

Daily Nebraskan

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3,2,1 . . . restore

Museum is responsible for Apollo 009

Space: the final frontier? NASA looks as though it's voyaging into utter disaster. The space agency's reputation has deteriorated with the space shuttle Columbia's delayed launching and finally the removal of the craft from the launch line-up.

The 118-day (and counting) delay of the shuttle's launch, caused by a hydrogen leak, is the longest shuttle delay in history.

But the University of Nebraska-Lincoln is making some space history of its own -- and it's nothing to be proud of either.

Years of exposure to Nebraska weather have damaged the Apollo 009 space capsule, which sits northwest of Morrill Hall. The paint on the outside of the spacecraft is faded, chipped and cracked. Part of the outer shell has broken off. The windows are dirty and scratched. Inside, wires are tangled and equipment is rusted.

Restoration of the craft has been estimated to cost at least \$200,000.

But restoration seems to be a floating idea because Hugh Genoways, director of the Nebraska State Museum, said that "from the museum's point of view, the (restoration of the) craft is a long ways down our priority list."

And while the museum says it doesn't have the money to pay for restoration, it's not going to let anyone else take care of the capsule either.

It's a sure bet that 18 years ago, when NASA agreed to give the museum a space artifact, the space agency didn't expect it to go to ruins.

Max Ary, executive director of the Kansas Cosmosphere and Space Center in Hutchinson, Kan., said that not only does the university own the craft, it has a responsibility to maintain a national treasure.

The center submitted proposal to the university this summer to take the craft from UNL permanently and restore it through backing from a museum or foreign country that would display the craft in an exchange program.

But UNL turned the center down, saying the craft was "too valuable to exchange," according to Genoways.

So valuable that Apollo continues to disintegrate.

Ary said that if the craft remains outside much longer it could "literally turn to dust" as the deterioration of the special metals used to build the spacecraft continues.

And now the space program is crumbling alongside its artifacts.

Delays such as that of the Columbia and accidents such as the 1987 explosion of the space shuttle Challenger have caused public skepticism about the U.S. space program and questions about NASA's abilities.

NASA's mission will continue. But it won't be successful if the space program's past is jettisoned.

--Lisa Donovan
for the Daily Nebraskan



Oil is not the only impetus

Hitler, Quadaffi, Saddam illustrate need for U.S. military action

I guess it's official now. We're all in big trouble.

On Thursday, Saddam Hussein announced to Iraq and the rest of the world that war with the West -- read "United States" -- is inevitable.

Strangely, this statement came just days after Iraqi officials said the economic embargo wouldn't affect their nation for "five or six years."

But lots of people in this country should be delighted at Saddam's attitude. It will give them something to grumble about well into the holiday season.

Since Iraq invaded Kuwait Aug. 2, most nations have condemned Saddam for his actions. For once, the world seemingly has come together to back a cause.

But here in America, some people are less than delighted.

Last Saturday, hundreds in San Francisco protested the U.S. military involvement in the Gulf, and there have been similar protests across the country.

People are forecasting another Vietnam, with thousands of Americans dying for nothing.

Uh-huh. It makes one wonder what those same Americans would say if oil suddenly shot up to \$200 a barrel, and their taxes shot through the stratosphere to help the government maintain our 20th century way of life.

American troops in Saudi Arabia are there because that's their job. They weren't yanked out of their living rooms, they weren't recruited at gunpoint. They joined to serve their country, for whatever reasons. They are highly trained and are getting paid to do what they do. Right now, they are serving their country and the rest of the world -- just like soldiers from other countries who are there.

And the cost? The Pentagon estimates that for occupation until next Sept. 1, the price tag will be about \$17.5 billion. Saudi Arabia has already promised to pick up \$6 billion of that, and other countries such as Japan and West Germany have combined to pledge another \$4 billion to \$8 billion.

Cost seems to be the main issue all the way around in the crisis.

The cost of oil was Saddam's premise for invading Kuwait. He said Kuwaiti leaders were letting oil prices get too low, and that it was his job to stop the trend.

Obviously, the impending high price

of oil is one big reason U.S. troops are sweating it out in the desert. It's also little doubt that without oil, life as we know it would cease -- and not just long weekend trips in the ol' Camaro.

Spock-like logic isn't needed to figure out what would happen if 50 percent of the world's oil reserves were controlled by a man who gasses his own citizens, and spends \$150 billion and 1 million lives on an eight-year war with a neighboring nation.

Had the United States not sent troops as soon as it did, Saudi Arabia would by now be another Iraqi province. Saddam would own half of the world's oil and control the world economy. Is that "none of our business?"

It was none of our business when Adolf Hitler was steamrolling Europe 50 years ago, either. But looking back, it's a damn good thing the United States was involved.

Saudi Arabia and Kuwait are two of America's most loyal allies in the perpetual battlefield known as the Middle East. Our government, as wrong and ridiculous as it so often is, has obligations to its allies as well as to its own citizens.

Refugees from Kuwait have told stories of Iraqi soldiers raping, robbing and looting. Saddam has ordered that Kuwait's culture be systematically exterminated. Kuwaiti families have been forcibly removed from their homes, which are being turned over to Iraqi families left homeless by the war with Iran.

One of the favorite arguments of Bush-bashers is that Israel has never received U.S. condemnation for occupation of the West Bank. That's not true. It was condemned by U.S. officials from the start, during Nixon's administration.

But the territory was occupied only after Jordan entered the Six Day War against Israel. If Israel had been defeated, would its land possessions have remained intact?

War obviously is never good, but it is sometimes justified. When all else fails, it's necessary. That's not a popular attitude, but a realistic one.

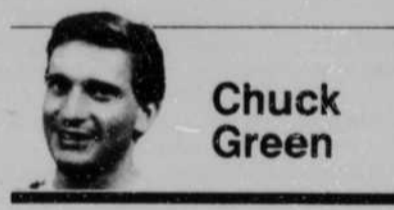
It's a pretty thought, hoping everyone will just wake up one morning and suddenly cooperate with everyone else on the planet, loving them all the while.

Unfortunately, though, the world is not yet a Utopia. The world's superpowers are slowly but surely getting on the right track, but some other nations still wait patiently to throw a wrench into the machinery of progress.

This time, it's Saddam. Maybe the military buildup in the Gulf will keep it from happening again.

Just ask Quadaffi.

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Chuck Green

Electricity, contrary to popular belief, is not just up there in the power lines, waiting to be used. It is created by generators run by fossil fuels. Petroleum is vital for medical services, communications, clothing and food production, and virtually every other aspect of life as we know it.

Until other means of creating energy are found, oil is needed. Complaining about developing solar energy doesn't help at the moment. Welcome to 1990.

Back in the spring of 1986, U.S. planes launched an attack on Libya in retaliation for a series of terrorist attacks on American citizens and property. The mood of the country then was much the same as it is now: violence only causes more violence.

But looking back over the last five years, I honestly can't think of any terrorist activity from Libya since. There hasn't been a peep from Libyan leader Moammar Quadaffi.

Our government has blundered more than its share and stuck its nose where it doesn't belong ever since the late-1940s. It has covertly invaded, killed, planned and generally meddled in the world's affairs for a long time, usually for self-serving reasons.

Such is the price of being the only economically intact nation in the years after World War II.

The Gulf crisis, though, isn't a contrived invasion of a tiny Caribbean island, or a coup against a Third World country. It's the world versus a nut, like it or not. And the U.S. is the only country that can do anything about it fast.

editorial

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letter

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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 submit 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

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