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**Nebraskan**  
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EDITORIAL

## Power struggle

Regents, commission should work together

**S**tupid. It is the only word left to describe the ongoing conflict between the NU Board of Regents and the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education. The two groups' continuing battle over UNL's peer group has moved beyond "cute," "silly" and "annoying" to downright dumb. Without even trying, the two groups have successfully proven that the university needs less bureaucracy. But by working apart the two groups have given UNL additional headaches.

The commission and the board — both blessed with some amount of oversight in the dealings of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln — have been bickering back and forth about the school's peer group for nearly a year.

Unlike most bureaucratic bodies, the two groups have both achieved quite a bit in the peer group search process. In fact, they have done too much.

But the situation should have been settled long ago — when the regents proposed a peer group composed of Colorado State, Iowa State, Purdue, Missouri, Colorado, Kansas, Minnesota, Illinois, Ohio State



David Badders/DN

and Iowa. That would have been enough if the commission hadn't stepped in with an almost completely different group of its own last week. The commission's group also includes Colorado State, Iowa State, Purdue, Missouri, Colorado and Kansas. But it added Auburn, Kansas State, Louisiana State, Oklahoma State, Georgia and Tennessee to replace the other schools.

Now, two groups exist — the regents' and the commission's — and they will both remain because the two groups can't reach a compromise.

Obviously that will lead to future problems. Both the regents and the commission work with the university when it is examining its budget, salaries and programs.

UNL Chancellor Graham Spanier and NU President Martin Massengale have both said they would abide by the regents' peer group, and that leads to further questions.

How will the university handle its dealings with the commission? Is UNL going to have to do additional work to get its proposals past the commission even if the regents have already approved them?

Already the commission has interfered in the establishment of the College of Fine Arts at UNL — a plan that had already been approved by the regents. The problem, which amounted to nothing more than a financial misunderstanding, only slowed the process a bit, but it is indicative of the problems when the power of two groups overlap. If the commission was set up to coordinate postsecondary education it should do what it can to accomplish that, but it should work with — not against — the existing structures.

Considering the actions of the regents in recent years, it seems that it would be difficult to find a more inept group of people to lead the university. But the commission, thus far, has succeeded.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Staff editorials represent the official policy of the Spring 1993 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.



JEREMY FITZPATRICK

## Working together will pay off

**F**rom all the controversy that has surrounded Bill Clinton's health-care reform proposals in the past weeks, you'd think the president was proposing a sweeping program that could change the direction of American politics.

Perhaps it's because Clinton is doing exactly that.

The United States has been asleep domestically over the past 12 years. The decade was a period in which America went through a regrettable time of rest from active politics as well as compassion for disadvantaged Americans.

Ronald Reagan liked to say in the 1980s that it was "morning in America." Unfortunately, if you are asleep during the day — as Reagan really often was — it might as well be night.

But now America seems to be waking from that sleep. We are cutting the deficit and considering the most significant social program in our history since Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal.

Our politics over the past 12 years have been based on self-interest. Americans were encouraged to do as well as they could for themselves and forget the interest of the country and their fellow citizens. The end result was supposed to be that a minority of the population would do very well and that would mean the rest of the population would prosper as well.

The policy worked. Well, at least half of it did. A minority of Americans did very well. The rest of the country just didn't get to share in the opportunity.

The philosophy of the 1980s was everyone for themselves. If people were in economic trouble, it was perceived to be their own fault.

That philosophy bankrupted the United States and left Americans with domestic challenges that are worse



**By paying more now, we will eventually pay less. It's an investment, as Bill Clinton is so fond of saying.**

than they've been in 20 years.

Now we are beginning to realize that America can only prosper if we all work together. More than 250 million people working individually failed in the 1980s. Perhaps now if those same people would work together, we would discover there is little we could not accomplish.

The fact that we are now contemplating a national health-care system is evidence that a new attitude is starting to take hold in America. We are beginning to realize that we can only guarantee health care to individuals if we are willing to assume responsibility for providing it together as a society.

Health-care reform might mean we will all have to pay higher taxes. But it will also mean that people who have major health problems will be covered and not be instantly put into bankruptcy.

By paying more now, we will eventually pay less. It's an investment, as Bill Clinton is so fond of saying.

Of course, we should not rush into health-care reform. Such an immense

social program will have an impact on our society for many years. Once in place, it will not be easily dismantled.

We must make sure the program is right the first time because it will be so difficult to correct. But we should not allow the difficulties or complexities involved make us shy away from acting. The issue cannot wait. Neither can the millions of Americans who have no health care and live one major illness away from poverty.

The months ahead are likely to be stormy politically as America considers Clinton's health-care proposals. Old systems never simply lie down and die. Those with a stake in the way America was in the 1980s will fight. Those who are doing well will resist helping the many who are not.

But health-care reform will pass. It is inevitable that some change must come to a system that is not providing for far too many Americans.

We should hope that change will be representative of a larger change in the country. "Greed is good," the motto of some in the 1980s, has been shown to be a recipe for self-destruction. In the short term, it has its rewards. In the long term, it costs America a very dear price in the budget deficit we will be paying off for decades to come.

Maybe the goal of Americans will change in the '90s from individual interest to general responsibility. We would be a richer — not poorer — nation if we could come to perceive that Americans will either move forward together as one nation or stand in place as individuals.

We are lucky to be the generation that is coming of age at a major turning point in American history. With the Cold War over, we have the opportunity to move America forward or fail to do so. That is our choice.

Fitzpatrick is a junior political science major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Response

I've been trying to figure out what to say about Sam Kepfield's article on the beleaguered white male (DN, March 31, 1993) or whether it deserves the dignity of a response. All I can come up with is: No, Sam, you don't have a clue. We white males are not being persecuted unless you consider it your right to play bull in a china shop. I've had black and female friends routinely run across sexist and racist behavior that has denied them jobs for which they were qualified (jobs which less qualified white males received). In comparison, this "re-

verse discrimination" is merely anecdotal.

Get a clue. The idea that we are the only ones here is not viable anymore. The world isn't fair, and we will have to be just another group on whom unfairness falls. All the breaks aren't going to some other group; they are being distributed among all qualified people now. There are those among some minority groups whose rhetoric is not helpful in creating a better tomorrow, but these minorities of minorities don't have the violent and real history David Duke's movement does.

Oh, another thing. Let's put an end to this idea that there are no scholar-

ships or organizations specifically for white people. Perhaps only mud-headed racists like Duke prefer the generic term "white" in their organization names, but these things exist in abundance for Euro-Americans. How many Irish, German, French, Italian or other such ethnic-American organizations are there?

The issue is not will white males be the next great oppressed group, but will they be able to grow up and play fair in a world comprised of others. I'll try. And you, Sam?

Trevor McArthur  
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