

Daily Nebraskan

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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Plan for 2001

Commit surplus to academics

The UNL administration argues that the \$6.2 million student-fee surplus (or slush fund) is "good financial management." We'll grant that premise.

The surplus developed from unforeseen revenues generated after the late 1960s. Currently money can be borrowed from the fund only for new buildings, like the student recreation center/indoor practice field. This money could be only a loan and would be paid back by ticket surcharges. That sounds fair enough.

The concern arises with respect to what happens in the year 2001 (strains of Strauss's "Also Sprach Zarathustra" begin welling up in the background now). In that year, the bonds that the fund apys for will be paid off, and any surplus left will be turned over to the Board of Regents.

2001 sounds like a long time away, but it's only 14 years into the future, and that's not so far away.

Considering that the slush fund came about from students thinking they were paying for the support of the university, a commitment should be made now to commit these funds for

the future support of academic aspects of UNL. If the money were placed, say, in an endowment fund, that would represent at least one step toward financial independence for the university.

Of course, the objection is that we don't know what financial state the school will be in at that time; economic prosperity could return to the state, and legislative purse strings could again be open. Nonetheless, the commitment of the funds toward an academic endowment should come now.

Given our current experience, we know what cutbacks mean for a school financially tied to the whims of the unicameral. If times were better, that would be the best time to commit the funds for future downturns in the economy.

Everybody complains about the lack of long-run planning. This surplus fund represents the possibility of developing a large pool of money that the Legislature wouldn't be able to touch. Plans should begin now to increase and foster the fund, but only if it will be used for the future excellence of UNL.

Letter

Condoms no guarantee against AIDS

With the advent of spring break, I thought it would be appropriate to keep my fellow students up to date on AIDS research. An interesting piece of research appeared in the Journal of American Medical Association (Feb. 6) written by Dr. Fischl (and others) from the University of Miami School of Medicine, regarding the transmission of the AIDS virus between spouses through sexual contact. Fischl found that husbands or wives of infected persons who have sex with their spouses without using a condom usually contracted AIDS. The AIDS virus was transmitted in 86 percent (12 of 14) of the cases studied. Heterosexual contact with the use of a condom resulted in 10 percent (1 of 10) of the spouses being infected with the AIDS virus. In those cases where the spouse abstained from sexual contact, none of the spouses were infected with the virus. The particular point of interest here is the 10 percent who were infected even though they used a "safe" sexual practice. The 10 percent infection rate is interestingly similar to condom-failure rates given in discussion of contraceptive methods.

What are my conclusions?

We are often told to use condoms in order to have "safe sex." It appears that there is some risk even with condoms. Since contraction of the AIDS virus often results in death, 10 percent is too high a risk. Education should be aimed at reorienting our society to think in terms of long-term monogamy.

Kent Roberson
graduate student
agronomy

ous relationships, not just condom use.

- Those who promote promiscuous sexual behavior are, in part, responsible for the spread of the AIDS virus. Those in advertising need to see their social responsibility and stop using sex appeal as the major advertising scheme. We need to choose to stop supporting those companies who use sex to sell products.

● There are still too many unanswered questions about the transmission of AIDS. There needs to be a concerted national effort to coordinate and fund medical research aimed at a cure for the infected as well as elucidation of the transmission mechanisms.

In all the cases in this study, the virus was transmitted through simple heterosexual practices. It is not a new revelation that the virus is no longer confined to the homosexual population.

One dangerous aspect of the AIDS virus is that a person can be carrying it for years and not know it. This study also points out that females who have AIDS can transmit the disease to males as readily as the other direction.

If I wanted to catch the virus, I would go on

spring break with my mind set on having numerous or casual sexual experiences, mistakenly thinking that I am safe because I've got a good supply of condoms. (Don't take my word for it, read the research.)

Readers also are welcome to submit material as guest opinions. Whether material should run as a letter or guest opinion, or not run, is left to the editor's discretion.

Submit material to the Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St., Lincoln, Neb. 68588-0448.

