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EDITORIAL

Just say NAFTA

House should pass free trade agreement

The House of Representatives will vote Wednesday night on the North American Free Trade Agreement, which is designed to eliminate tariffs and other restrictions on trade between Canada, Mexico and the United States over 15 years.

NAFTA has become a political lightning rod. Ross Perot has used his opposition to the trade agreement as an avenue for free publicity. His opposition to the agreement is probably one of the best indicators that it would be good for the United States.

The debate over NAFTA is complicated, and the potential benefits or drawbacks are difficult to predict. But NAFTA would be good for Nebraska and the United States. And if the agreement does not work, the United States can withdraw from it with six months' notice.

Tuesday the Associated Press reported the vote count at 206 votes for the agreement and 200 votes against. But the margin is not clear because 28 representatives are undecided.

The vote will be close. Perot and the forces opposed to NAFTA will use all the rhetoric possible to prevent the passage of the agreement. But Perot's tactics should be ignored. The eccentric Texas billionaire has clearly shown the only future he is interested in is his own.

Congress should vote to approve NAFTA. Free trade between the United States, Canada and Mexico is in the best interest of the country.

Trade policy is a difficult and complex issue. But NAFTA is not permanent. If the agreement does prove to be faulty, the United States can withdraw and in only six months' time.

Bucking the tide

One court gives hope to gays in military

Three appeals court judges appointed by Jimmy Carter seem to be some of the few legal officials who have the right idea about gays in the military.

The three unanimously ordered the U.S. Naval Academy to graduate a midshipman who was expelled after saying he was gay and directed the Pentagon to place him in the ranks of Navy officers.

The U.S. Court of Appeals said Navy rules demanding Joseph F. Steffan's expulsion from the academy "solely because he admitted his homosexual orientation are not rationally related to any legitimate goal." These judges are not following the guidelines set by other legal and executive officials who have supported the Pentagon's new "don't ask, don't tell" policy.

For example, last month Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor had the chance to delay implementation of the "don't ask, don't tell" ruling. She could have denied an emergency order urging her to overrule a lower court's ruling that banned sexual-orientation discrimination in the military. But the high court passed the emergency order by request of the Clinton administration.

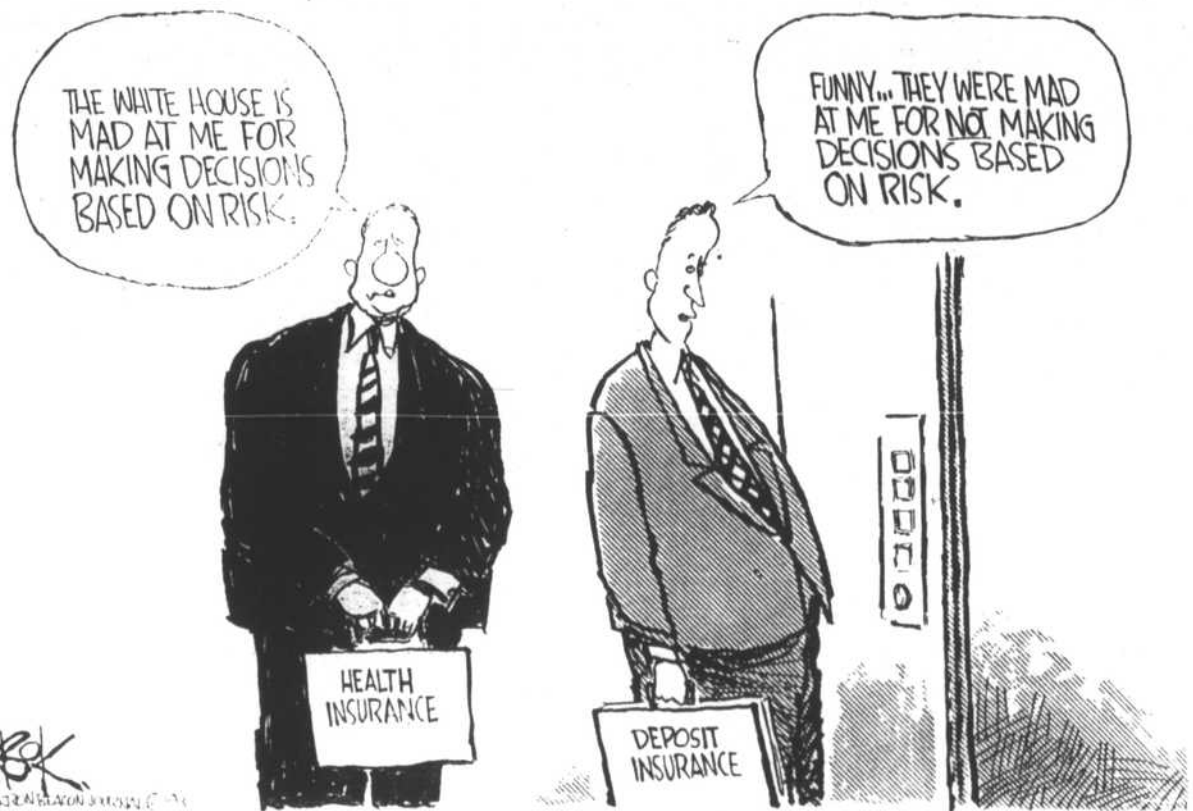
At least the appeals court for Washington, D.C., has some desire to prevent discrimination in the armed forces. The rest of the legal system, as well as lawmakers, should keep this example in mind when considering a policy on gays in the military. Luckily, homosexuals still have some hope of defeating discrimination against them as long as some judges are open-minded about this issue.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Staff editorials represent the official policy of the Fall 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.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Stereotyping

