benefit from U.S. alliances with the South African apartheid.



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letters to the editor

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Suicide headline disliked

I must protest the misleading headline on page 9 of the Sept. 21 Daily Nebraskan. It would be understandable if you were trying to sell your papers in supermarkets, but that is not your job.

It is one thing to say "the typical female suicide is a housewife" (although that can be misleading as well) but it is quite another to say that the "typical housewife is suicidal." The latter is simply false and not even the psychologist being reported on asserted it to be true.

T.J. Christlieb, graduate student philosophy