

Editorial

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War decisions Congressional approval needed

The recent attack on Libya raised new congressional concerns regarding commitment of U.S. troops abroad. The main concern is balancing the ability of the president to act quickly in emergency situations while preserving legitimate congressional oversight powers.

The constitution provides for a sharing of the war powers between Congress and the president. On one hand, Article I, Section 2 declares the president to be the commander-in-chief of the military, while Article I, Section 8 gives Congress the power of the purse over the military, as well as the power to declare war.

The scope and division of the respective war powers have been subject to considerable dispute. Historically, presidential powers have come up on top: While war has been officially declared five times in U.S. history, the U.S. military has been used in foreign territories about 170 times.

During the Vietnam war, congress declared that the war-making power had shifted too far toward the president and passed the War Powers Resolution — overriding President Richard Nixon's veto. This law requires the president to inform Congress and consult with Congress under various circumstances when committing U.S. troops abroad. (Last week's D.N. editorial denouncing the U.S. attack on Libya incorrectly identified the War Powers Resolution as part of the Constitution. The act actually was passed in 1970).

So far the War Powers Act hasn't stopped the president from acting in emergencies. In both President Gerald Ford's rescue attempt in the Mayaguez incident and President Jimmy Carter's rescue attempt of U.S. hostages in Iran, Congress was involved to a significant degree only after the attempts.

Two factors make Reagan's anti-terrorist posture different from these emergency situations. First, preemptive—defensive and

retaliatory acts are different from rescue attempts. More objective calculation goes into the latter than in necessarily reactionary rescue attempts.

Second, Reagan indicated that the attack on Libya was the beginning of an extended anti-terrorist policy and was not a one-shot deal as are rescue attempts.

Both the above factors involve significant foreign policy commitments distinct from rescue attempts. Consequently the policies undergirding the constitutional involvement of Congress and those involved in the spirit — if not the letter — of the War Powers Act are brought to bear.

Congressional involvement in war-making actions is an important U.S. policy that should be protected. The president — any president — should not have a *carte blanche* in creating extended commitments of U.S. military forces.

Reagan's announced anti-terrorist policy slips through the cracks of the War Powers Act. The law requires express congressional approval only after 60 days of military involvement in an area. However retaliatory raids do not involve military commitments extending beyond this time period.

The spirit of the Constitution and War Powers Resolution requires active and continuing congressional oversight of the president's war commitment. In light of the Libyan attack, several policies have been advanced by congressional leaders of both parties to integrate this needed oversight back into foreign military commitments decision-making process. Reintegration is not a luxury — it is a necessity.

It is only right that Reagan bring his entire anti-terrorist military agenda to Congress. It will be all the stronger given congressional input and approval, if ultimately approved. And if it is not explicitly approved by Congress, it does not merit continuation.

Good pay, good play And, we hope, higher attendance

At first glance, new UNL basketball coach Danny Nee's annual salary of \$75,000 may seem a little high. But considering the circumstances, it's actually not that extravagant.

Nee's predecessor, Moe Iba, who resigned after UNL's loss to Western Kentucky in the NCAA first-round playoffs, earned \$57,680 annually.

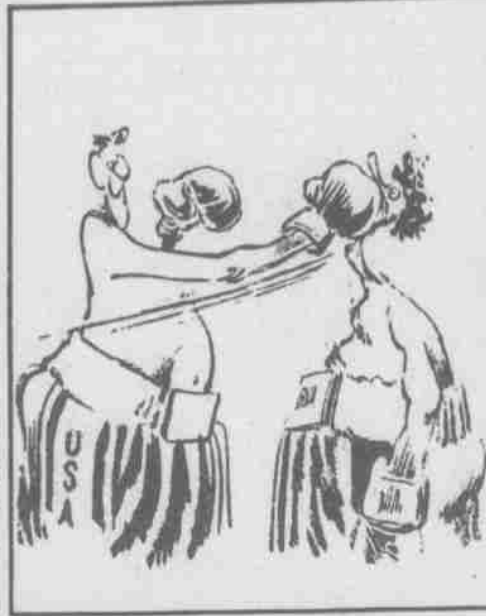
In contrast to that, NU football coach Tom Osborne earns \$83,600. Larry Brown, KU's basketball coach, earns \$70,000. Bill McCartney at CU earns \$50,000. It should be noted that these salaries don't include fringe benefits. Nee's contract would tie him with Billy Tubbs of Oklahoma for the highest salary of all the conference basketball coaches.

It's doubtful UNL could have attracted a good coach with Iba's original salary. Although it's higher than what most UNL professors make, it needed to be large enough for competent coaching recruits to consider the job.

In addition, Nee isn't exactly walking into what one would call a strong basketball program. It needs work, and it will take a lot of work to turn things around.

If Nee's salary came from the same pool of resources that pays professors, it would be difficult justifying such a large increase. But it doesn't.

We wish Nee the best of luck. It's just a shame that many people in charge of educating the students of this campus don't earn respectable salaries. They deserve them.



