

Smart start

Education a sound investment for future

When the economy turns down, it's hard for Americans to see past the next paycheck. But investing in the future is the only way to ensure that conditions ever will be much better.

Head Start, a federal government program conceived in the Great Society days, provides preschool education to disadvantaged 3- and 4-year-olds. This is one government program that deserves all of the funding we can spare — and then some.

Thirty-five percent of American kids starting school are not ready for kindergarten, according to a survey of teachers by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. It is alarming that more than one in three American children can't start their educations off on the right foot.

In fact, according to Ernest Boyer of the Carnegie Foundation, America's children start off on exactly the wrong foot by watching more than 4,000 hours of television before they begin school — 4,000 hours of cartoons, junk food commercials and violence.

President Bush indicated in his State of the Union address that he would like to see an expansion of Head Start. We hope he urges Congress to put some money where his mouth is.

Boyer recently told the Senate Labor Committee that two-thirds of the nation's eligible children aren't enrolled in Head Start because Congress' \$2 billion annual appropriation for the program simply isn't enough. He recommended \$8.3 billion.

Although the extra \$6.3 billion sounds like a lot in these tough times, it is an essential investment in the future.

For each dollar invested in Head Start, \$4.75 eventually is saved in costs for remedial education, the welfare system and the penal system, according to researcher David Weikart, head of a preschool project in Michigan.

If these figures are correct, Boyer's recommendations would mean an extra \$30 billion savings for the nation. This doesn't even take into account the extra national earnings generated by a better-educated work force.

Head Start money easily could be found in the oversized military budget. The military investment, once necessary, has matured. We have seen the return in the demise of the Soviet Union. American leaders now must use those resources to prevent the demise of this country.

The time to start making real commitments to education is now. The children of America cannot wait for the next paycheck.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

UNL in grip of racial paranoia

The recent letters of John M. S. Medley ("Whites sole perpetrators of racism," DN, Feb. 14) and Lisa Weems ("Lack of diversity tarnishes DN," DN, Feb. 18), and the statements of Sister Souljah are examples of a disturbing trend: hyper-paranoia, as I call it. These individuals have the rare ability to detect racism in almost any word or deed, even where none existed at all.

Blaming others while doing nothing is worthless. I suggest that these radical wannabes should look around and see the truth. Oppression of minorities by racists was a reality in the United States long ago. However, today any person with the will to succeed

can go as far as he or she wishes. Do not tell me, Mr. Medley, that the "drug dealers on every streetcorner" are a part of the "system," devised by "the white man," that you call racism.

Everyone knows that bigots exist; however, even bigots are too busy with life also to be enforcing some mythic system of tyranny against African-Americans. I simply cannot believe that Medley, Weems and Souljah have nothing better to do with their time than mimic the party lines of the past. The world has changed, get with it.

Jon Dokter
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RHA proving effectiveness

Recent issues of the Daily Nebraskan highlighted this year's ASUN student election groups and their platforms. Both parties targeted issues pertaining to the UNL residence hall system. Their platforms include ideas such as 24-hour visitation and "more flexible meal plans."

