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Closed-mindedness Supremacists gaining too much control

White supremacy movements are still going strong in the United States. Although white supremacists don't belong to a unified national group, individual groups do exist across the United States.

And that is frightening.

Why? Because twice this year a present or previous member of a white supremacist group has been in the news regarding his association with public office.

In February, former Ku Klux Klan member David Dukes was elected to the Louisiana House of Representatives. Now, Dennis Mahon, a national Klan organizer, is running for one of three open seats on the Northmoor Board of Alderman in Northmoor, Mo.

It is dangerous for these people to become important policy-makers on any government level, because they could bring their fanatical beliefs to those policies. They could instill even more hatred and fear of non-whites and non-Protestants into citizens.

Roger Aden and Matt Sobnosky, two graduate speech communication students at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, researched the use of language by white supremacists for their post-graduate projects.

Aden and Sobnosky found these examples of the fanatical ideas espoused by some white supremacists:

-- The Aryan Nation, based in the northwestern United States, has proposed the creation of a separate all-white nation in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana and Wyoming.

-- Some white supremacists argue that the U.S. government has been infiltrated by Jews, and that civil rights laws are evidence that white people are discriminated against.

-- A white supremacist essay found by Sobnosky claimed that missing Christian children actually are kidnapped by Jews to be killed in rituals.

White supremacists have every right to run for office. They, just like any citizen, should not be persecuted for their beliefs.

But here is where the voice of the people can change things. An informed electorate will be able to decipher the lies and twisted tales supremacists use.

An informed electorate can stop supremacists from gaining a stronghold in elected positions, and spreading their dangerous, sickening views.

-- Curt Wagner
for the Daily Nebraskan

opinion READER

Senator corrects DN editorial

After reading Brandon Loomis' editorial (Daily Nebraskan, April 3), I felt I must address the inaccurate statements contained in the article.

Regarding the example given with School District A and School District B, it should be stressed that School District A can reject any student who wants to transfer if there is not room for that student. Therefore, the costs for School District A will increase little, if at all. The purpose behind LB183 is to allow students to attend another school if there is room for them, not to require the school district to hire more staff, expand their facilities, etc.

Loomis painted the picture that the parents in District B could send their children to District A and receive more benefits without having to pay for them. However, it should be pointed out that District B will lose a set amount of money for each student transferring to another district, and unless staff could be reduced because of the fewer students left at District B, the costs to operate the school may increase.

Loomis stated that whites could

and probably would flock from schools in North Omaha. Amendments have been added to the bill allowing a school district with a desegregation plan to limit the number of students who transfer into or out of the school district, in order to carry out the desegregation plan. Additionally, an option school district is to give first priority for enrollment to option students whose request for enrollment would aid the racial integration of the option school district and the resident school district.

It also must be stressed that schools will not have room for "flocks" of students, unless they have been operating very inefficiently, which I seriously doubt, due to their accountability to their local taxpayers.

I realize that there is opposition to LB183 and everyone is entitled to their viewpoint. However, I felt that I should rectify some of the statements contained in the article.

Dennis Baack
state senator
47th district



Long-range view looks bleak

Human-caused environmental disintegration disgusts columnist

Oil spills. Rain forests. Ozone (or lack thereof). Acid rain.

What do all of these have in common? Yes, they are environmental problems we face. They are also problems which could be solved, but most likely will not.

I don't want to jump on the short-run environmental bandwagon created by the recent oil spill. Instead, I want to take a long-range view of some of the problems we face.

Everyone knows about the oil spill in Alaska. It was caused by a drunk captain and an unqualified third mate. It was also caused by Exxon and other oil companies. Years ago, when the pipeline was installed, it was suggested that the tankers operating in the area use a double hull design to prevent such a disaster. The oil companies assured concerned parties that an accident was a "one in a million" chance. The oil companies refused the double hull design and went with the single hull. "Cheaper" and "unnecessary" (for the double hull) were the reasons given. Right.

The vast Amazon rain forests are disappearing at an alarming rate. Hundreds of forest acres a day are cleared to make room for grazing cattle. The new land only can be used for a few years before it is exhausted. After one or two years, the cattle are moved on to new land that has recently been deforested and so on.

This has more implications than can be counted. Not only are beautiful and unique areas, plants and people being destroyed, but the world climate may be changed. The Amazon basin is the largest single area of its kind in the world. Its effects on not only the immediate region but the world as a whole are not known. The idea that the loss of so many green plants will not have any noticeable effects is no longer believable. The probable effects are all negative and all global: an increase in carbon dioxide, a decrease in oxygen and changes in global rain patterns.

The main reason this is happening is the government of Brazil. Brazil is trying to get people to move into the interior of the country. This is no easy feat, considering the nature of the

interior -- rain forests are hard on roads, they grow right through and over them. The Brazilian government is using the money loaned to them to clear the forests and create range land and jobs in the interior.

This is profitable. Burger King (that wonderful pseudo-institution of America) buys the Brazilian beef. This causes Brazil to produce more beef and to destroy more rain forests. I only can assume that Burger King is not the only American corporation to import Brazilian beef. As long as American companies continue to purchase the beef, Brazil will continue to produce it and the rain forests will continue to be destroyed and we all will suffer.

Another major problem facing everyone is the lack of ozone. Ozone is that substance in the upper atmosphere that blocks those ultraviolet rays which tan (and burn) us. These rays are basically harmful to humans -- causing skin cancer and eye problems. The ozone is being destroyed by fluorocarbons. These substances are produced in large quantities for refrigeration units, aerosol cans and for use in power transformers.

It has been known for quite some time that these substances were causing the destruction of the ozone layer -- but little has been done. In a recent conference of industrialized countries it was again stated that "Yes, we do have a problem," and again, no workable solutions were presented. The major problem is one of economics. The short-range costs of replacing harmful substances are large. Corporations are supposed to make money, so incurring these costs doesn't make sense to them. The solution is simple; force the companies in question to change. Create legislation requiring them to make the changes needed.

Even such a simple solution is beset with problems. In America the big corporations can "influence" legislation to their own ends. There is nothing illegal about it. But there should be. When concerns over a few dollars (or a few billion dollars) outweigh the future of the planet and our existence here, something is wrong.

Yes, I said the future of the planet and our existence! It has been theorized that in the near future the very clothing we wear will have to be a barrier to ultraviolet rays. No longer will we be able to enjoy a day at the beach. No longer will it be chic to be brown. Instead, it will be deadly. Birth defects and skin cancer will run rampant. All for a few dollars.

Acid rain is another problem that has not been solved because of economic concerns. Various parts of the nation have been besieged by acid rain for decades and nothing has been done. Forests, lakes, fish and all kinds of wildlife have been affected negatively. The main reason nothing has been done lies in Congress and in the White House. Congress is always susceptible to corporate pressure and this case is no different. To get something done, the White House needed to get involved. Yet for the first eight years of this decade we had a president more concerned with Red than with happenings in our own backyard.

West Germany proved that economic solutions are possible. The German government decided some time back that acid rain and other pollutants were a serious problem. They gave various industries five years to make the changes or face serious fines. The changes were made within the five-year limit. Simple.

Will we see any change in America? Don't hold your breath. Will the human population survive its own environment? Don't hold your breath.

But, then again, maybe you'd better. Who knows what you're breathing.



Craig Heckman

Heckman is a senior international affairs major and a Daily Nebraskan editorial columnist.

Letters should include the author's name, year in school, major and group affiliation, if any. Requests to withhold names will not be granted.

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