

## Music to the Earth

More manufacturers should cut waste

The music industry finally listened to its own artists last week and decided to eliminate the compact disc long box.

On Thursday, Jay Berman, president of the Recording Industry Association of America, announced that no new releases would be sold in long boxes after April 1993. Instead, the association adopted a standard size of 5 by 5 1/2 inches — much smaller than the 6-by-12-inch long box.

The association, which includes such recording companies as Bertelsmann, EMI, MCA, Polygram, Sony and Warner, distributes more than 95 percent of recorded music in the United States.

Record retailers and wholesalers had opposed the elimination of the long box, which was designed to fit album display cases and to deter shoplifting. The retailers and wholesalers probably will have to spend much money converting the display cases and devising new ways to stop shoplifting.

Those are small prices to pay for a policy that will aid the nation's overcrowded landfills.

The Sierra Club estimated that cardboard and other paper products account for two of every five pounds of trash in the United States.

After the recording association's announcement, Sierra Club executive Daniel J. Weiss said, "Eliminating the long box is music to our ears."

But the recording industry should be just the beginning of efforts to reduce packaging nationwide. Manufacturers of deodorants are beginning to eliminate cardboard packaging entirely, and some potato chip manufacturers long ago moved to plastic bags instead of boxes. These marketers are taking the lead.

A trip to any grocery store makes it painfully obvious how much our society wastes on needless packaging that does little but jack up prices and take up space in landfills.

When the rest of the manufacturing sector follows the CD manufacturers and discontinues this undeniable squandering of our resources, it will be music to everyone's ears.

## Landlords should act on beliefs

It troubles me to read recent letters to the editor that have discussed civil rights for homosexuals and the freedom of religion for landlords. The impression I get is that, because the religious beliefs and values of Christian landlords are not universally held, they are somehow less deserving of Constitutional protection. The landlords are being told, in essence, that, although they own the property, they have no right to say what behaviors are practiced on their property.

A person's choice of religion is not simply an inconsequential matter of opinion, as though it were no different than deciding what toppings to get on a pizza. They are the result, in most cases, of thoughtful consideration and constitute a heartfelt belief that is at the core of one's being. We can disagree with other religions, we can debate their various merits and we can attempt to persuade each other to one side or another. If our freedom of religion still exists, however, we cannot be required by law either to adopt or renounce any religious be-

liefs in the absence of an extraordinarily compelling national interest, such as the prohibition of human sacrifice.

It seems to me that a landlord should not be forced to choose between obeying the law and obeying his or her God. If I owned property, I would view myself as a steward of what God has entrusted to me, and I would not feel free to open up the property to activities that are inherently in opposition to what I believe the Bible teaches. This would extend to unmarried heterosexual couples as well as homosexual couples.

Beliefs and behaviors are two different things, and I would not dream of suggesting that renters be required by law to abandon their own religious beliefs. By the same token, I should not be required by law to permit on my property certain behaviors and thereby turn my back on my religious beliefs.

Brad Pardec  
staff member  
Love Library

## LETTER POLICY

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 or reject all material submitted.

Readers also are welcome to submit material as guest opinions. Whether material should run as a letter or guest opinion 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.

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.



ALAN PHELPS

## Bush passing trivial tests

America's president and first lady were in Texas over the weekend to campaign a little and to fill out absentee ballots for the upcoming primary.

As usual, every little thing they did made national news. That's the way things work in this country. The president is automatically interesting, even if he is a Republican.

The Republican primaries are providing all sorts of opportunities to see what George and Barbara are up to. Bush's slip in the polls has made what once was shaping up as a terribly dull affair into something worth watching.

Actually, Bush is doing all right in primaries so far around the country. In fact, the 60 or 70 percent of the vote he's been getting would look pretty good — that is, if he had an actual opponent in most states.

As things are, the president simply looks silly. And some of the issues voters seem to think are important in this election year are even sillier. Lately, for instance, Bush has been raked over the coals for his meager grocery store knowledge.

In an interview Friday with a television station in his so-called "home" state of Texas, Bush was asked if he knew what a loaf of bread cost.

"I'd say... it would cost you about a buck a loaf," he guessed. "How close is it?"

