

Daily
Nebraskan
Editorial Board
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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Decision was right

Bill's veto showed objectivity, courage

Idaho is the perfect example of the argument that abortion should be kept out of politics. When Idaho Gov. Cecil Andrus vetoed what would have been the most restrictive law against abortion in the nation last week, he put his political career on the line.

Andrus, a Democrat up for his fourth term, consistently has pledged an anti-abortion stance. Those supporting the Pro-Life movement have criticized Andrus and withdrawn their support for the governor because they think he betrayed his own beliefs for political reasons.

Some pro-choice advocates had put pressure on the governor to veto the bill, saying they would boycott Idaho potatoes if it went into law. Andrus denied being influenced by the threats of economic retaliation.

Andrus' move was not the politically correct one for someone up for re-election.

It was, however, the right one.

The bill, based on a National Right to Life Committee model, had many inconsistencies that should have been ironed out before it was presented in such force.

Five states now have rejected forms of the national model as too restrictive. Idaho's version called for outlawing abortion except in cases of severe fetal deformity or a threat to the life or physical health of the woman, non-statutory rape reported within seven days and incest if the victim is under 18.

Andrus said he rejected the bill on the grounds that legal experts told him those provisions probably would not be upheld in court.

And if the bill wouldn't pass judicial scrutiny, why bother making it a law?

Rep. Gary Montgomery, one of the drafters of the bill, admitted that the legislation "could have been improved and strengthened," according to The Associated Press.

Montgomery and others promised to refine and re-introduce the bill in 1991.

Andrus' opponents have been quick to blast him for his decision and quick to talk about the effects it will have on his try for re-election.

In their fervor, they have missed the reasoning behind Andrus' decision, promising a backlash for a politician who has shown he can look objectively at a bill that would further his own beliefs.

-- Amy Edwards
for the Daily Nebraskan

Protest shouldn't be devaluated

I read Steve Winter's excellent portrayal of the attitude that short-sighted, small-minded people have toward many things that they are unable to comprehend (DN, March 22), and I'd like to say:

There's one thing I admire about you, Steve Winter -- you spoke out and said what you thought. But I sure don't like what you said.

I have respect for the people who felt strongly enough about their beliefs to actually go sit in trees. There isn't much doubt about what those people might be doing "in 10 years." I think I know. I have no idea what you'll be doing "in 10 years."

You say that there are very important issues in Nebraska that need our attention. That is true, but I have no faith in your attending to them when you refuse to care about the smaller issues and criticize those who do.

The trees in Cooper Park were not important to you -- does that make them "not important?" Hardly. Sorry, Steve, you are not our personal connection with the ultimate, objective realm of values.

If an individual tree means nothing to you, can a forest? (Know any math? What's a billion multiplied by zero?)

You are right, no one should "expect children to understand complex issues like this." You showed us what happens when children think they do.

I think I see a strong relationship between Cooper Park and tropical rain forests -- the fate of the trees in Lincoln represents on a local level the fate of all trees in the continuing drama of man's relationship with the planet. And, as concerns those who

tried to save them (as opposed to you), no one's going to clean up the world if they don't take care of their own back yard first.

I think maybe you're selfish. I think that the destruction of rain forests is something you think may affect you during your lifetime, and that's why it's important to you. I think you are not similarly dependant on Cooper Park trees, and, therefore, they do not matter to you. (And what doesn't matter to Steve Winter doesn't matter, right?)

You brought it up -- I wish you would realize "where humans fit into the ecosystem." Humans are just another member of the animal kingdom, and the most destructive member, too.

You wrote, "Trees can't be murdered. Trees don't have rights." They don't have any rights, that's true, but neither do you. A "right" is only an intangible that you think you have just because people say you do. The word is meaningless.

And the word "murder" is nothing but an eccentricity of English, a word for the specific purpose of expressing the killing of a life form which we think should not be killed. What each of us thinks should not be killed is subjective.

No, Steve, the environmental movement is not discredited by those who put thought and effort into it. It might be devaluated by your proposed presence in it if your attitude does not change. Time will take care of that if you let it.

Fran Thompson
sophomore
sociology



Lithuania is just another bug

What would Honest Abe do if he was in Gorbachev's shoes?

It appears that Gorb's hibernating Russian Bear is rubbing the sleep from its eyes and preparing to crush with its mighty mandible the puny Lithuanian pest.

We, the Western World -- the good guys -- are pulling for the underdog. We want to see the Lithuania tick burrow and furrow and bury its head in Gorb's buttock.