Letter Policy

The Daily Nebraskan welcomes brief letters to the editor from all readers and interested others.

Letters will be selected for publication on the basis of clarity, originality, timeliness and space available. The Daily Nebraskan retains the right to edit all material submitted.

Editorial

Bigots flaunt insecurities

Prejudice will always prevail in 'Tupperware-time' America

R ows of small, quaint shops, students, protesters and panhandlers litter the sidewalks of Telegraph Avenue in Berkeley, Calif. Twenty years ago, this small college town north of San Francisco became the home of '60s radicalism and everything that makes up the term "progressive." Today, it still leads the league in liberalism.

As I walked through the streets in early January, I was amazed by the sense of freedom that seemed to flow through the temperate winter air. Most of the students were on Christmas break, but a lot of people were still out. Street vendors selling their goods. A man asking for donations for the anti-apartheid fund. Burned-out street people asking passersby for a spare quarter. Gay couples strolling arm in arm. Punkers blaring their boomboxes. Yuppies sitting on benches reading New Age magazines. And a group of men playing bongos.

Of course, I thought this isn't typical collegiate America. Berkeley is merely an idealistic paradise isolated by its radical ideologies and attitudes.

When the NOFAG party article was published in the DN last week, I wasn't at all surprised. How typical of UNL, I thought. There comes a time when one hears about so much idiocy that it becomes routine. Eventually you start to give up worrying about it and instead delve into your own little world and your own circle of friends who share your sentiments.

Monday, The Associated Press ran a national wire story about the unwelcome trend of bigotry on college campuses across the country. It cited the following incidents:

- On Jan. 26, a cross was burned in front of Purdue University's Black Cultural Center. On Feb. 19, the words "death nigger" were carved into the office door of a counselor in the School of Sciences.
- Bates College in Lewiston, Maine, canceled classes on March 4 and held an all-day teach-in on sexism after two male students pinned condoms and a picture of a penis on a female profes-

or's door.

- University of Chicago officials reported in December 1986 that a stream of anti-homosexual mail was sent to homosexual students' friends and families, including Christmas cards wishing all homosexuals dead.

- A University of Colorado fraternity recently distributed a poster on Martin Luther King's birthday of a black woman with the caption "Come Play With Me!"

"I think it's clearly part of a national mood," said Robert Johnson, director of minority studies at St. Cloud State University in Minnesota. "I just think the Reagan administration has made it easier to express these sentiments."



Scott
Harrak

The incidents the article reported on were only a sampling of the bigotry that prevails on campuses today. UNL is, of course, not immune to such acts.

It is nothing we haven't heard before. Bigotry is an American tradition, fueled by the WASP values of suburbia and traditional gender and racial roles. The '60s opened our eyes to what we had been doing for decades, but it didn't change the world for eternity. Narrow minds will prevail as long as there are anxieties, misunderstandings and prejudices to fuel them.

For too long I've been fooling myself into believing that we can somehow change America's attitudes. I've finally realized that we can't.

There will always be people who get enjoyment out of making fun of people who are already struggling to cope with the mainstream America that fills college campuses, corporations, the government and the bureaucracy. Today it's the NOFAG boys; tomorrow it will be something or somebody else. I can't see why some are so threatened by women,

different races or sexual preferences. When people like the members of the NOFAG party start announcing their ridiculous hang-ups about a cultural minority, we should laugh instead of protest. The reason? It's their unintentional way of showing how false, corrupt and insecure the WASP "majority" truly is. That's right, boys, the joke is on you. The "fags" aren't the funny ones — *you* are. The "fags" are already damned to the depths of hell, so why bother? You instead showed us all that some "limp-wristed pansy sicks" threaten you. There's no need to feel that way. Why, someday you'll live a normal life, marry some hot babe and have children. And soon your wife will become fat and start hosting Tupperware parties, while you struggle from 9 to 5 to pay for your dwelling on the outskirts of town and the new microwave. And there will be church ice-cream socials and block parties to attend. You'll have to bring a covered dish like all the rest of the neighbors. When you're all old and gray, you'll be able to say to yourselves, "Gee, haven't we lived a normal life?" So don't feel so bad about all those minorities. They'll never be invited to your block parties anyway. When you see those "horrible niggers" on the street, don't panic! They'll be forced to live in the ghetto and also won't be invited to your block parties or ice-cream socials.