The seconds between Bush's query and the reply from the TV interviewer must've seemed like an eternity to the president.

Loaf of bread — that's a dollar, isn't it? Shoot, or is that a gallon of, whaddaya call it, milk? Or a sack of corn? Dad-gummit, curse this damnable invisible wall between me and my people! Curse it! Curse it!

The interviewer told him that a buck was pretty close. The price of bread varies widely around the country and from store to store, but one dollar will purchase some bread most anywhere.

The president apparently has his people shop in expensive grocery stores. Super Saver here in Lincoln usually has bread for a mere 49 cents, and most other stores sell comparable loaves. It's hard to imagine how one bread could be twice as good as any other, but when you are George Bush, you get the best bread other people's money can buy.

Bush pointed out that, although his knowledge of grocery store prices might be deficient, he didn't believe Americans cared.

"I don't go to the supermarket as president. I don't think people expect the president to do that," Bush said.



***It would be a shock to find George in the cereal aisle at Russ's, checking out a special on Corn Flakes. Surely he has better things to do, such as avoiding issues.***

He's probably right. It would be a shock to find George in the cereal aisle at Russ's, checking out a special on Corn Flakes. Surely he has better things to do, such as avoiding issues. He did venture into a mall over Christmas to buy some socks, though, so maybe he could take some time out to visit a market as well.

While Bush admitted his lack of supermarket expertise, it seems he is, nevertheless, fairly good at guessing prices of common grocery store items. Perhaps he should take a look at getting a spot on "The Price is Right."

Bob "A Fur Coat is a Death Coat" Barker: George Herbert Walker Bush, come on down!

Bush: Bob, I am really excited. I watch your show every day, plus I spend a lot of time in the grocery store, now that I've figured out how those new-fangled scanners work.

Bob: George, listen to the highly commercialized description of our first item.

Faceless announcer: A Brand-New Bomber! That's right, the U.S. Air Force B-2 "Stealth" Bomber! Although you can't see it, it's here on our stage. This B-2 comes fully equipped with a custom package including four-speed automatic transmission, fuel-injection V6 turbo, air, power windows, steering and breaks, leather interior, AM-FM cassette Dolby stereo, a full payload of one-megaton nuclear ordinance, and it meets all California emissions standards.

Remember, George, the U.S. Air Force asks everyone to "buckle up"

for safety! This B-2 is yours, George, if the Price Is Right!

George (somewhat flustered): I'd say... it would cost you about a billion a plane. How close is it?

While George was playing around in one part of Houston, Barbara was having fun of her own on the other side of town, and, of course, the press was there as well. After all, the president's wife is news, even if she continues to claim her best-seller, "Millie's Book," was written by the White House dog.

A new elementary school in a fast-growing, upscale suburb of Houston has been named after Barbara, and she was on hand for the dedication ceremony.

"I'm so flattered that I can't believe it," she said.

The kids already are learning a lot at Barbara Bush Elementary. When Barbara said she thought they only named schools after dead people, 22 first graders shouted back, "You're not dead!"

Apparently, the little tykes were able to make that diagnosis without any high-tech medical equipment. One wonders what they would say about Paul Tsongas.

It must have been a relief to the first lady to learn she was, in fact, alive. For a moment, she probably thought she had been trapped in some wacky Twilight Zone episode.

Meet Barbara P. Bush — an ordinary woman by most standards, who claims Texas residency to escape paying state income taxes. Barbara lives a somewhat easy life, although her husband continually buys overpriced bread.

"But today, she is about to take a side trip to a place where people who name institutions of learning after their dead have a little surprise in store for her..."

After the kids convinced Bar she was alive, she pushed her book and made the solemn promise, "I will be back."

Such extensive press coverage of the first couple is a daily part of the lives of all Americans. It's fun to watch George and Barbara zip around the country in that cute jet of theirs.

The president probably gets tired of all those people following him around, though. Just think what life would be like with some lunatic for a shadow, asking dumb questions at every opportunity. And besides, Dan Quayle, there's the press corps.

No wonder George doesn't go to the store.

Phelps is a sophomore news-editorial major, the Daily Nebraskan opinion page editor and a columnist.