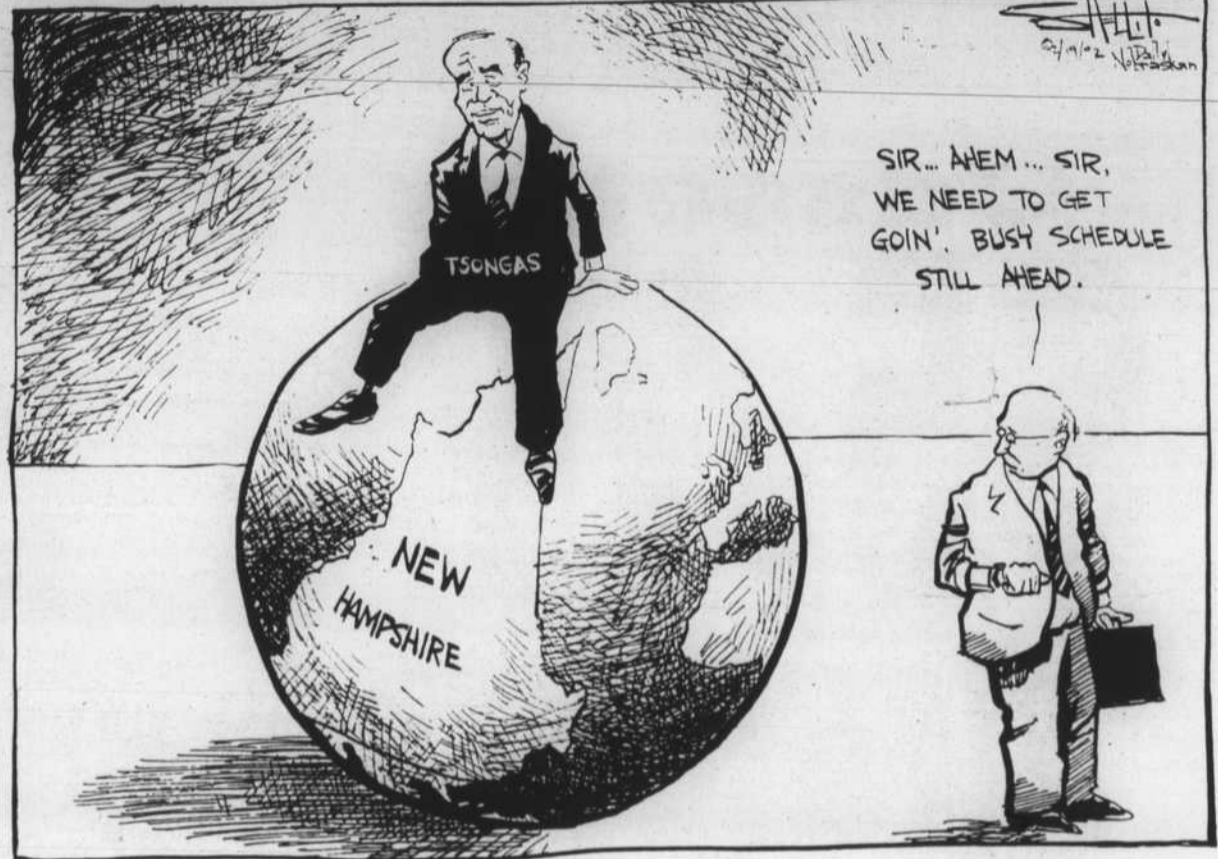
Page six of Monday's Daily Nebraskan contained a very important article about the future of the residence halls. Administration and RHA both took measures allowing for 24-hour visitation starting next semester. It was an issue raised by RHA member Jeff McTaggart last year and recently pushed by members of Abel Hall.

To my knowledge, there are no former RHA members and only one residence hall student assistant on this year's ASUN executive and sena-

torial tickets. This is quite surprising considering RHA's recent accomplishments. In the past year, RHA successfully worked for condom availability in the halls, hosted a Midwest Regional Residence Hall conference, created the UNL Campus Escort Program and now has acquired 24-hour visitation for the halls, to name but a few achievements.

If ASUN parties wish to raise and be effective on residence hall issues, they should recruit more RHA members and student assistants who are deeply involved with the system. Until then, perhaps residence hall issues should be left in the capable hands of the RHA.

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KIRK ROSENBAUM

Beware: Candidates are coming

Last Friday night was an ugly and evil night, and not just because it was Valentine's Day. It was cold and gray, a good night to lay in a supply of beer and rum and have a double order of almond chicken delivered. Maybe watch some old Ali fights on ESPN.

What I watched instead was a flurry of last-minute speechifying and rallies by the candidates in New Hampshire. They were all pretending that New Hampshire is sacred ground, peopled by wise and perceptive souls instead of the dull patch of rocky soil its visitors know it to be.

This whole election has made me nostalgic for the days of Ronald Reagan. Never mind the dark clouds rolling in or the falling black rain — it was "morning in America."

Ronald doesn't worry much about mornings anymore. He lives the good life in Bel Aire, sleeping until noon to the sound of a boy raking up the lawn. If it weren't for that pesky 22nd Amendment he would probably be running for re-election to a fourth term.

