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Nebraskan
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EDITORIAL

Rumor mill

Expedite investigation to end speculation

The beating of Boon-Chung Ong, a University of Nebraska-Lincoln student from Malaysia, has been talked about since it happened shortly after midnight Oct. 17. Rumors have been spreading rampantly about who did it, why it happened and if the beating was racially motivated.

UNL police have identified three men as suspects in the assault; two are not students, and one is. All three are black.

One of the nonstudent suspects was cited on third-degree assault charges in Omaha Monday night. The suspect was a juvenile and was not identified.

UNL Police Chief Ken Cauble said another suspect was interviewed by police Tuesday night. Cauble said the man, who is not a UNL student, offered additional information on the assault and was not cited at the time of the interview.

Cauble said he would not make additional arrests until he was certain of the suspects' involvement.

Rumors have spread about the assault. Why did the athletic department assist in the investigation? Some rumors have said that football players were involved. Until this matter is resolved, the rumors will continue to spread.

UNL police need to expedite their investigation so this matter can be resolved. The police need enough time to fully complete their investigation, but they also need to fully disclose the facts of this case as soon as they can.

The rumors about this case need to be stopped. Only after the case is fully brought to light will speculation be replaced by facts.

OTHERS' VIEW

Chalk one up for Lutherans. A new report from the leadership of the Lutheran Church offers a welcome reality check to religious crusaders in the moral wars.

The report tells Lutherans — among other things — that masturbation is healthy, homosexuality is biblically justifiable and using condoms is not sinful, but morally imperative.

When the pope issued statements about human sexuality over the summer, he took the opposite position on these issues. He lambasted homosexuality and birth control, and he launched a broad attack on humanistic values. The Lutherans' message of tolerance is a happy alternative. Their stance toward human sexuality is a model for a harmonious relationship between religion and life.

In order for democracy to function, there must be a certain level of tolerance. Protection of free speech relies on the tolerance of offensive speech. Equal opportunity in the secular world relies on tolerance differing lifestyles — and religions.

Whenever a moral line is drawn dividing good from evil, tolerance is threatened. On the other hand, that line is drawn all the time. Democracy exists in the delicate balance between moral dichotomies and forbearance.

The moral code handed down by the Lutheran church seems to embrace democratic tolerance. By accepting masturbation, homosexuality and birth control, the Lutheran Church accepts and tolerates people as they are.

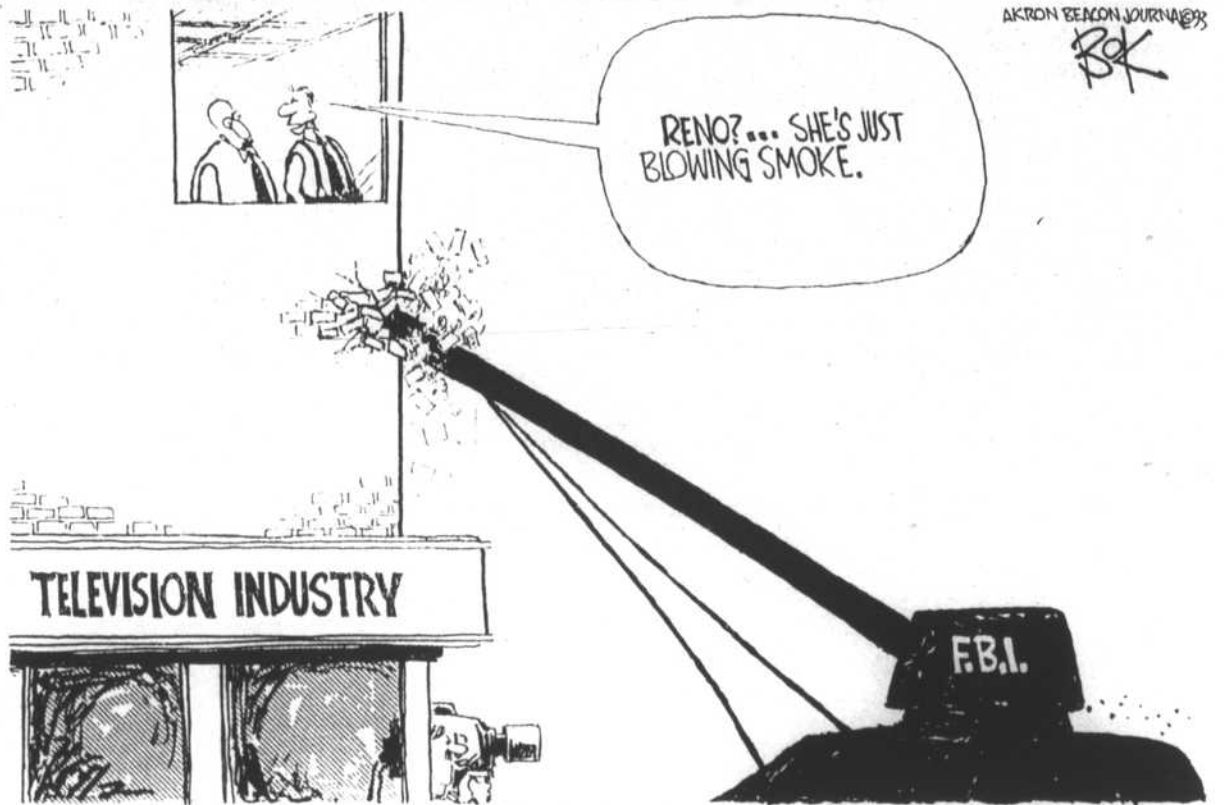
— The Minnesota Daily
University of Minnesota

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.



