

Daily  
Nebraskan

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EDITORIAL

## Waste hazard

Warehouse would help bring compliance

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln has a big problem with its hazardous waste. UNL stores combined radioactive and hazardous waste on East and City Campuses. The waste is generated by chemistry and biochemistry research, janitorial services, the art department and the UNL Health Center.

The Environmental Protection Agency cited and fined UNL last fall for improper disposal of a mixture of radioactive and hazardous waste. University officials are now working to bring UNL into compliance with the federal regulations that have been violated.

UNL wants to build a new, larger warehouse that would store the materials for up to a year. Currently, UNL is violating EPA regulations by holding the waste for more than 90 days.

However, there is no place in the United States that will take the mixed waste. That poses another problem for UNL.

Some say the waste disposal on campus is nothing to worry about. But as an EPA official said, "We don't bring complaints for minor violations."

Obviously this waste is causing UNL many problems. UNL has to deal with temporary disposal of the waste and find a place to ship it permanently. Some also are trying to make the problem a smaller issue than it appears to be.

While many of the details have not been disclosed because they are still under investigation, clearly UNL needs to address the problem and take it seriously.

Any hazardous waste problem is something to be concerned about, and it is disturbing to wonder what kind of hazards the students and faculty at UNL may face while at UNL.

## Battle back

U.S. fight for democracy left unfinished

As the United States considers deepening its involvement in Bosnia and Somalia, it should consider the example of Panama.

On Monday, demonstrators shouted "Democracy is trash!" and "We want justice!" as they protested the acquittal of a general and six soldiers in the 1985 killing of a leading opponent of former dictator Gen. Manuel Noriega.

Protestors in Panama City looted shops and set up barricades to protest the decision. Police dispersed protestors in David, Panama, with tear gas and bird shot and arrested 22 people.

Former Maj. Gen. Luis Cordova, an ally of Noriega, and six collaborators were accused of the torture and decapitation of Dr. Hugo Spadafora, a leading opponent of Noriega. Spadafora was tortured and decapitated not far from David in September 1985 after he secretly entered the country from exile in Costa Rica to raise opposition to Noriega.

Noriega was deposed in December 1989 by a U.S. invasion and is now serving a 40-year drug sentence in the United States.

Despite Noriega's apprehension and conviction, justice apparently is not being served in Panama. The citizens are rioting and expressing their discontent that democracy is not working as promised.

The United States has an obligation to help Panama because the United States is responsible for the current state of affairs in the Latin American country. It was the U.S. invasion in 1989 that promised democracy, and it is time the United States made a real commitment to help that promise come true.

EDITORIAL POLICY

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EDITOR 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.

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SAM KEPFIELD

## Foreign policy in wrong hands

It's almost enough to make you wish for the days of the Evil Empire.

In the post-Cold War world, the United States finds its foreign policy being formulated by CNN and run by the United Nations in such Third World backwaters as Somalia and Bosnia. We are there for no reason other than the United States has been led by its nose into these situations by a media more interested in sensationalism and feel-good journalism.

Bosnia, the first such challenge to erupt, is a classic study in disaster being courted by good will. When the breakup began over a year ago, the initial reaction of the Bush administration was to do nothing. It wasn't our problem; let Europe handle the problem if it chose.

A year later, the Clinton administration is issuing warning after warning to the Serbs that they'd better shape up or else. American fighters circle low over Serbian artillery positions while CNN reporters solemnly intone about the meaning of it all. The Serbian gunners laugh, as well they should.

The best efforts of the media haven't drawn the United States into a ground war in the Balkans—yet. At first, it was the politically correct war with tales of Muslim women being raped by Serbian soldiers and forced to bear unwanted children—a clear violation of the vaunted right of choice. Then it was pictures of children needing medical care who could not be evacuated. The media played a sick lottery, centering on one hapless tot while dozens died all around.

