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EDITORIAL

Noble mission

Military goal is to feed hungry Somalis

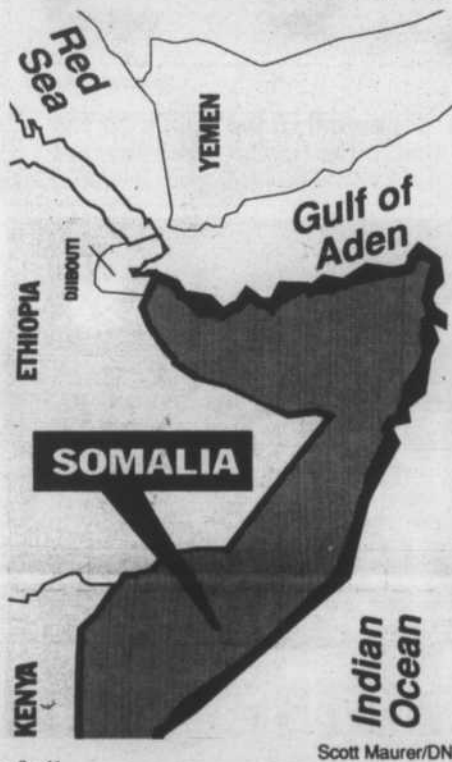
Somalia is about to get its best present ever as the United States military embarks upon the ultimate missionary mission — helping the hungry.

For some time now, people all around the world have been sending food to the starving people in the African nation. Unfortunately, groups loyal to the opposing warlords in Somalia's civil war have intercepted much of the food.

Agencies already aiding the hungry estimate that half of the food sent to Somalia so far has been stolen.

Finally, after the deaths of 300,000 Somalis this year, the United States has decided to send 30,000 troops to the African nation to "restore some semblance of order," Defense Secretary Dick Cheney said.

The plan, as late as it comes, is admirable. This time, the United States cannot be accused of stepping into a regional conflict with its own ulterior motives. If there is bloodshed this time, it will not be in the name



Scott Maurer/DN

of oil.

But this time is no simpler than previous U.S. involvements.

President Bush ordered the relief effort, intended to secure Somalia's major ports and airports, on Friday. The plan was laid for American troops to enter the region, establish peace and begin distributing food.

But, at the same time, relief workers were forced to withdraw from areas that need volunteers as well as food. By Sunday, relief workers had already sent out 100 trucks loaded with food that has been sitting on the docks of Mogadishu's port for a month.

Nearly 2,000 Marines were making their preparations to come ashore. They will be joined by soldiers from France, Egypt, Turkey and Mauritania. The troops will not fire unless they are fired upon.

For now, the United States is not in for the long haul.

"If you're looking for the United States to stay until all Somalia's problems are solved — it's not going to happen," Cheney said.

The mission is admirable. The United States must not get mired in the political battle in Somalia. American troops headed to Africa are to ensure that the food sent to the African nation makes it to the people who need it.

This is not a political mission, and the United States should not embroil itself in a violent morass.

The United States has the means to establish the peace — quickly. It is the role of the United Nations to help keep it.

The No. 1 goal is to feed the hungry and save the starving. The troops have the potential to save 2 million Somalis from starvation.

The United States cannot afford to forget its objective, and the mercy mission must not turn into a tangled, bloody battle.

EDITORIAL POLICY

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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

'So be it'

The solution to the human rights problem is simple. We are all human, and everyone should respect and accept the diversity of our Earth's peoples.

African, Asian, Caucasian, Christian, Buddhist, homosexual, heterosexual, male, female, whatever. Who cares about the basic labels? We are all human.

Yeah, yeah, I know some people might pass off what I'm saying as hippie drivel, but the world would be a hell of a lot better if we all just smile at one another and say, "so be it."

Beyond that, maybe we should all look into someone's eyes and put ourselves in their place. Feel the prejudice, the hurt and the hatred aimed at all of us from someone who doesn't understand an individual personal culture.

Our Earth is just one planet in an infinite number of planets. Why should we be so divided? What happens when we make contact with another world? Will we still fight amongst ourselves? Our planet must unite, but it has to start small. First, within yourself, then among friends, later in a community, a city, a state, a country, a continent, then a planet.

So during National Human Rights Week, look inward and open yourself to the diversity surrounding us.