What we should realize, however, is that it is only natural for any reasonable man with a tick on his butt to singe the sucker with the head of a match. This procedure is necessary if the reasonable man is to prevent the puny, yet irritating itch, from spreading into something nightmarish like Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever or gangrene, or whatever such crawly parasitic beetles are capable of inflicting.

But when Gorb takes out his matchbook, we hold a demonstration in Washington and our president starts flinging warnings of sorts.

I certainly can understand why the puny Lithuanians would protest Soviet intimidation. They have every right to, as do the Lithuanian-Americans in this country who fear for the lives of relatives and for their national pride. But we who are neither puny Lithuanians nor Lithuanian-Americans have no right to protest the tick exorcism.

Consider this: A few months ago, we went down and had a good time squashing Panama, the pesky mosquito sucking the blood from President Bush's neck. For years, we've been taking swipes at those Nicaraguan reds, and it looks like maybe we've finally purged that festering boil. We exterminated the Grenada insect as well.

So what is our standard going to be? That it's OK to use force in sovereign countries outside of your borders, but not to use it when dealing with states legally under your control?

It would be best never to use force, but if you're going to do it, I'd say that burning the tick off your butt is the most acceptable scenario. Anyway, a country like America that spends so much time rallying around the flag hardly can blame the Soviets for rallying around theirs.

But let's assume that Americans do believe that force is acceptable only when applied in places where a country has no authority to apply it. Let's examine our own attitude to-

ward secession.

Who's your favorite president? There's a good chance that if you didn't answer Ronald Reagan or Franklin Roosevelt, you said Honest Abe.

What did Honest Abe do when the chigger bit his butt? He crushed it like the bug it was. You can talk all day about how Honest Abe was on a crusade for humanity, a mission to liberate the slaves and enforce or enact the true democratic and egalitarian principles on which this country was founded. You can argue that Gorb has no such righteous crusade to pursue in Lithuania.

But the truth is that the only crusade Lincoln was on was to preserve his union, to keep Manifest Destiny alive, to elevate the United States to the great power that it became. He was interested in the evil of slavery only insofar as its abolition would hold the country together.



Brandon Loomis

Our favorite president applied pressure and squashed the Dixie pest. Most of us are glad he did. How, then, can we justify warnings to Gorb not to scratch his itch?

Picture this, if you will: Puny Nebraska secedes from the union this summer, asserting its independence and greatness, and longing to relive the days when its boundaries included much of the Great Plains and Rocky Mountains. My colleague Bob Nelson suggested just such a move earlier this semester. Therefore, rest assured, it could happen.

How would Mr. Bush react? Let's forget about the nuclear missiles deployed in outstate Nebraska. The federal government could easily remove them and find them a new home, and Nebraska would not have the funds to replace them.

Puny Nebraska, then, would be unimportant to the functioning of the rest of America. Sure, we supply some foodstuffs, but the slack easily could be taken up by increased production elsewhere. Besides, there would be no reason that trade between the Nebraskan Empire and America could not continue.

But Mr. Bush would not look the

other way. The danger is that if puny Nebraska asserted its independence, why not puny Kansas or puny Kentucky or relatively small but absolutely helpless Alaska? These individually insignificant states seriously would hurt this country if all were to secede. We'd have no wheat, no tobacco and no oil.

If puny Nebraska seceded, its birdgun-armed militia would be handily flattened by the U.S. Armed Forces.

I'll put it in the eloquent words of another of my colleagues, Sports Editor Jeff Apel. Jeff finds an analogy between the situation in Soviet Lithuania and that in Memorial Stadium when the Kansas State Wildcats come to town.

K-State, says Jeff, will bicker all year about its rights being offended -- the school can't compete for recruits, Lou Holtz makes fun of the Wildcats and they demand an apology, etc. Jeff says that when they show up at Memorial Stadium, however, the mighty Cornhuskers -- through brute force -- put them in their place. Such are the workings of the world.

If we really cared about the underdog, we'd try to even things up. We'd give K-State a few of our best players and sit down to watch a really competitive football game and hope that the best team would win. Instead, we hope to beat the puny Wildcats by at least 50 points.

If K-State officials threatened to secede from the Big Eight, we would put pressure on them to stay for fear of losing money from their basketball program and of the possibility that other teams would follow.

Remember the domino theory? We used it to justify fighting when it appeared that states around the world would fall one after the other to communism. Why can't communists use it to justify fighting when it appears that states even within their own borders will fall one after the other to democracy?

I think democracy is imperfect, but that it works better than communism. We're seeing living proof of that, or at least of that belief, all around the world. So, if we think democracy is good, maybe we should oppose all attempts to stifle it. But if we're going to do that, let's clear up our own double-standard first.

Loomis is a senior news-editorial major and the Daily Nebraskan wire editor and a columnist.