

Don't give it up

Officials should keep rhinoceros at UNL

UNL Interim Vice Chancellor Bill Splinter's decision to rethink giving away Morrill Hall's rhino is a smart choice.

Although the rhino's fate at UNL has not been permanently decided, the realization that it may be valuable enough to keep despite its drawbacks is refreshing.

Officials planned to get rid of the rhino because they thought it was inconsistent with the theme of Elephant Hall. They also used the excuse that the rhino is 65-70 percent asbestos.

Splinter said, however, that a fiberglass skin could be created to alleviate the asbestos problem if the rhino were moved to another museum.

This excuse, by that statement, was proved invalid. UNL could put a fiberglass skin on the rhino just as well as another museum.

Putting plans to move the rhino on hold is a wise move, considering that the rhino could fit in with Morrill Hall after all.

Former museum director Bertrand Schultz said his vision of a Hall of Giants, which the rhino was created for, still could be realized.

Morrill Hall has the tallest giraffe, rhino, mammoth and boar in the world, Schultz said. This collection would draw donors to finance a Hall of Giants.

The benefits to keeping the rhino are many. It stands above the other exhibits in Morrill Hall in splendor, acting as a symbol of an age gone by. Although it is not an elephant, it is a model of a prehistoric animal — the Asian baluchithere.

As Splinter said, the rhino is a unique exhibit and it may be the only one in the world. To have such an exhibit is an asset to Morrill Hall.

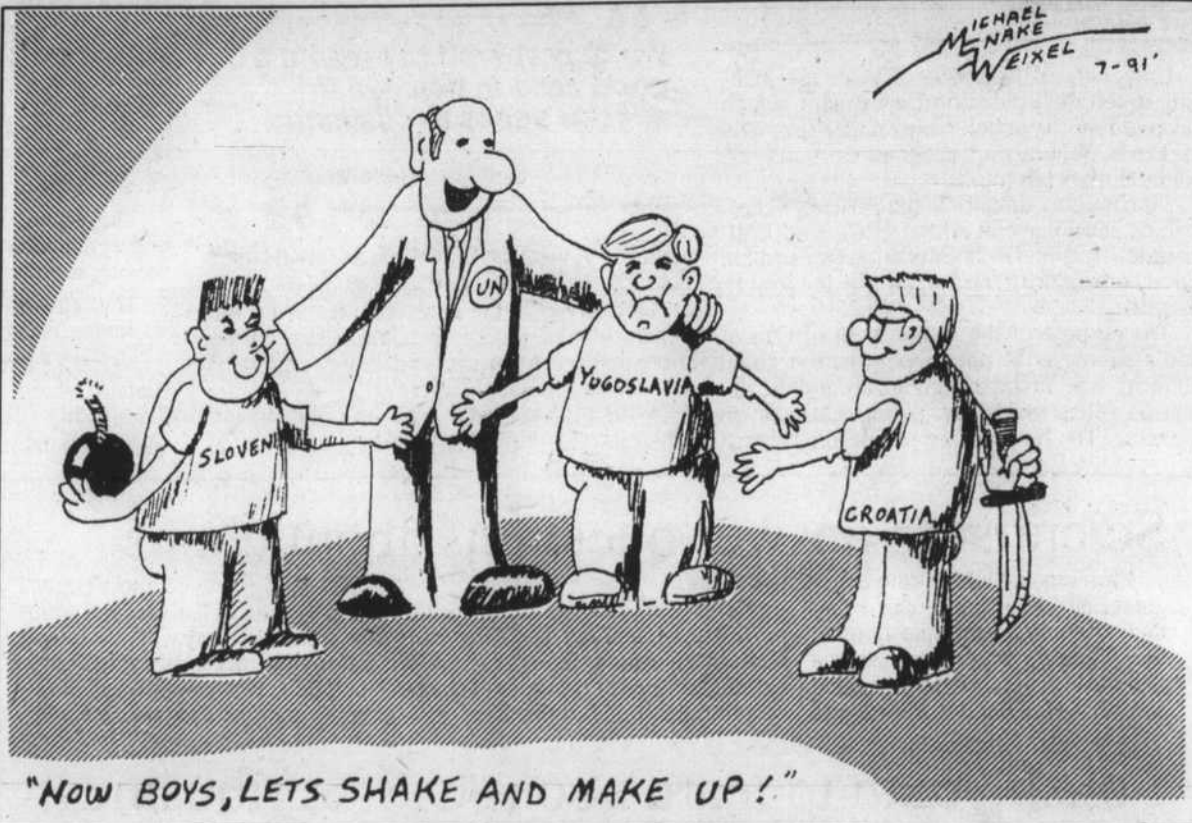
Other museums obviously realize its value. Six or seven museums are vying for the rhino.