Three hundred U.S. troops are in Macedonia, and there is talk of several thousand being dispatched to Bosnia as "peacekeepers" under U.N. control. Absent is any definition of victory, no conditions other than some elusive concept of "peace."

Somalia presents perhaps the clearest example of the New World Order, and America's role in it, run



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amok. CNN again led the way, broadcasting pictures of Somalis starving to death, picking one country out of a dozen or so where this is a regular occurrence. American troops were dispatched—CNN landed on the beach with them—after public outcry with the oft-heard promise of "home in six months."

Last month the Clinton administration sent 400 Army Rangers in, and the only tangible result so far has been the capture of some U.N. employees—not in itself a bad thing, but not their intended mission. The capture of the warlord Mohamed Farrah Aidid, is becoming a Gilbert and Sullivan comic opera.

Our initial mission, to feed the people, is over. Now, the United Nations and State Department talk of "nation-building" in a country that clearly does not want any U.S. presence. U.S. troops have died in this hazy exercise of power; do we want civilians building a nation to suffer the same fate? More importantly, is it the duty of the United States to build anything, gratis, overseas, while we let huge tracts of our inner cities resemble these Third World hellholes?

There are troubling common threads in both of these engagements, not the least of which is the lack of any definition of victory. Nation-building is fine for graduate seminars, but victory in these cases can only be achieved by occupying every square inch of territory, disarming everybody, imposing martial law, ruling the country as a conquered province and hoping the natives will be ready for self-rule

in a decade. This necessitates a commitment of several years and hundreds of flag-draped caskets arriving at Dover Air Force Base. Sure, it's colonialism, but did this sort of thing happen when the sun never set on the British Empire?

The second point is along the same lines. If U.S. troops are deployed, they should not be under the command of the United Nations. The only thing U.N. troops have shown themselves good for is target practice. Why the United States should place its men under the military geniuses of Denmark or Portugal is incomprehensible.

But the most worrisome thing about this affair is that Americans may soon pay for their blindness in choosing a commander-in-chief totally ignorant of, and contemptuous toward, the military. Clinton's bartering away control over our military, the most precious badge of sovereignty, is inexcusable. Ditto for his willingness to bow to the braying of the media that elected him, and involve the United States in a no-win war.

The United States, in the wake of the Cold War, has the luxury of being able to pick and choose her engagements and should do so wisely. With no Soviet Union competing for dominance in a region, lives must not be wasted in an effort to make a pack of ex-draft dodgers and peace protestors feel good and redeem their patriotism.

Kepfield is a graduate student in history and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Gun control

Sam Kepfield's argument against gun control (DN, Sept. 1) was correct in every detail.

Gun control will have no affect on reducing violent criminals' access to guns. Criminals will always have guns. You may scoff at this remark, but the fact that criminals are "lawless" people is what makes them criminals.

William Nosal  
freshman  
chemical engineering

### 'Covert liberal'

I have a sneaking suspicion that Sam Kepfield is a double agent, a covert liberal whose conservative diatribes are designed to discredit the

creed they purport to defend. How else to explain the mind benders in his recent column on gun control (DN, Sept. 1)?

Kepfield trots out that tired historical argument about American freedom deriving from the right to bear arms, but immediately plays it (and his own credibility as a history graduate student) for laughs by claiming that "the reasons for World War II, the American Revolution and the War of 1812 were that we didn't want to be like (England and Japan)."

He also dutifully recites the NRA's line that the carnage in America would simply continue if guns were outlawed because those inclined to use them would turn to knives or even rocks, then shrewdly subverts his own argument by mentioning the massa-

cre at a McDonald's a few years ago, knowing full well his readers will appreciate that a lunatic armed to the teeth with rocks poses rather less danger than one armed with assault weapons.

Finally, he affirms the need for "a reaffirmation of the principle that human life is precious," then cleverly mocks his high moral tone by concluding the sentence with a blood-thirsty call for "swift and sure punishment"—meaning let's execute more people.

Sorry to blow your cover, Sam, but the game is up.

Dane Kennedy  
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history department