

Editorial

Human Rights Day mandates aid to needy

"One world is enough for all of us," as a line from a song by The Police says. Sadly, one world is not enough when 5 percent of the population consumes 40 percent of the world's resources and the population is expected to increase by at least 2 billion in the next 15 years. Two recent news events illustrate the effects of a shrinking world or its population.

Speaking at Nebraska Wesleyan University last week, Robert Drinan, a law professor and Jesuit priest of Georgetown University, told us the bad news. His words made me queasy. After his speech, I found my cockroach-infested "hole" comfortable and secure, even overly adequate.

Drinan said every sixth person in the world is chronically malnourished and one-fourth to one-half are illiterate. He also said half of the world's people have an average yearly income of less than \$400, compared to \$12,500 in the United States.

An article in Wednesday's Omaha World-Herald described a visit to Ethiopia by Rep. Cooper Evans, R-Iowa. Evans, a member of the House Select Committee on Hunger, urged that food be distributed by airlift to speed its delivery. Poor roads and limited access, compounded by civil war in the northern provinces, have slowed food distribution. Some of the camps get only 20 percent of the amount of food they need, so only children and nursing mothers are fed, he said.

The people have nothing left because they have killed their oxen and eaten the seeds used to grow food.

Today is "Human Rights Day" in honor of the United Nation's adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by the General Assembly in 1948.

The declaration proclaims an expansive set of guidelines describing the rights of people, as members of their respective governments. They include rights to adequate standards of living, freedom from arbitrary arrest and equality without regard to race, sex, religion, language and political and social affiliation. Population

expansion and immoral politics make those rights a distant goal.

The declaration recognizes the moral obligation of the citizens of the world. However, human rights are being ignored throughout the world.

Politics intervenes with morality. Our government hesitates to give aid to the diseased and starving in Communist-linked countries. In Ethiopia, for example, Drinan said the process of allocating aid was "slowed down because of that ideological difference."

A writer for the "Nebraska Report," published by the Nebraskans for Peace, reported receiving a letter with the statement, "The citizens of the world are at peace, only the governments are at war," printed on an envelope. Even an Archie Bunker couldn't turn a starving person from his door. But, it's much easier for a government.

Because we are removed from such problems, we feel helpless or just don't care. We do not try to help change matters. Instead, we let the government take over while we offer little input or resistance to policies it adapts.

We can fight for international human rights individually. First, by becoming informed and letting government representatives know about it. Write letters to both state and national representatives. Be coherent and straight to the point about what policies you support or condemn. Drinan said the efforts of Amnesty International's letter-writing campaigns have helped obtain the release of some political prisoners throughout the world. I know it doesn't seem like it helps and it takes time. But you probably don't feel like you're starving either and your body isn't digesting muscle tissue.

We have the resources to alleviate most of the world's suffering. We have a moral obligation to the people of the world. The United States as a world leader can have a tremendous impact on the restoration of human rights. It should. Until then, we should all heed the words of Edmund Burke: "Evil grows because good men do nothing."

By Julie Jordan Hendricks
Daily Nebraskan Senior Editor



Left drained of energy; 'soldiers' moving back

Let's start with two events, each very different from the other. The first was the arrest of civil-rights leaders, mostly black, outside the South African Embassy in Washington. The second was the lavish 70th anniversary party for the New Republic magazine. Taken together they tell you something: The American left is in a lot of trouble.



Richard Cohen

The embassy protests are by far the more important of the two examples. Starting with congressional delegate Walter F. Fauntroy (D-D.C.), some 15 civil-rights leaders — 15 of them black — have been arrested outside or inside the embassy. They have been protesting both apartheid and the Reagan administration's policy of blowing kisses at South African racism.

So almost every day, a civil-rights leader appears outside the embassy, gets closer than the 500 feet a protestor is allowed and is arrested. All of this is supposed to be reminiscent of the old civil-rights days when such tactics were used in cities and towns all across the South.

With all due deference to Fauntroy and those who followed, the police this time are not armed with mace, dogs and clubs. No cattle prods are used and no firehoses are turned on the demonstrators. Both the mayor and police chief are black, as are many of the arresting police officers. What we have is the style, but not the substance, of a civil-rights demonstration, a totally symbolic action that will probably fail if only because the civil-rights demonstrations of an earlier era succeeded so well. Non-violence makes for lousy television.

But Fauntroy and the others are doing a good thing. They're educating people about the nature of the South African government and the refusal of the Reagan administration to recognize that a government can be both anti-communist and evil. And, Fauntroy and some of the others did spend a night in jail. It was, in a manner of speaking, their jail, but

it was a jail nonetheless.

Still, this is a demonstration in a time warp, a little stroll down memory lane for these stalwarts of the civil-rights movement. What made these kinds of demonstrations powerful and effective in their time was the fact that the cops were not friendly and television crews recorded scenes of violence that shocked a nation. It's not that Fauntroy and the others lack guts — they're some of the same people who once stared down police dogs — it's just that they don't have the opportunity to display it.

Now let's go across town to the New Republic dinner. It was a black-tie affair meant to celebrate the New Republic's intellectual energy and vigor, all of which it has in abundance, but also its liberalism, little of which is ever in evidence. But a town that's loath to acknowledge that the civil-rights era is over is certainly not going to point out that the New Republic is no longer a journal of the left.

Instead, everyone conspired to overlook that fact. As usual, it took Henry Kissinger to put his finger on the problem when he joked that his semi-annual invitations to the White House would be withdrawn for associating with so many liberals. If the guests had truly been liberal, Kissinger would probably not have come.

If you take these two disparate events — the New Republic dinner and the embassy demonstrations — you can conclude that the American political left is not only out of energy, but out of imagination as well. The New Republic has become centrist if not conservative, so enthralled with itself that it didn't notice that Kissinger was toasting not the magazine's liberalism, but its conversion to his point of view. He alone had reason to drink.

As for the demonstrators outside the South African Embassy, good luck to them. But they won't change the policies of the South African government and they probably won't move the Reagan administration, either. They're foot soldiers of the American left — moving backward because they have no idea how to move forward.

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DID YOU HEAR? REAGAN IS TAKING HIS WIFE ON AN INVASION OF THE CARIBBEAN AGAIN THIS YEAR...



Letters

Regents should 'face campus'

Students of UNL, you should be proud of yourselves. In addition to studying and battling the administration, you've been busy. Last January, the plans for the Lied Performing Arts Center and used car lot were revealed to us. And guess what? We need \$7 million to fund it. It slid quietly through the Legislature like slime down a slippery rock. The rich people of Lincoln who wish to see Pavarotti thank you.

That's not all. You'll also help pay for Nebraska Bookstore's new multistory brick money-making machine. That extra \$1 or \$2 on textbooks will never be missed, will it? Then when the dust settles, the NU Regents hike tuition another 10 percent. They seem to raise tuition and fees with about as much trouble as one might encounter removing gas bubbles from the intestinal tract.

Undaunted, UNL students cour-

ageously move onward, busy with day to day affairs, like "How am I going to pay tuition?" Bad news doesn't bother UNL students because they have so much to be proud of. For instance, we have the seventh best library in the Big Eight. Our computer system is one of the oldest in the nation. Our campus is uncluttered by unsightly parking spaces. Most faculty members are not on food

stamps. Get proud, get loud. And soon, they'll add a big empty building supported by student fees. How appropriate that the Lied Center is designed to face away from campus — the same direction our decision-makers and administrators have been facing for years.

Mike Howard
senior
political science/English/history

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