Mr. Moran, in your response to my letter (DN, Nov. 15), truthfully I do not care what fraternity you belong to, or whether or not they haze. If you had read the correct letter instead of making up your own, you would see I did not once criticize or stereotype any and all fraternities. Merely I talked about Brent Burmoor's statement to put image above humanity.

If you can cite for me one generalization I made toward fraternities, I'd appreciate it. Because right now, I think you saw my name in one letter or the phone book and then responded to a different one.

Jeff Bomberger junior actuarial science

learn a little more about the greek system before he decides to pronounce judgment.

Susan C. McBride sophomore communications studies, chemistry

Agriculture

The approval of Bovine Growth Hormone for use in milk cows (DN, Nov. 15) is a tragic and infuriating addition to the crimes of animal agriculture. This drug, which increases milk production by up to 20 percent, causes cows' udders to become so heavy and swollen that they can drag on the ground. Many cows suffer from this additional genetically engineered baggage, accidentally stepping on their udders resulting in infection. This, added to drug-induced heat cycles followed by artificial insemination, adds to an already miserable life for a true slave of humanity.

It is a lie that cows need to be milked by humans. The sole reason cows produce milk is to nourish their calves. For humans to drink milk, most cows are impregnated as often as possible throughout their lives, their calves are taken away, often to become veal, and the milk produced for the calf is pumped by machines.

BGH, animal science's latest mutation of nature, should be banned, as well as all drugs and techniques that are injurious to animals under the "care" of humans. It is the only humane thing to do.

Scott Ferguson sophomore Spanish, English



James Mehling/DN

Bellevue

Having grown up and lived most of my life in Bellevue, I feel qualified and compelled to respond to Alan Phelps' criticisms (DN, Nov. 15).

Conclusions drawn about an entire city and its residents without even having lived there are going to be faulty at best. Our college, museums, schools and unique history give us an identity separate from Omaha. Bellevue is a self-contained city with its own police and fire departments, business district and historical attractions. S.P. Benson administrates the departments that provide all the services of an independent city such as the streets department, parks and recreation department, public works department, permits and inspections department and the library. The reason why Bellevue is trying to adjust its population count to reflect the newly annexed areas is so it will be able to receive the state and federal funds due a city its size.

Phelps only has to attend Bellevue's annual Arrows to Aerospace Festival to realize community spirit is indeed alive and well in Bellevue. I would caution that making negative generalizations about people and the place they are from with no experience or evidence to back him up can only hurt the credibility of the Daily Nebraskan.

Brent Kumor junior French, Western European studies

Rape

In response to the editorial stating the Daily Nebraskan was far left for printing that it seemed the jury did not come to a fair conclusion (DN, Nov.

15), I have to agree with the ideology of jurors not basing decisions upon facts presented in the media. The American media is not objective.

We live in a nation that gives more jail time to a convicted 7-11 bandit than to a convicted rapist, child abuser or incest assailant. A California man received probation for his first conviction of rape of a minor and only received three years in prison for his second conviction of having sex with his 8-year-old daughter.

Our court system treats rape victims as assailants and thinks rape in marriage doesn't exist. Spouse abuse has barely receives recognition. A woman's only protection is a restraining order, and she is 75 percent more likely to be hospitalized after leaving her abusive spouse.

An advocate for abused women was reminded in 1983 by a Boston judge about the recognition of the "rule of thumb," which was once a law stating a man could beat his wife with anything thinner than the width of his thumb.

A woman does not cut off a man's penis because she just enjoyed their act of sex. She was not looking for a token of love. The reality is that husbands beat wives, men rape women, victims lash out at assailants, and our court systems do not protect the victim.

Kim McMahan junior sociology, political science

'Status quo'

Carlson, wake up! It's people like you who perpetuate stereotypes and, thus, the "status quo" you speak of. Yes, some greek houses have their problems, as do some individuals.

Let's go one step further. If students in one off-campus house get busted for drugs at a party, does that mean all off-campus students have wild parties and drugs in their homes? It's interesting that most reasonable people find it ludicrous to stereotype people by skin color, yet college students find it OK to stereotype fellow students by living units.

If you want to know what the greek system does for the university, ask our administration. They've helped us exist for 100 years and don't seem to be making any plans for our disbanding. Don't blindly flail out at an entire system just because you, as a freshman, haven't gotten acquainted with enough individuals or chapters to have a clear idea what it's all about. Rush is open to every student at the university — black, white, Asian, Native American, rich, poor, Christian, atheist — and you have the choice to try rush or not. However, ignorance on your part is no excuse for a weak attack on a concept you haven't tried to understand.

Melissa Castro senior broadcasting