

Many complaints made to DN letter writers

Paper criticized

Over the past year or so, I've read the Good News fairly regularly, but instead of getting a good laugh a lot of other people seem to have been getting, I've never been anything less than horrified at the overzealous fundamentalist propaganda. It was a great relief when Chuck Green and Bob Nelson took it upon themselves to respond with equally zealous humanism.

Whether or not fundamentalists can accept it, homosexuals are people and condoms save lives. Most modern, enlightened people accept these two facts.

Whether or not these facts accord with every last letter of the Bible is another issue. Most people take a more broad interpretation of the Bible, rather than a strict, letter-by-letter interpretation. For isn't Christianity the unconditional love of fellow man? Or is it a complex legal system, fraught with conflicting demands for every possible human action?

With the letter response from Bruce Gregg and Ron Stephenson, Green has been labeled as intolerant for his column in which he labeled Nels Forde, publisher of the Good News, as intolerant. I think both Gregg and Stephenson need to distinguish between being critical and being intolerant.

As Gregg himself has confessed, "zeal has clouded thought" and "we have appeared intolerant of homosexuals." In truth, the Good News has been on a vigorous campaign to alienate homosexuals from God and their fellow human beings. This is intolerance.

Green has merely identified and brought this intolerance to light. He made no attempt to change Nels Forde or the people who write for the Good News, or try to undermine their self concepts, he has merely disagreed openly with them. This is criticism.

Nels Forde and the Good News exemplify intolerance while Green and Nelson exemplify justified criti-

cism. Mind you, I'm not being intolerant of anyone here. I just want to point out the difference.

Gregg's letter is a cause for hope. If he really has been appointed to try to "end the intolerance that has found its way into our pages," then maybe something will change.

I issue the new editor of the Good News a challenge. Print editorial letters in the Good News. Not just letters that you agree with, or letters that Nels Forde agrees with, but letters that you may violently disagree with. The Daily Nebraskan has been open-minded enough to print your letter and Stephenson's letter, along with hundreds of others the editors of the DN may not have agreed with.

If Gregg accepts this challenge, perhaps the labels of intolerance and closed-mindedness will cease to apply.

Chris Potter
sophomore
physics and philosophy

Blame misplaced

This letter is in response to a recent commentary (Daily Nebraskan, May 1) concerning your call for a boycott of Exxon products in retaliation for its recent oil spill in Alaska. I know it seems quite obvious that Exxon has been in the past, as are most corporations in America, quite insensitive to environmental issues, but is Exxon really completely to blame for the oil spill?

How many people reading this letter drive their cars to school every day? How many could possibly use alternative means, such as public transportation, or better yet walk or ride a bike? Before blame is placed anywhere, we should all take a hard look at how efficient we, as individuals are -- especially when the weekends come and O Street is bumper-to-bumper with cars.

Kenneth P. Cannon
Lincoln

Heckman blasted

The announcement that Craig Heckman's column (DN, May 4) was his last was a cause of anxiety. Indeed, I shuddered for most of the morning hours over the grim prospect of spending the next three years in darkness without such a sage to enlighten me. My spine might never have stilled, were it not for Heckman's comments on the justice system, which represented a flaw in his otherwise tremendously sanctified and inviolate contentions. Heckman believes that the attorney is the guaranteed key to the prison cell, and that any suspect rich enough to retain expensive representation will certainly walk. This belief is erroneous.

Heckman has first ignored the concept of a court-appointed attorney. It surprised me that someone so informed and thoughtful was unaware of the clause in every suspect's Miranda rights stating that, if the suspect cannot afford an attorney, one will be afforded for him. This attorney may be a public defender, a private practitioner willing to work on a pro bono (volunteer) basis, or an attorney from a legal services organization such as the ACLU who will work for a minimal fee or no fee at all; or the attorney may be any one appointed by the court to represent the suspect, regardless of whether the suspect can pay normal hourly fees.

The attorney's position or hourly rate is not a gauge of his ability, but the format under which he chooses to work. The most expensive attorney available may not be the one truly most able to help a suspect; conversely, a legal services attorney may be extremely able and willing to take on the demands of time and personal expense, merely because he or she believes, as most of us do, that every suspect's rights to quality representation and a fair trial should be equal.

In fact, not a few major Supreme Court verdicts -- including Roe vs. Wade have been won by attorneys who have provided free representation. Hourly fee is not an indication of

how hard an attorney is willing to work.

Nor, moreover, is hourly fee a guarantee that a suspect will be acquitted. The second and more important concept that Heckman has overlooked is that of concrete facts in a case. If the suspect is clearly guilty and the facts presented in a trial prove it, no attorney can make that suspect into an innocent man.

A good example is the case of John Joubert currently under deliberation in Omaha. Joubert's court-appointed attorney (an extremely competent and reputable private-practice attorney in Omaha) has the monumental task of trying to change Joubert's death sentence by saying that his previous representation was incompetent. Unfortunately, Joubert's chances are slim to none.

An attorney's personality cannot work miracles. The attorney's job is to work with the facts of the case for the best possible outcome for his client; if the facts are obvious, the suspect will be found guilty, and no attorney can change that.

Even more significant to note is that many felony cases are heard, at the defendant's request, by a jury of the defendant's peers -- and it's the peers part that matters here: it is the defendant's peers, people who are as likely to acquit as to convict, who will make their decision based on the facts of the case.

As much as Heckman wails about the injustices of the justice in the United States, he might concede (no guarantees here) after a little research that the American justice system tends to go out of its way to protect the rights of the accused. In fact, the justice system is one of the few instances where a person's money isn't a consideration -- the greatest financial burden in most criminal cases, after all, is borne by the court in the interest of assuring a defendant's right to a fair trial. No self-righteous "enlightenment" can nullify the truth, nor can it transcend the facts.

Maren Chaloupka
freshman pre-law

Research justified

Considering graduate student stipends, one would think Steve Morin would be supersensitive to the 20 percent increase in energy cost for his car over the past month, and be supportive of an alternative source of power. As reported (DN, April 26), Valmont Industries had invested \$9 million toward the development of a Stirling engine which would use a broad range of non-petroleum based fuels. They were still faced with problems in metallurgy, lubrication and heat transfer which required resources beyond their capabilities and they had decided to abandon the project.

We may or may not be able to solve these problems although we believe we have the expertise -- I believe that is legitimate research. If we can foster the development of a power source that can economically utilize waste combustibles -- everything from cow chips to old car tires -- then I believe that is a public good.

William Splinter
associate vice chancellor for
research

editorial

Signed staff editorials represent the official policy of the fall 1988 Daily Nebraskan. Policy is set by the Daily Nebraskan Editorial Board. Its members are Curt Wagner, editor; Amy Edwards, editorial page editor; Jane Hirt, managing editor; Lee Rood, associate news editor; Lisa Donovan, columnist; Diana Johnson, wire page editor; and Chuck Green, copy desk chief.

Editorial columns represent the opinion of the author.

The Daily Nebraskan's publishers are the regents, who established the UNL Publications Board to supervise the daily production of the paper.

According to policy set by the regents, responsibility for the editorial content of the newspaper lies solely in the hands of its student editors.

BIG DEAL

Godfather's Pizza™

Large
Super
Pepperoni
\$5.99

Two
Large Super
Pepperoni
\$10.99

Any Crust Available · Free Delivery · Limited Areas
No Coupon Necessary

Offer good only through May 15th, 1989
South 48th & Hwy. 2
483-4129

12th and G
474-6000

N 48th & Vine
466-8264