But the Reagan years are over. So is the 1992 New Hampshire primary, thankfully.

Those candidates who have used it as a springboard to obscurity will curse this state, which has absorbed far more money and resources than it deserves. The state is too small, too white, too industrial to be an accurate reflection of any sort of national trends.

This is what the losers will be telling themselves today as they pack up to move on to 48 more states.

There were a good many losers in New Hampshire, it seems. Every Democrat but Paul Tsongas has suffered visibly over the past few months. New Hampshire seems to be the only state besides Massachusetts that isn't painfully uncomfortable with a Tsongas-Dukakis comparison.

I have reasons for refusing to vote for Tsongas that are totally personal and probably irrational. Two months ago I was at a parade in Concord that was attended by representatives of all the campaigns, including Tsongas'.

His marchers all wore "Tsupport Tsongas" shirts, and one of them walked up next to me while I was standing on the sidewalk. He was holding a giant metal cylinder painted in the Tsongas colors of green and white. He explained it as some sort of



I went temporarily blind, picking green/white confetti and gunpowder out of my ears and mouth. When my sight returned I could see Pat Buchanan standing on the corner and I could swear he was laughing.

firecracker intended to be detonated at a strategic point in the parade.

"I've been trying to get this thing to go off all night," the guy mumbled, giving it a few hard shakes.

At that point the device exploded in my face with a deafening sonic boom. I went temporarily blind, picking green/white confetti and gunpowder out of my ears and mouth. When my sight returned I could see Pat Buchanan standing on the corner and I could swear he was laughing.

The geek next to me muttered a lame apology and started to brush me off. I tried to grab him by the throat but my equilibrium was savaged and he dodged me easily, then ran down the street. I spent the rest of the evening recovering on a nearby bar stool under the close supervision of Dr. Scagrams.

The point of this story is that any candidate who would give matches and explosives to a fool like that deserves about six votes.

It's difficult, I realize, to supervise your bottom-rung volunteers if you are running for president. Any of your reliable deputy field coordinators can turn out to be an escaped sex offender

from a day-release program in Ohio. He will make a good deal of noise when discovered, and he will take you down with him.

Such incidents can develop quicker than funnel clouds and have the same effect on a campaign.

Earlier at the same parade I watched a nasty scene developing between members of the local high school hockey team and a few Harkin supporters. The hockey boys were in full uniform, fresh from victory in a local tournament. They were fired up and irate about having to follow any patry political campaigns. A few of them began chanting four-letter words with the candidates' names.

In response, a pair of Harkin's supporters put their signs down and approached the hockey team. It might have developed into a good brawl — the hockey players were younger and fully armored but vastly outnumbered. And Harkin's crowd had dogs — big, slobbering monsters wearing sweaters that read "Barkin' for Harkin."

I anticipated people getting punched and bitten and high-sticked, but a few of Harkin's cooler heads prevailed. They convinced their supporters that beating up the local heroes was the wrong road to victory.

Harkin himself was 2,000 miles away, spending the holidays at his beach house in the Bahamas.

Wouldn't that have been a hell of a headline for the senator to read in his morning edition? There wouldn't be much for him to do but grab a fishing pole and a bottle and hit the beach. By the time the news trickled down to the Caribbean, the entire Harkin campaign would be a distant memory, which isn't far from where it will be soon, anyway.

This is the sort of thing that happens when you pack a half-dozen heavyweight campaigns into a state the size of a used car lot. There is bound to be some trouble before the finish line. George Bush had many reasons for abandoning New Hampshire, and I might even agree with a few of them.

The good news is that New Hampshire's 1992 primary is over, and the candidates have fled.

The bad news is that they're coming our way.

Rosenbaum is a senior history major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Staff editorials represent the official policy of the Spring 1992 Daily Nebraskan. Policy is set by the Daily Nebraskan Editorial Board. Its members are: Jana Pedersen, editor; Alan

Phelps, opinion page editor; Kara Wells, managing editor; Roger Price, wire editor; Wendy Navratil, copy desk chief; Brian Shellito, cartoonist; Jeremy Fitzpatrick, senior re-

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