So when you see all those awful minorities living their sleazy, unconventional lives, just relax and be satisfied knowing that you're lucky enough to live a normal life. Unlike those cretins.

So the next time you see a "fag" making eyes at you or some "nigger" or "redskin," think of how deprived they are and feel pity instead of fear. They'll never know the unparalleled glory of eating a casserole out of a Tupperware serving dish. Just don't be the one to serve the food, guys.

That's women's work.

Harrak is a UNL senior English and speech major and the Daily Nebraskan arts and entertainment editor.

Iran scam sinks Reagan's reputation while administration jumps off-board

L ike a direct hit on a battleship, the Iran/Contra affair landed squarely on the Reagan administration and caused extensive damage. Some crew members (Poindexter, North) were killed outright; others (Regan) died later of their wounds. The captain himself was injured, though not fatally. What remain are the jobs of damage assessment and damage control. How many guns have been knocked out? Is the steering mechanism still working? Can anything, or everything, be repaired?

Just how badly (to abandon the metaphor) has President Reagan been hurt by this whole controversy? In some respects, very deeply indeed; in others, much less so.

Of course, one's estimate of the damage to President Reagan will depend to some extent on one's notion of exactly what there was to damage. If, like writer Garry Wills, you think of Ronald Reagan as essentially just an illusionist — a bemused purveyor of amiable dreams — then, like Wills, you will conclude that little has been lost, because there was so little there to lose: Reagan has not so much collapsed as simply "evanesced."

Others, however — friend and foe alike — take a more serious view. Before the Iran affair, President Reagan bestrode the political landscape like a colossus. His enemies feared his popularity and his famous "Teflon coating," which prevented criticism from sticking to him personally. His admirers were looking forward to the victory, in 1988, of whichever Republican could best persuade the voters that he was a clone of Ronald Reagan.

All of these attitudes are now open to serious question. At a minimum, the liberals have stopped being mortally

afraid of Reagan. ("The magic," Lou Cannon of the Washington Post exulted, "is gone.") They are happily at work constructing new and discreditable concepts of their tormentor — as a devious and deliberate liar, as a senile nonentity, etc. And conservatives must necessarily wonder whether, when they invoke his name in future years, they will be evoking memories better left unevoked.



William
A.
Rusher

The net effect of the Iran controversy on Reagan's personal reputation probably will have to await the conclusion of the various probes now under way. But what about its effect on the ability of his administration to launch new policies or promote existing ones?

This, oddly enough, probably will be small — though only because the prospects for governmental gridlock were bordering on certainty anyway, after the Democrats captured control of the Senate last November.

In areas where Reagan can call the shots without having to ask permission of Congress — e.g., short-term military operations or negotiations with the Soviet Union — I would counsel his conservative friends not to be unduly discouraged: This president has not lost his appetite for active competition with the Soviet Union, nor is he about to give away the store.

Looming behind the fascinating

question of the immediate political consequences of the Iran controversy is the larger and much graver issue of what it implies about the sheer inefficiency of the American form of government as a means of coping with the modern world.

Every president must devise policies to deal with foreign problems. Every Congress will insist, not unreasonably, on being consulted if American funds, let alone lives, are to be expended in pursuit of those policies. A system of government under which the presidency and the Congress can be, and usually are, dominated by rival political parties, and in which the media use their publicizing ability and emotional influence without restraint for partisan purposes, may be a great way to maximize human freedom, but in policy terms it is a prescription for paralysis and (all too often) disaster.

When the ashes of the Iran controversy are cold, and its dramatis personae have all received their respective rewards and penalties, this country will have to confront and, if it is to survive, resolve that underlying problem.

* 1987, Newspaper Enterprise Assn. Rusher is the publisher of the National Review.

Editorial Policy

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