

Daily
Nebraskan
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EDITORIAL

French blessing?

Mediocre support greets European union

The French votes are in and it seems the "ouis" have beaten the "nons" by just a smidgen.

Early French TV reports say voters in France have narrowly approved a treaty, the goal of which is to turn Western Europe into a political and economic superpower.

Voters were asked: Do you approve the bill submitted to the French people by the president of the republic authorizing the ratification of the treaty on European union? They answered with a shaky yes.

"It's a pseudo-success — a mediocre yes," said far-right leader Jean-Marie Le Pen, who opposed the treaty.

The yeses have won the vote number-wise. But the lack of public support will weaken Europe's ability to carry out goals proposed by the European Community plan.

The treaty would unite the economics, foreign and defense policies, and currencies of the 12-nation EC by 1999.

Support for the treaty could make the EC a healthy competitor with the United States and Japan. And a little competition never hurt anyone.

France has pushed for European unity since World War II. Now the fate of Europe is in this country's hands.

A lack of public support for this plan could mean turmoil for the world's financial markets that have already taken all the blows they can.

At least Europe is actively trying to solve its economic woes. Americans are still waiting to be bailed out of this country's recession.

French citizens should count their blessings.

Spell it out

Passage would forewarn ROTC students

Some things deserve a warning label. Pregnant women who drink deserve to know alcohol may hurt their pregnancy. People who smoke should be told the chemicals in their cigarettes could lead to their demise.

And ROTC students who are homosexual should be forewarned that their sexual preference may cost them an education.

University officials and members of the Homophobia Awareness Committee are now making an attempt to spell out ROTC's policy banning homosexuals in the Undergraduate Bulletin.

The passage would tell students in black and white about the potential costs of enlisting in the ROTC program.

ROTC's policy goes beyond discrimination.

When students sign up for ROTC, they are asked about their sexual preference in a series of personal questions. If a student lies or is unsure about sexual preference, an official said, legal actions could be taken against that student.

If it is determined that a student lied about his or her sexual preference, the student will be asked to withdraw from the program.

Scholarship students who have finished two years of schooling will also have to refund the money spent on books and tuition.

The penalty amounts to a fine for being homosexual.

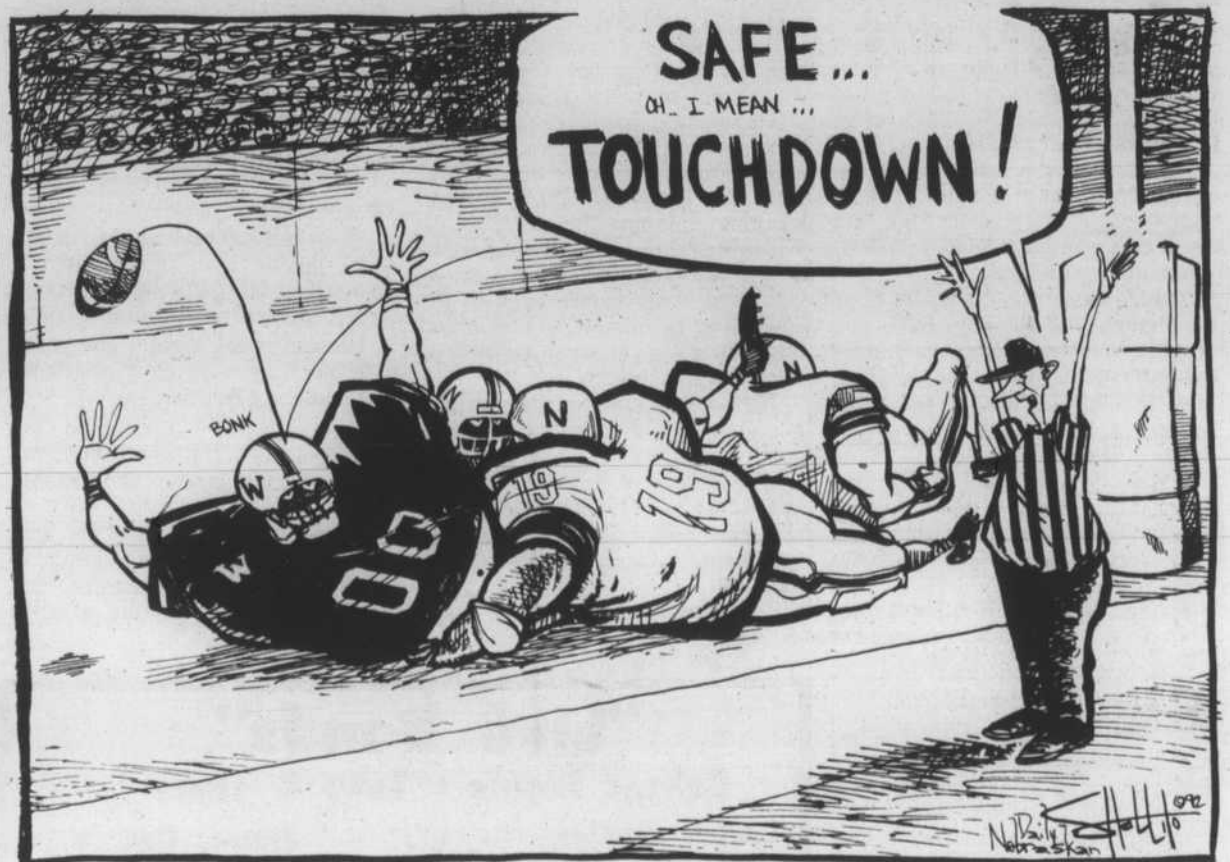
Students deserve a fair warning about the dangers of pursuing an education through ROTC as well as an honest declaration of the program's discriminatory policy.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Staff editorials represent the official policy of the Fall 1992 Daily Nebraskan. Policy is set by the Daily Nebraskan Editorial Board. Editorials do not necessarily reflect the views of the university, its employees, the students or the NU Board of Regents. Editorial columns represent the opinion of the author. The regents publish the Daily Nebraskan. They establish the UNL Publications Board to supervise the daily production of the paper. According to policy set by the regents, responsibility for the editorial content of the newspaper lies solely in the hands of its students.