SAM KEPFIELD

Discrimination not color blind

Imagine, if you will, 10 white guys wearing Tony Lamas, hub-cap-sized belt buckles and cowboy hats. After taking in a Garth Brooks concert, they find themselves in front of Broyhill Fountain and discover a black student. They proceed to beat him up, without saying a word, and then leave in a battered Ford pickup.



When we are willing to scrap our justice system and the concept of innocent until proven guilty and turn it into yet another affirmative action ghetto, the game is up.

Is there doubt in anyone's mind just what the reaction to this would be?

Protest marches by the Afrikan People's Union in front of the fountain. Pious statements by Graham Spanier that this sort of racial incident would not be tolerated. Eric Jolly and his merry band of quota hawks would cite this as yet more evidence of racial "backlash" in our fair city. Sen. Ernie Chambers, he of the torn sweatshirts, would no doubt be thundering away against racism in the halls of the Legislature, the editorial pages and in person. High-sounding editorials would be running here in the Daily Nebraskan, decrying racism and demanding the heads of the perpetrators. There would be campus workshops on racial sensitivity, as if we needed more.

Is any of this happening when it's a case of black students beating a Malaysian student? Apart from protests by international students, no. It has to make one wonder about the larger, hidden prejudices at work here.

This is not a racial incident, according to UNL Police. No racial epithets were hurled, no racial motive existed for the attack. Fine and dandy, I'm willing to buy this explanation for now, until I see better evidence. But why is an official explanation that this is an act of "random violence" complacently accepted in this case and not where the victim is black and the suspect white?

Need anyone be reminded of the uproar in January 1992 when the Daily Nebraskan ran photos of Scott

Baldwin after his arrest, being loaded naked and handcuffed into a police car? As plain an example of racism as there could be, protesters said. It was an obvious and overt attempt by the Daily Nebraskan to keep blacks psychologically in slavery. Never mind that handcuffs are standard procedure for violent suspects such as Baldwin, to keep them from further injuring on police officers.

It doesn't even take a beating to start cries of racism. Exactly one year ago, UNL Police tried to question black students enrolled in an anthropology class with Candice Harms. They were questioned because Harms had been seen talking with a black male the day before her disappearance.

Good police work? Not according to Chambers, who immediately called it an "outrageous, racist" move. When UNL Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs James Griesen replied that if the description had been for a "6-foot-6 blond guy, police would have been looking for him," Chambers called for Griesen's resignation for such an "insensitive" remark.

Nationally, we have the situation in Los Angeles. Four cops are tried and acquitted, and South Central riots. The cops are retried, and two are convicted on federal civil rights charges, to the cheers of the black leaders.

Meanwhile, Damian "Football" Williams and Henry Watson are acquitted of most charges. Are there any

calls for a civil rights trial? Does the white community in Simi Valley riot? Of course not. But we do hear that the verdicts "kept the peace," a racial quid pro quo.

So it seems here as well. After so many charges of racism, the absence of protest at the beating of Boon-Chung Ong is apparently designed to keep the peace, to placate Chambers, Jolly and the diversity crowd. That is where the real assault is taking place.

When we are willing to scrap our justice system and the concept of innocent until proven guilty and turn it into yet another affirmative action ghetto, the game is up. If we can rationalize allowing reverse discrimination in such matters as making up for past lynchings or beatings, then America and the Constitution are headed for the ash heap.

A few unenlightened individuals may cause these incidents, but most of us, be we white or black, aren't out-and-out racists. Moreover, racial animosity is not an exclusively white, heterosexual European male phenomenon. Treat black on Asian violence the same as white on black violence, but don't start making assumptions and inferences where they aren't warranted.

Here, as nowhere else, do we see the true agenda of Spanier, Chambers and Jolly. It's diversity, but only for the few, not the many.

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

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Canada

It's clear from Todd Cooper's column (DN, Oct. 21) that he's not seeking a diplomatic post anytime soon! As we North Americans travel our continent, we can often find those who resent their nearest neighbors even though the majority of us may be courteous, hospitable, understanding, tolerant and even greatly interested in the cultures, economies, values and aspirations of their neighbors. Having lived as a U.S. citizen employed by the Canadian government in Lethbridge, Alberta, Canada for six

years, I can say with some authority that the vast majority of Canadians were most hospitable and courteous to this family of "landed immigrants."

Canada has extremely strong ties to its immediately southern neighbor because not only have baseball players immigrated, but likewise, historically, pioneering family members of U.S. citizens. Despite our periodic challenges in reaching amiable trade agreements, there is a profound respect between the people of the United States and Canada. We are credited with having the longest undefended border in the world.

The expansion of the National and

American baseball leagues into Canada was a tangible recognition of the great interest Canadians have in baseball. That expansion provided employment for additional players whose efforts probably create at least as much economic activity in the U.S. league towns as they do in Montreal and Toronto. Where would the United States' segment of professional hockey be without the continuing importation of Canadian talent?

Lavon J. Sumption
resource development specialist
Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources