

Daily Nebraskan
Editorial Board
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Chris Hopfensperger..... Editor, 472-1766
Dionne Searcey..... Opinion Page Editor
Kris Karnopp..... Managing Editor
Alan Phelps..... Wire Editor
Wendy Navratil..... Writing Coach
Stacey McKenzie..... Senior Reporter
Jeremy Fitzpatrick..... Columnist

EDITORIAL

'Plane' dumb

In tight budget times, regent trip is flighty

It was bad enough that some members of the NU Board of Regents got together to informally discuss President Martin Massengale's evaluation.

It is worse that at least two members of the board spent an excessive amount traveling to the little shindig.

The two, Regent Don Blank of McCook and Regent Chairman John Payne of Kearney, chartered a plane to fly to Lincoln on Nov. 15.

The \$819 flight, which was paid for with state funds, was more expensive than taking a commercial flight, driving to Lincoln or picking up the phone for a conference call.

To Blank and Payne, it was a matter of convenience. To the university it should be seen as financial frivolity in a time of tight budgets.

If the university is footing the bill every time a regent meets Massengale for coffee, administrators are looking at the wrong things to cut when they sit down at budget negotiations.

Blank justified the flight by saying the meeting was to discuss university business.

That may be true, but it was a personal discussion between Massengale and those regents who attended. If it were a business meeting, as Blank would have people believe, it would have been handled more professionally.

The meeting was questionable at best, but the flight was just plain hypocritical of Blank and Payne. At the same time the state is asking university students, faculty and administrators to prepare for huge budget cuts, the regents are winging their way across Nebraska on state funds.

If the regents want to have an informal discussion, they can reach out and touch someone. They don't have to reach into the university's thinning pockets.

U.S. aid

It's time to decide how to help Somalia

No more waffling. The United States needs to make a decision soon on how to aid Somalia.

For months the United States has wavered, meeting with officials across the world about the issue. Still no resolution has been made to send in U.S. troops to help.

At least the United States is considering making a move to help the starving people. Lawrence Eagleburger, acting secretary of state, said the Bush administration was willing to provide thousands of U.S. troops to try to ensure that shipments of food reached the mouths of needy Somalis.

It's a tough move. U.S. officials worry that such a relief effort could backfire militarily. They worry the effort could spark retaliation against relief workers.

But U.S. military officials already have determined such a move would be simple.

The 1,800 marines already in the Indian Ocean could land north or south of Mogadishu and secure the capital's port and airfield. Infantry could have its choice of that airfield or seven others to establish regional supply centers.

Politically, such a move could hurt the outgoing Bush administration and the incoming Clinton administration. Many humanitarians worldwide would be angered at the use of force to feed those who are starving.

Regardless of the consequences, Somalis need to eat. They deserve a chance at life. The United States needs to help them.

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.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sculptures

Recently there has been quite a bit of controversy about the sculptures around campus — especially the new Serra sculpture, "Greenpoint." I can see that it is already a successful work of art because it has stirred a lot of comments and opinions.

This is exactly what art is supposed to do. It is supposed to challenge the viewer to form ideas and opinions as to how it makes them feel, whether it be good or bad. There really is no wrong answer contrived in the viewers' minds as to why the artist did what he did. That's the beauty of it.

In a world of either black or white, it's nice to still have some gray areas to let the mind wonder a bit. A person is able to make his own answer as to why or how, and know that there is no wrong answer.

Many of the younger people's comments on the sculpture were somewhat ironic. Many of them will find that their ideas and comments will be met with challenge from others as they go on through life.

Maybe then they can find the mental release that comes from being able to look at a piece of art and know that the ideas they form about it in their minds are never wrong.

Only then will they be able to appreciate the work of others. I would like to thank Neubert for all of the hard work in getting through all of the administrative mire to bring us something new to wonder about.

Tony Pelan
DBI employee

Editor's note: DBI installed "Greenpoint."

Racism

What's becoming more evident in today's world? We've heard about the riots in Los Angeles. We've heard about the Rodney King beating. We've heard about the African American students who were singled out in an anthropology class at UNL.

It's evident that racism is definitely a key focus in the world, and with everyone so aware, it's hard for a minority not to think that when something negative happens to him or her that it comes from a result of racism.

As a minority, I would often catch the "it's because I'm black" syndrome. But what would you think if you were turned down by a black employer for a job for which you felt you were well-qualified? What happens when you walk into a clothing store and you're constantly being asked, "May I help you?" by a black salesperson? Would you still feel that it was because you were an African American? I don't think you would. It might even result to "it's because I'm a male or a fe-

male."

We may sometimes use the color of our skin as an excuse for a lot of the things that happen to us. Not to say that nothing we encounter is racially stemmed because that would surely be a lie.

We can't constantly have the mental block that our color works against us because it's surely an asset. As long as you face any situation with confidence you will surely overcome.

Willie Hibler
freshman
education

Free speech

There's a lot of talk these days about freedom of speech, one of the things guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution. Most of us, I think, proudly and gladly affirm such a freedom. However, I guess it's really just a vague ideal, the definition of which we can't all seem to agree on.

So be it. It may be a vague ideal, but at least we are a people with ideals. Now please allow me to express one aspect of my interpretation of this freedom of speech. This freedom extends to the choice of language one desires to speak.

I realize that for some sense of national unity, a country needs to have one or several official languages. I concede that I can't send a letter written in French to the Daily Nebraskan, for example; thus I am writing this in English, the official language of our country. However, it really irritates me when I hear native English speakers making comments such as, "Why don't those foreigners speak English? This is America, dang it!"

Yes, even some of my friends, family members and co-workers think it's rude for internationals to speak their native languages in public. I think this is a very unkind and inconsiderate attitude.

People from other countries bring to us the richness of their cultures and ways of thinking that are immeasurable, and their languages are part of this richness. For God's sake — we expect the whole world to buy our cars, listen to our music, watch our movies, house our soldiers and drink Coca-Cola — can't we at least let them be themselves when they come here?!

America is going to have to wake up to the fact that we aren't the center of reality — China and Lesotho and France are just as important.

So, to all of you, my friends who speak languages beyond English, I would like to apologize for the unkind attitude of some of my fellow Americans; I myself like to speak with friends in French and in Spanish, and I'm trying to learn some Chinese.

Daniel E. Talkington
sixth year
French and Spanish

Star Trek

Jennifer Ernisse's commentary ("Learning Star Trek Philosophy," DN, Nov. 18) on "Star Trek: The Next Generation" opened the door for me to add a few comments. While it is "only a television show" and should be treated as such, it is also true that television delivers and reinforces a visual image of and for our society.

There are some deep problems with the show: The far-off future still has two white male characters in the power positions (the Captain and Number One).

The two leading black male characters are presented behind masks of sorts. The actor playing the intelligent and capable Geordi La Forge is hidden behind his visor. The actor playing the aggressive Commander Worf is hidden behind a ton of makeup.

The leading female characters are cast in traditional care-giving roles; we have a female doctor and a female counselor. Whoopie Goldberg's character (Guinan) is portrayed as possessing great personal power, yet her power is largely self-made and exists outside of Federation/Academy power structure.

Treatment of the affairs of the crew is often portrayed in a skewed fashion. Female characters are more likely to be portrayed as pursuing love. Counselor Troi became involved in a dangerous affair that jeopardized a mission, her status and possibly her crew. Yet when Commander Reiker similarly pursued a love affair in the androgynous planet episode and completely violated the Prime Directive of non-involvement, he seemed to escape similar culpability.

We also have to watch the insufferable Wesley. The young white son of Dr. Crusher, coming up the pipeline, groomed by Picard, La Forge, Reiker and Data to be an Academy graduate and probably someday earn a Captain's chair — perpetuation of the chain of command. I see no female counterpart, no black male or female counterpart, not even an alien counterpart.

The show is a lot of fun. It has often rendered thoughtful treatment of situations. There have been some strong recurring female characters such as Ensign Ro, an extremely capable woman currently enjoying guest status. There has also been Lt. Commander Tasha Yar, who was killed off some time back; Worf now fills her position. However, the show does give in to the stereotypes and myths of today. We television watchers need to be aware of that so we don't similarly take such stereotypes with us into future.

A.E. Krejci
staff/research technician