

Daily
Nebraskan

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A dangerous trend

Neglecting students' needs hurts everyone

The trend from grant-based to loan-based financial aid for university students is alarmingly representative of this country's commitment to education. It presents a paradox in that the indirect results of such a system perpetuate the reasons for the trend.

How will this nation deal with long-term issues like drugs, AIDS and the global community when it directs our limited resources at short-term "solutions?" The inept "drug war," AIDS epidemic and trade deficit illustrate our failure to deal with these issues. Long-term solutions require intelligent leadership. Today, this is at the expense of education, with students picking up the slack for the government's fiscal irresponsibility, inability to compete in world markets and knee-jerk policies.

Nationally next year, there is a projected \$365 million unmet financial need; an increase from last year of \$34 million. This discrepancy forces short-term adjustments on students that can have the long-term implications mentioned above. Students, having unmet need from decreasing grants, have two options; either make up the difference themselves by working or take out larger loans.

The responsibility on students to fill this increasing gap makes demands on students' time. They get less out of education than if they could devote that time to academics. This doesn't refer to spending money, but simply having enough to cover tuition. These are significant increases; 58 percent a credit hour at UNL from 1980 to 1985. "I just didn't have the time" can lead to cramming, cheating and the "getting the grade" attitude so prevalent on today's campuses.

If students choose to take out larger loans, they are faced with the reality of paying them back; a pressure toward a more marketable degree. A "market-responsive" university system is advantageous in this rapidly changing world, but current motivation is not in the pursuit of enlightenment but marketability. This is not a recent phenomenon and it reaches far deeper than the student-loan issue. It comes from years of neglect of our institutions infrastructures. Short-term planning and solutions end up costing us all more in the end; not just students.

Former San Antonio, Texas, mayor and education activist Henry Cisneros said in a speech at UNL Sept. 28, that "a nation is known by the schools it keeps. America's relationship with the world will be determined by the understanding future leaders have of other cultures. We need to focus on education like we've never done before."

— Andy Manhart
for the Daily Nebraskan

Students must take action

Dearest Pravda,

Accountability! How dare you speak of "accountability" when the whole campus knows that The Daily Nebraskan is a censorious piece of trash run by incompetent theologians who have their fates neatly tucked in the hip pocket of the NU Board of Regents? Or is it the chancellor? It's so confusing.

The pen names we have chosen are intended to reflect the values and goals of our publication, and of ourselves. Speaking for myself, I took the name of Percy Bysshe Shelley, the English romantic poet. His struggle against oppression in Ireland and tyranny at home reflects all the best that a revolutionary can offer: commitment, integrity, vision, intensity, sincerity and intelligence, while getting heartbreak in return. I had no delusion when I began this project. I knew that the established press would ridicule us, that the mob would ignore us, and that the biggest fan of "The New Breed" would be me.

But what revolution begins with a bursting bank account? Or with an enthusiastic mob rising spontaneously from below? I have no illusions about my own ability either. I am no leader. I don't want to be a politician.

I am an artist, a thinker, a soul. All revolutions begin with culture, with art.

The purpose of "The New Breed" is not to simply raise the consciousness of the students (they know what their problems are), and certainly not to incite the masses to riot. Its purpose is to show the students of this university that if anything is to be done about any student issue, any ecological issue, or any world issue, it must be done by the students themselves. The students must take responsibility for not only bitching about issues, but making it perfectly clear to the power elite that if pushed far enough, the students of this university will shut down this university. And the people of this nation will shut down this nation. We have too long neglected the poor, the environment, the elderly and volunteer organizations such as the Red Cross.

An impending age of rapid change is bearing down upon us in this country. "The New Breed" is saying: change with it PigAmerica, or perish.

Jim Sundeem
editor of "The New Breed"
teaching assistant
English

The Gamut of Behavior for Former US Presidents



Stephanie Cannon/Daily Nebraskan

Drug convicts need evaluation

National drug problem just isn't as simple as Bush would like

Get the drugs, users and dealers off the streets. That's what President Bush says.

