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EDITORIAL

A question of trust

Quayle's inaccuracies clouding the issues

Dan Quayle is right. Bill Clinton has danced around some of the issues brought forward in this campaign with all the grace of a Mack Truck.

Clinton has swerved to avoid presenting Americans with upfront answers on the draft issue, his drug use and his activities abroad.

Give Quayle credit for calling the shots on that one. But it's the vice president who's wrong when it comes to just about everything else.

During Tuesday night's debate, the audience often heard the words "no, no" flowing out of Al Gore's mouth as Quayle time after time made charges he couldn't back up and incorrect accusations.

Quayle charged that the Democrats' spending promises would lead to tax increases for working Americans and that their environmental policies would eliminate jobs.

During the debate, Quayle misrepresented Clinton's stance on taxes numerous times.

He made reference to Gore's book on environmental policy. Quayle even went so far as to make reference to a specific page — 304 — and the tax increase, he said, that page entailed. According to a CNN report, the vice president must have missed something. The dollar figure on page 304 refers to Marshall Plan spending after



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World War II.

Quayle even took on Gore, saying the Tennessee senator supported a measure to benefit businesses abroad. Gore said Quayle was wrong. Gore should know. After all, it is his voting record.

Quayle didn't present the whole picture when describing the policies of the Clinton/Gore ticket. Instead, he polluted the air with half-truths. While trying to open voters' eyes to questions surrounding Clinton, he clouded their eyes with a pack of questionable charges.

But Quayle's attacks didn't start or end with the 90-minute debate. In a morning TV appearance Wednesday, Quayle repeatedly asserted Clinton tells lies.

"Bill Clinton has trouble telling the truth," Quayle said on ABC's "Good Morning America." "He doesn't come clean."

The Democrats, surprisingly, have not harped on the same charges. After all, Bush is the man who said: "Read my lips, no new taxes." He is the candidate who called himself the environmental president and then ignored the suggestions made at this year's Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. Bush is the one who claimed the title of education president, but supports a backwards plan on public schooling.

Quayle is trying desperately to label Clinton as anything but trustworthy. The vice president tries to paint Clinton as shifty, uninformed and above all else, a liar.

"The three words he fears most in the English language: tell the truth," Quayle said.

But there are four words that should make Quayle shake in his boots a little: Practice what you preach.

EDITORIAL POLICY

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KIMBERLY SPURLOCK

Working toward cultural diversity

Before I make any effort to dispel some of the myths and misinterpretations those few white students and others may have about the purpose of my columns, I must state clearly that I will neither retract nor apologize for the opinions I have stated in past columns.

As evident by the response to a few of my columns, some majority students are looking for a pat on the back. They seem more worried about receiving brownie points for having black friends and remaining silent in the light of injustice than anything else.

Martin Luther King Jr. wrote in "A Letter From Birmingham Jail," that to tread the middle of the road and not speak out against the injustices, you see, is almost worse than committing the crime.

It seems to me that some majority students, both young and old, fail to understand why minority students are embittered on this campus. Little do people realize, a lot of minorities feel this way because of the battles they were forced to fight in their younger years.

Too much time is spent perfecting a like-it or leave-it mentality, and not enough is spent trying to understand what makes minorities angry at society.

Personally, my experience growing up black in a predominantly white society has not been the most enjoyable.

Many majority students have faced hardships in their childhood lives. But my focus is on the ratio of the minority population to the majority population, who have faced such hardships.

There are times I wonder how I made it this far because many of my childhood friends failed to stand beside me.

I had no spectacular desire to succeed and make something out of myself; I didn't expect myself to fail. I just knew that I had succeeded and would continue to succeed.

I remember when I was in the fifth grade and I moved back to Nebraska from Nevada. In Nevada, I did very well in school. I received mostly A's.

But when I came back to Nebraska, I was automatically placed in the "B" reading group, which was the lowest and slowest reading group.

There I was with my friends, people who just so happened to be black like me, sitting at a small round table in the back of the room. We waited for our teacher to finish instructing the "A" reading group, who just so happened

to be white — surprisingly — and who sat in big-kid desks.

I was only 10 or 11, and I didn't know why I was placed in this reading group. I never told my parents, but I always felt less of a person than those in the "A" group.

After what seemed like an eternity, I was placed in the "A" group. Forced to leave my friends, I sat in the front of the room in a big-kid desk while they remained in the back.

I never thought about that incident until last year when I, along with two of my friends, were asked to speak on blacks and the educational system during Black History Month, at Southeast Community College in Beatrice.

That day at the college, I sat at a table in front of the audience and thought about what I would say. And I thought about the fifth grade.

Although I was placed in the higher reading group, I still remained behind the "A" group because I didn't have any knowledge as to what they learned prior to my being placed in that group.

I was mad because I thought about what could have happened to me; I could have lost all self-esteem and given up.

I think about my friends who were left in the "B" group. Now, years later, I don't see any of them in college. A few of them have babies, and others never graduated from high school.

I wonder, why I made it and they didn't? And although I did make it and continue to make it, I can't help but think about them.

It's not their fault they didn't get to where I am. It's not their fault they may not have had the will power to get here.

My fifth-grade teacher may not have consciously known what she had done. An apology is not going to change the situation in which my friends find themselves.

That's why I write these columns. To let you know what black people and other minorities go through — not only in the educational system, but also

in this nation and world.

My primary goal in life is to put something back into my community, which is in North Omaha, and to educate my people on the contributions and accomplishments our ancestors made to this world.

I'm on a mission to give those who are less fortunate than me the opportunity to get to where I am and beyond.

I see what this nation has done to my people and minorities, and I will not give up until I help them to regain knowledge of self by believing they can do anything they set their minds to.

I will give my friends the self-esteem they did not receive in school when they were younger.

I love my African heritage and people. I live for helping my people because I know from experience, that if we do not help ourselves, no one will.

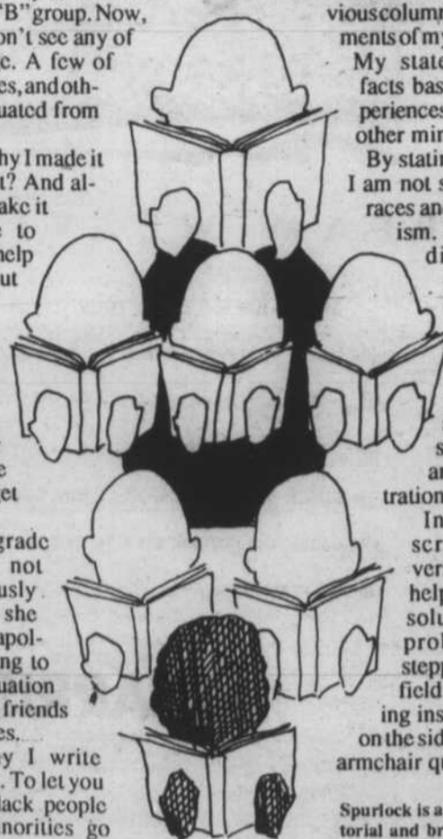
And younger readers, try spending more time actually listening to the racial debates and discussions that occur on campus.

You'll find that minorities are, and have been for years, trying to increase awareness about cultural diversity.

The statements in my previous columns were not figments of my imagination. My statements were facts based on the experiences of myself and other minorities.

By stating these facts, I am not separating the races and causing racism. True cultural diversity and enlightenment cannot be achieved unless the majority race understands the reasons behind the anger and frustration of minorities.

Instead of screaming reverse racism, try helping us to find solutions to the problems. Try stepping onto the field and participating instead of sitting on the sidelines playing armchair quarterback.



David Badders/DN

Spurlock is a junior news-editorial and broadcast journalism major, a Daily Nebraskan night news editor and a columnist.