Michael Svoboda
sophomore
broadcasting

'Dark side'

I must admit I was very amused by the recent Sam Kepfield column concerning Thanksgiving ("Stop the guilt at Thanksgiving," DN, Dec. 2). In fact, I have been amused by Kepfield's columns all year long. Now, don't get me wrong. I personally like Kepfield and have a class with him. We just do not share the same views on certain issues.

I got my first union card when I was 17 years old. When I was 19, I went to work in the coal mines in western Wyoming, and when I was 28, I was elected president of the Western Energy Workers Union. I have been active in the Democratic Party and worked on many campaigns and issues in support of the party. Needless to say, Kepfield and I don't view things the same.

I must admit I have enjoyed his columns. In fact, I have kept most of them in a clipping file on my living room table. Maybe it is a fascination with the "dark side" or just a need to

explore and learn about a new and different way of thinking. I don't know. But I keep them and read them often.

Last week after coming from class, I discovered that my dog had gotten into the garbage. Now the little mutt knows better, and I felt he needed to be disciplined. Without thinking I grabbed up all of Kepfield's columns and wrapped them in the recent issue with the column about Thanksgiving. Then using the column in sort of the same club-like way that Sam does, I beat the poor unfortunate animal.

When I came to my senses, I stopped to see if I had hurt old Shep. I now notice two things about him that I think are a direct result of the contact with the material. First, whenever he moves, he seems to veer wildly to the right. Second, whenever he speaks, his knees begin to jerk.

The power of the press is an amazing thing.

Donald Wade Davis
sophomore
Teachers College

Graduation prayers

I would like to commend ASUN Speaker of the Senate Andrew Loudon's clever and provocative adoption of cultural-diversity speak in his ASUN resolution that was voted down last week.

The resolution said that keeping prayers in the graduation ceremony would "offer a cultural and educational experience by displaying different religions' traditions."

Really. One might as well include a McDonald's commercial or a top-10 hit single. Or yet another inspiring passage from the writings of a dead, white, Christian male. Or some shopping center Christmas music.

I would like to ask Loudon just who he thinks he will be educating. It seems to me that most of us are well aware that a lot of people think there is a God. We have had ample exposure to Judeo-Christian chanting, if you ask me. Further inundation is not necessary, thank you.

I thank the nine members of the commencement committee who voted against the resolution for bearing in mind the non-religious and the differently religious. I thank them for understanding that exposure to the familiar is not educational.

If Loudon wants the ceremony to appeal to the majority, he should at least be honest about it. To couch his agenda in the jargon of the self-righteously open-minded is transparent and silly, if not a little bit dorky.

Pohl Longsine

senior
mathematics, computer science

Multiculturalism

Does Kimberly Spurlock ever think about what she is writing? I couldn't believe it when I read, "Malcolm X did not condone violence but believed in self-defense."

It seems a strange coincidence, but the Klan claimed to be against violence except in cases of self-defense, too. I'm sure you will agree the Klan is an evil, hate-driven organization. Malcolm X was a militant radical.

I see, Abraham Lincoln didn't free the slaves. I guess the Emancipation Proclamation of 1862 and '63 were meaningless. The fact that Lincoln endorsed the 13th Amendment must seem insignificant to you. Just to show you that Lincoln was more than a political opportunist, look at his record as a public servant.

Lincoln first went on the record against slavery in 1837 as a state senator in Illinois. During his term in the U.S. Congress, he attempted to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia. After the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act, the future president was drawn back into politics where he fought the movement to expand slavery. This is what led to his joining the Republican Party and his winning the party's nomination for the presidency.

Lincoln could have been conciliatory and given the South what it wanted, but true to his nature, he put principal ahead of all. I don't apologize for loving justice, and I don't apologize for all the white boys who lost their lives securing the freedom of slaves.

If you think Lincoln wasn't a hero for all Americans, there's something wrong with you. He was a great man, not because of his race, but because of what he did. The last country to officially abolish slavery was Angola in 1960. Slavery does still exist, but not here.

As for the color of Jesus, who really cares? I have always believed the teachings of Jesus and that he gave his life for our sins were more important.

My problem with Spurlock is that you think of every issue as black vs. white. Every group of people has contributed to our magnificent society. To pretend the only groups of significance are the blacks and whites is a disservice to all. I hope you take advantage of the multicultural opportunities on campus — you need them.

John Shuman
junior
Spanish, anthropology