America revels in vengeance

Attitude toward violence perpetuates Reagan policies

How quickly the war jitters subside. The Dow Jones goes up. The dog needs to be taken to the vet. There is laundry to be done. We swallow a couple of Maalox tablets and hope that the worst of it will be a thousand canceled trips abroad.

But my own jitters have a much longer life span. I am not able to see the bombing of Tripoli as a one-night stand, a clean "surgical strike" against terrorism.

The New York Post headline keeps running through my head: "Take That, Khadafi!" So do the street interviews with Americans who applaud "taking out" the "mad dog." I keep hearing the president — "If necessary we shall do it again" — and reading the polls that show Americans overwhelmingly favor this action even if it will increase terrorism, even if it will increase the risks of war.

There is more to all this than rage at Khadafi, the terrorist it is safest to hate. There is also in our reaction a lust for action, for hitting back, a palpable pleasure in shaking off the usual restraints, a sense of physical release in landing a good hard punch to the solar plexus, even if this punch kills another baby. And if our allies desert us, well, there is even something pleasurable about that, something American about hitching up our own pants and going it alone. Nobody can tell us what to do.

I read that message and not just now, when it runs under the bombing of Tripoli, for which there was at least provocation and pretext. It is there, more dangerously, underlying the way this government has dealt with Soviet proposals for arms control and with

Central America. The bombs of April may have dulled the echo of the "Mighty Oak," the whimsical name for the recent nuclear test. But this was the bomb that blew up the best chance we had in years for arms control.



Ellen Goodman

The Soviet Union opened a window to us, declaring a moratorium on nuclear testing. They held it open for seven months, and we slammed it shut. We decided to go it alone — choosing "Star Wars," the science-fiction notion of an impenetrable space shield, over a mutual test ban.

Now, imagining that we have the Soviets "on the run," the administration is considering breaking the terms of the last arms-control agreement, SALT II. How much more exciting it is to be free at last of restraints, to go for it — victory in the arms race — rather than negotiating an end to it.

What of Nicaragua, to which we export terror? On the silver anniversary of the Bay of Pigs, the White House wants to strut American stuff again, the stuff of power. It is as if the slow-boiling desire to act has finally bubbled up against the lid of self-restraint, even reason.

I know it is risky to link these three danger zones into one text, even loosely. There is much more popular support for our attack on Libya than there is for

nuclear testing or for Contra funding. The debate about Tripoli is between people who are elated that we finally did something and people who wonder what good this something did. It is a debate about inaction and wrong action. Most Americans feel at least an edge of ambivalence.

But underneath these separate actions in the world runs one fixed idea about America's role and rights in the world: the president's picture of a weak post-Vietnam America. It is an image of an America reluctant to fight. An America restrained by world opinion, immobilized by the fear of another escalating war, cautious of its allies and enemies. A helpless giant, paralyzed, afraid of its own nuclear shadow.

The White House has purposely countered this "paralysis" with a swagger. Like some President Feelgoods, they issue approval for hostile feelings, offer the quickie catharsis, live in the now and worry about the consequences later. I'm OK, you're OK, and it's OK to carry a big stick . . . especially against a small country.

I am sure the president and his men see in this muscular policy the return of the mythical man, the American striding alone to High Noon in every trouble spot. But I keep seeing Slim Pickens, in "Dr. Strangelove," gleefully riding the bomb to Doomsday. From the halls of Managua to the shores of Tripoli, it's worth a lingering case of the jitters.

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Goodman is a Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist for the Washington Post.

Letter

Brief letters are preferred, and longer letters may be edited. Writer's address and phone number are needed for verification.

DN's conclusions, implications on Libya attack tenuous

The Daily Nebraskan seems to be implying, by its headline, "Nebraskans' opinion split on Libya attack" (Daily Nebraskan, April 16), that there is a roughly a 50-50 split on condemning or condoning President Reagan's actions bombing Libya.

A sample of seven people is hardly large enough to imply this, and the people who call their representatives hardly give an unbiased estimate of what Nebraskans, as a whole, think.

The DN makes the argument, "Libya attack; One madman fights another" (DN, April 16), that the United States provoked Libya in the recent round of terrorism. The editors seem to be suffering from selective amnesia.

If the editors want to make this argument about who provoked whom, shouldn't the attack on the Rome airport be taken into account? The fact that Khadafi also supports Abu Nidal also needs to be considered.

The DN also argues that Europeans seem to know more about how to deal with terrorism than the United States.

Again, the paper seems to be suffering from selective amnesia. The Europeans may have suffered more from terrorism in the past than the United States, but this does not imply they know more about how to stop it.

Who could possibly forget Europe's policy of appeasement toward history's

greatest terrorist, Adolf Hitler of Germany?

These are also the same governments that refused to take economic action against Libya after the airport attacks because "they simply do not work."

Well, what does work? I am willing to give Reagan's alternative a chance.

This alternative obviously will not stamp out terrorism. It will make Khadafi and other nations that sponsor terrorism realize that the United States will not idly stand by and watch its citizens murdered.

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