

Daily Nebraskan

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EDITORIAL

University unity

NU's fragmented structure needs fixing

One university with a strong president. As NU Board of Regents chairman, Charles Wilson said this would be his goal. If Wilson continues to seek this goal, the University of Nebraska may finally begin to move forward.

In the past, the roles of the president and the Board of Regents have been blurred. It has been unclear whether the president has the authority to get things done.

Wilson said he wanted to realign the existing structure. The board should function through the president, he said, not independently or directly with the chancellors.

Now, NU's governing structure sometimes functions like a poorly built machine. Its different parts — the board, the president, the chancellors and the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education — act out of time. They grind against each other and waste energy.

When something goes wrong or nothing happens at all, it's difficult to pinpoint which part has failed — which part needs replacing.

By clearly defining the roles of the board and the president, and the relationship between the two, NU's administrative machine may work more efficiently.

The president would be better able to do his job — to take responsibility for the direction NU takes and to be held accountable for his actions.

NU could stand strong and united before the legislature and the state of Nebraska as an institution worthy of Nebraskans' pride and respect.

One university with a strong president.

Primary target

Reducing arms should still be top priority

President Clinton promised \$50 million in aid to Belarus Saturday. The assistance includes \$25 million to help the country carry out its pledge to surrender all 81 of its old Soviet SS-25 nuclear missiles.

The money could have been spent on many unsolved problems in the United States. But it is a good investment in the security of the United States.

In fact, Clinton should spend even more money if it would result in nuclear weapons being dismantled anywhere. Ukraine has also agreed to dismantle its missiles, but Russia is still fully armed.

Agreements have been negotiated to disarm the United States and the former Soviet Union, but they are not enough. The political instability in Russia has made that country vulnerable to a takeover by right-wing former communists. And those communists are hostile to the United States.

During Clinton's visit to Belarus, for example, the Associated Press reported that communists marched around a statue of the founder of the KGB and waved banners, one which read: "Yankee Go Home."

The Cold War is over, but its weapons remain. The possibility that the world — or more likely, a major city — could be destroyed by those weapons still exists.

The United States needs to make a stronger effort to eliminate the threat of a nuclear exchange between nations. Such an exchange is extremely unlikely between Russia and the United States now. But governments change. President Clinton needs to make significant arms reduction his primary foreign policy goal.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Staff editorials represent the official policy of the Spring 1994 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.

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PAUL KOESTER

Overpopulation choking world

Do you know what the No. 1 problem is in society today? Well, it's not crime. It's not guns or drugs. It's not even a lack of family values. No, it's a much more subtle problem, a problem that affects all 5.3 billion people who inhabit this small planet.

Overpopulation — a problem so large that it was given six syllables. Count them. Six. That's also how many billions of people this earth will soon have.

Of the earth's water resources, only 1 percent is fit or available for human consumption, and that 1 percent is being increasingly polluted by agriculture, industry and human waste.

For each of the 5.3 billion humans that exist today there is only about one acre of land with the right climate and soil suitable to grow crops for human consumption. In addition to this there are only two acres of permanent pastureland per person to raise livestock. Two acres isn't much, considering it takes more than ten times the amount of land to raise a pound of animal protein than a pound of plant protein.

Not to rain on anybody's parade, but the earth's population is predicted to double over the next 50 years. With today's population, 40,000 people starve to death daily, and one billion are starving or significantly undernourished. Unequal food distribution is the problem now, but in 30 or 40 years, it is doubtful we will be able to raise enough food to feed the masses, especially with the effects of global warming.

Is it ethical to give birth to more children in this country when millions are starving at our doorsteps, especially when there are thousands of children just across the oceans waiting for adoptive homes? I shudder when I see people fighting to eliminate sex education and contraceptive distribution here and abroad.



Mahatma Gandhi once said that if the nation of India were to live the same lifestyle as those in the United States, they would strip the land bare like locusts.

You may not think overpopulation is a problem because you can leave the city and see nothing but large expanses of virtually people-free farmland with groves of trees every here and there, or go to the desert and go miles without seeing anybody. Sure, people may not be smashed against each other, but because humans need basic resources such as productive farmland for their survival, people need much more than elbow room. Worldwide, most remaining arable land is marginally productive, and this small amount is under increasing pressure to be used for urban projects such as housing or landfills.

Although our nation is less densely populated than many others, virtually all our land is being used, mostly to raise environmentally exhaustive livestock. Our population is experiencing a positive growth rate, and immigration pressures are increasing. Unfortunately, we haven't even learned to take care of our own people yet.

How can we say we are not overpopulated when we consume 30 percent of the world's energy and produce massive amounts of pollution and waste?

All humans need basic resources for their survival. Humans need clean water, air, metals, trees, energy and fertile land for producing food and fiber. More people mean a greater environmental impact, especially if

each of these people consumes a large amount of resources or produce a large amount of pollution. For example, it is estimated that one American has the same environmental impact of 40 Eastern Indians. These Eastern Indians are mostly vegetarian, consume less than 2 percent as much electricity per person, and don't drive cars everywhere.

Mahatma Gandhi once said that if the nation of India were to live the same lifestyle as those in the United States, they would strip the land bare like locusts. We in the United States are living it up while we can with little concern for future generations. If Bill Clinton's new world economy succeeds, Gandhi's statement will soon be put to the test.

Even now the ill effects of overpopulation are evident. Poverty and racism are on the rise, and people are fighting over land and jobs all over the globe. Indigenous peoples are rapidly losing what's left of their lands, and deforestation and extinction of species are rampant.

Planet earth is rapidly losing its ability to give people a life with elbow room and security for all. As an old Chinese proverb says: if we don't change the direction we are heading, we may end up where we are heading.

Koester is a senior soil science major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Bike proposals

I would like to voice my opposition to the no ride zone and bicycle registration that has been proposed by the Parking Advisory Committee and will next be considered by the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska on Jan. 19.

If college students are required to pay \$5 to ride their bike to campus it WILL discourage from riding to campus. This, in turn, will encourage people to drive to campus and add to the current parking problem.

Also, I fail to see how putting a sticker on my bike is going to do anything to reduce the chance that my bike will be stolen. I see this as just another chance for the government to attempt to control something that is inherently free of constraints. If my bike is stolen, that little sticker on the frame will do nothing to stop the thief from pulling all the parts and selling

them.

The idea that a sticker will aid the police in returning the bike to me is moot at best considering the small number of stolen bikes that are recovered.

A better solution would be to empower the current bike police to allow them to slap a fine on those few maniacs who are a menace on a bike. The vast majority of those riding across campus are not a problem and should not be penalized for the actions of the few.

Jim Brill
UNL employee

Orange Bowl

I know everyone is tired of hearing about the Orange Bowl, but I have one last thing to say. Sending a tape in to the officials makes Nebraska look like a big baby to the rest of the nation. I realize Bill Byrne did what he

thought was right, and I'm certainly not suggesting that we weren't wronged. But haven't we suffered enough? Let's just focus on the positive. Our Cornhuskers played a fantastic game to the bitter end.

I agree with Tom Osborne when he said we did win, because we won respect. Let's not ruin our new-found respect by crying about what could have happened.

I can admit I've done my share of "what if's," but now that I've settled down and wiped the tears from my eyes, I've realized something. It doesn't matter if we won because we looked like a team worthy to be called one of the best in the nation.

That, my friends, is the respect we deserve and shall demand ... no matter how lousy the Orange Bowl officials were.

Jennifer Nyp
junior
human development