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. The editor decides whether material should run as a guest opinion. Letters and guest opinions sent to the newspaper become the property of the Daily Nebraskan and cannot be returned. Anonymous submissions will not be published. 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.



KIRBY MOSS

Cultural bias provokes reflection

Here I am shouting the fury of my culture whose lone purpose to exist too often it seems is the eternal fight for social and economic inclusion.

"We demand more black professors!"



"We demand more black executives!"

"We demand more black politicians!"

One day a Mexican-American friend said to me: "What about Mexican-American professors? What about Mexican-American executives? What about Mexican-American politicians?"

Amid my shouts, I didn't even think of that. But to her, the idea was automatic.

As I stood there, naked in my cultural bias, I began reflecting.

Am I a racist bigot for not considering Latin folk as strong as I do black folk in the quest for a larger share of this country's wealth and power?

Before I continue, I'm well aware that I could substitute, in the place of Latinos, members of any culture — from Native Americans to gays to religious fundamentalists to fraternity members. But I'll save that discussion for a later column on the myth of multiculturalism.

After all, we are the dubbed "minority," or people of color, referred to constantly by the conventional wisdom makers. We're always grouped together for statistical purposes in the broader scope.

But individually or even culturally it seems we are human antonyms.

For example, I've watched selection committees in corporate and academic America divide across black and brown lines when it came to choosing employees and faculty.

Several candidates of color possessed sterling qualifications. But after careful deliberation, the decision still came down to a choice of black or brown to fill one or two set-aside positions.

Did both sides succumb to the old

saying that we are still fighting each other for such small pieces of the imaginary pie of prosperity? Who gets the slice? What does it depend on? It's a very complex and real question.

Here's another example of our differences. Several Mexican-American friends and co-workers have told me they check the "white" race box on driver's license applications and their license actually would read "white."

I wonder what would happen if I did that? Think anyone would notice?

Perhaps, in part, because of instances like these and some others, I've been prone to look straight past their Mexicanness and slice the society I live in into two halves — black and white.

But considering my friend's comment, when I now hear myself or any other person of color call a white person a bigot, I do a self-check on my own cultural cues.

Sticking to the literal meaning of the word, then I too am a bigot — and so are you and you and you... no matter how we try to deny it.

That's kind of hard to admit, but that's my first utterance in overcoming such individual beliefs about other people who are not like me.

It's all a humbling paradox of sorts, considering that I am a person of color and that I study different cultures as the foundation of my graduate program.

But learning about people from different cultures through passive methods like reading and listening to lectures — as ways to peer into and analyze their behavior and beliefs — from the sanctuary of the university is far removed from talking, working or shouting it out with people from different cultures.

In the classroom, I'm always doing deep mental dives into the murky theory of cultural concepts such as sociobiological evolution, for example, or pondering the cultural meaning of teeth marks on prehistoric bones.

I'm steeped in all of this world culture to my eyebrows and I had no idea that this is Hispanic Heritage

Month — I bet many of you didn't either.

I went to the Hispanic Heritage Festival two weekends ago. While I danced and laughed with the happiest of them, in the middle of it all I stopped mentally and looked around me into the faces of hundreds of brown folk.

Many of them dressed slightly differently than people in my culture.

They wore heavy cowpoke boots and black 10-gallon hats. Little girls, with dark hair and dark brown eyes, pranced around in red and white dresses adorned with intricate lace.

Most of the people there spoke a different language. Their music and their dance steps were unfamiliar and awkward to me.

In that setting, I was the unusual "minority among minorities." I felt lost for a moment, insecure because I didn't know what many of them were saying in their mother tongues. I didn't know the culture.

In that same moment, however, I felt warm and alive to be among their rich culture celebrating with them.

I wonder if they welcomed me as warmly?

That night, coupled with my Mexican-American friend's comment, I accepted the fact that we are culturally separate, black folk and brown folk.

Yet our commonality is that we fight for similar basic wants.

A little respect. A fair shake. Inclusion.

Of late, I'm realizing that people must look beyond skin color and culture to the one universal that links us all — we're human.

We all have to eat, sleep, die — and here in the United States, unfortunately, listen to the empty drone of presidential candidates. Outside of that is where culture comes in. Through it all, we just develop different ways of doing these three fundamentals.

Moss is a graduate student studying cultural anthropology and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Lincoln Christian

I am writing to explain why I felt the need to write the full-page ad warning the public about the Lincoln Christian Church (DN, Sept. 14).

I did not write it because of a "bad attitude" toward the church. I wrote about what I experienced when I attended the group. I wanted students to be aware and be informed.

Not one of the warnings I made in the ad is false. Ask them personally. They cannot deny it. Lincoln Christian members do not force anyone to attend their activities but will do anything and everything to persuade you to come.

They do this because they believe that we are all "lost" and they are the only ones "saved." The members believe in what they are doing and can't understand what they are doing wrong.

They don't know better because they are under mind control. The Cult Awareness Network of Chicago deemed this movement a cult.

Keep your independence and freedom. Guard your life. Stay away from the Lincoln Christian Church.

Mark Larson
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