It sounds good -- a drug-free America, that is. And as far as convictions go, it seems to be working. America's prisons are full of drug-convicted inmates.

In fact, they are more than full. Nebraska prisons are operating at 138 percent capacity. Cots are being set up wherever there is room at the Lincoln Correctional Center. Nationwide, the number of inmates in prison rose 7.3 percent in the first six months of this year. This increase is higher than in any previous full year, according to the Associated Press.

As one prison official pointed out, the drug war is just firing up.

Where will all the soon-to-be-convicted drug violators go?

Bush doesn't consider this a federal government problem. Although it is estimated that \$80 billion is needed to alleviate prison overcrowding nationwide, federal officials say states must solve their own problems.

But state officials say money isn't available to build the new prisons needed.

Bush's narrow perspective is sure to come to a dead end. Get the drug users off the streets. To hell with practical problems like where to put them.

But prison officials have to deal with those dealers and casual drug users now facing jail sentences. And, if a bed is found for the recently convicted, then what?

Nebraska's Corrections Director Frank Gunter knows the state's responsibility goes beyond providing more cell space for inmates. Inmates convicted on drug charges need to be evaluated. If inmates are drug addicted, they need treatment while they are in prison.

If this country really wants to eliminate or improve its drug problem, money must be made available.

Or is Bush advocating a Band-Aid solution? Let's cover up the drug problem by temporarily clearing out drug-infested street corners.



Chris
Carroll

It all comes down to money. Hiring additional counselors and segregating prisoners for drug treatment classes will cost money.

Convicted drug users can't be jailed indefinitely. It would be better to release a former convict who is a recovering addict instead of an untreated addict who has been wanting to get high for a very long time.

The national drug war needs to include more drug treatment programs in the prisons. Inmates need to be evaluated as individuals, not simply labeled a criminal and thrown into the prison mainstream. Are they habitual users, or casual users who got busted after buying a gram of cocaine for the annual Christmas bash?

The gun-toting user who lives off of the money made by selling drugs needs a treatment program quite different from the soft-spoken person who bought drugs to party with on the weekends.

Both committed crimes. Neither the casual or habitual drug user is above the law.

But, for the gun-toting user drugs are more than a high. Drugs are a way of life and an important source of

income. It will take a lot of work to break the link between the user and his or her lifestyle. A program targeted at this user is likely to be rather stringent, almost military in nature.

But, if a casual user was thrown into this same program, it would be a disaster. Neither the casual user nor habitual user could focus on the program. The casual user would be too busy trying to survive. The serious user would set up the rules for survival.

But, necessary drug treatment programs can't be considered until the jail space problem is solved.

Nebraska officials predict all cells will be full and all cot space taken by 1992. In the meantime, crowded inmates are getting restless. Inmate misbehavior in Nebraska prisons was up 43 percent this summer.

Rather than solving a drug problem, the Bush plan is creating a prison crisis. As the ratio of prisoners to guards begins to increase, so will the incidences of violence.

The national drug problem just isn't as simple as Bush wants it to be.

The problems pointed out by prison wardens should have been obvious to the Bush administration. A national drug war should have been well thought out.

It wasn't. Many steps in Bush's drug plan will reveal problems like those now confronting prison wardens across the country.

Bush's drug war is fast becoming part of the problem, not the solution. Although Bush can't deliver on his promise of a drug-free America, he can stop the drug war.

It's time to abandon the war and begin dealing with addicted people. Otherwise, everyone loses.

Chris Carroll is a senior news-editorial major and Daily Nebraskan columnist and supplements editor.

letter

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.

Readers also are welcome to sub-

mit material as guest opinions. Whether material should run as a letter or guest opinion, or not to run, is left to the editor's discretion.

Letters and guest opinions sent to the newspaper become the property of the Daily Nebraskan and cannot be returned. Letters should be typewritten.

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

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