Those museums should not get the rhino. It belongs in Nebraska. It's part of the state's culture for Nebraska schoolchildren to see the rhino looking down at them on a field trip and to envision the world in which it lived. To take it away would deprive thousands of museum visitors each year.

Visitors are not bothered that it does not fit in with the Elephant Hall concept — they appreciate its excellent representation of an ancient creature.

The inconsistency with the name Elephant Hall is academic. To give away the rhino would be to lose a priceless treasure.

— Victoria Ayotte
for the Daily Nebraskan



VICTORIA AYOTTE Americans should celebrate diversity

I've always loved the Fourth of July. As a little kid, my brother and I would ride our bikes all over town looking for firecracker stands. When they finally opened, we would spend most of our waking moments checking out the wonderful assortments of bangers, boomers, cones and rockets.

When the long-awaited day finally arrived, we'd sit on our porch as the Firecracker Day parade went by, then spend the rest of the day shooting off our goodies.

This attitude, I think, led me to decide in a diary entry as a 12-year-old that my country came right after God in my list of priorities. I would do anything for it. God bless the U.S.A.

Naturally, I associated my country with its government, as most Americans do. I started keeping track of politics in junior high, and would argue Reagan's greatness with my liberal relatives. Support for the president and the country went hand in hand. I felt very righteous in my cause.

Now that I'm in college, I have become more liberal, as many college students do. I have become disenchanted with what the supposedly great American government has done to other peoples. How we ignore the plight of millions while considering peoples' rights when it is politically expedient — as in the case of Kuwait. How we ignore the tragedy of the homeless in the United States while giving out billions in military aid.

These sad truths suggest that our country is ruled not for the best interests of Americans, with a view toward global harmony, but for increasing U.S. power in the world. Our foreign policy seems to be helping those who will increase U.S. prestige while ignoring those who we deem do



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not count. Power, not humanitarianism, is the game played.

The United States, coming out of its isolation in the early 1900s, declared that it would protect nations in the Western hemisphere if they wanted U.S. help. Now the United States has decided to interfere the world over. This is the New World Order. It is not a policy of global harmony, but a program in which the United States is the preeminent power and deems itself the ultimate world player, solving disputes and using its influence to have things go its way.

The Persian Gulf War was the first test of the New World Order. American appears to have passed with flying colors. The United States put itself on a pedestal as the ultimate world authority and interfered in a regional dispute it had no legitimate stake in. U.S. power was used to build our

world role by taking out the bully Saddam Hussein.

We celebrated liberating the Kuwaitis while ignoring the hundreds of Iraqis who died. Our nation had again found pride in itself. We felt that we were the victors, that we were the best nation in the world. It's always been a part of the American psyche that might means right. The war euphoria epitomized this.

But such an attitude leads to oppression. History has shown it time and time again. Righteous Americans, believing themselves better than others, brought in slaves to work for them and expanded westward, killing American Indians along the way.

I finally realized, as every American must realize, that our country is great not for its power — its ability to kick ass — but for its diversity. It is not even great for its government, which often shuts out the minority view. It is great for its people.

Celebrating diversity, not victory over other people, is the key to the Fourth of July. We must not forget that those who came over on the Mayflower were fleeing persecution by the English, who thought they were better. England finally fell as a world power, which the United States will do if it does not utilize its strengths. The United States must realize its role is not to conquer others and to feel that it is the best, but to have pride in itself for its achievements in conquering the problems associated with assimilating so many different peoples and cultures.

I will celebrate the Fourth of July this year. But I won't think of victory over other countries. I will think of the diversity that makes America great.

Ayotte is a senior news-editorial major and summer Daily Nebraskan editor.

EDITORIAL POLICY

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