

OPINION

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Daily Nebraskan

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University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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Right turn

But Johanns goes too far with cuts

Lincoln's government could be moving to the right side of the abortion debate in attempting to be on no side.

Lincoln Mayor Mike Johanns made a bold decision by recommending that the city take Planned Parenthood and Natural Family Planning off the city's budget. But Johanns is only half on target.

The mayor, in announcing his decision this week, said he wanted to put the city in a neutral position. But in effect, he is taking a side by cutting the groups' funding.

With a Planned Parenthood abortion clinic on the horizon, Johanns took a step in the right direction. Abortion does not deserve the public's money.

Should the city council support Johanns' proposal when it sees the budget in June, Planned Parenthood would lose \$12,000. That is about 1 percent of the agency's \$1.1 million budget. Natural Family Planning would lose \$5,000.

Planned Parenthood's grant from the city went to its sex-education budget for programs and materials. However, the money was only 10 percent of its spending in that area.

The funding is not that significant to the area. If anything, a decision to remove funding has symbolic importance.

Planned Parenthood does perform important and affordable health care services, provides birth control and gives counseling. Those areas should be left untouched, and they will because the public's money does not go there.

But Natural Family Planning should not lose any of its funding. Natural Family Planning is about as far from abortion as you can get. It is a worthy program and should continue to be supported.

Quotes of the week

"This perverted lifestyle is contrary to the laws of God and man. It is a crime against nature and will inevitably bring doom to those who practice it."

— Fred Phelps, pastor of the Westboro Baptist Church of Topeka, Kan., on homosexuality.

"All of the sudden, you begin to see people wanting things the way they were in the Southwest Conference."

— NU football coach Tom Osborne, on SWC commissioner Steve Hatchell being named the first commissioner of the new Big 12 Conference.

"We remain close and in great support of one another."

— Part of a statement issued by Julia Roberts and Lyle Lovett announcing they were separating after 21 months of marriage.

"People aren't aware what the Contract With America entails. The more they are aware, the more they will be against it."

— Carl Klarner, member of the Nebraska Progressive Party, at a protest against the Contract With America.

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must be signed and include a
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'Bigoted display'

In my four years at UNL, I've seen some pretty asinine demonstrations, ranging from neo-conservatives to pot smokers. Of them all, I doubt any one of them could top the utterly stupid, moronic and incredibly bigoted display for prejudiced faith I witnessed Tuesday evening across 12th Street from the Lied Center.

Pastor Fred Phelps and his entourage of homophobic zealots put on a demonstration so sick and devoid of compassion and decency that I doubt Pat Buchanan or Jerry Falwell could orchestrate anything equal to it.

Although the display itself was theological puke at its finest, what really appalled me was the age of some of these protestors. I spotted at least four children in the crowd who couldn't have been more than 12 years old.

What kind of parents turn their own children into hate mongers who use God to excuse their bigotry? A moral diet of prejudice and extremist rhetoric is a deplorable way to raise a child.

Scott Carpenter
senior
English

Protest

First of all, the only things that can result from the "preachings" of so-called Pastor Fred Phelps are hatred, violence and people turning away from God in fear of being associated with fringe extremists like him.

Second, God does not hate. God loves all equally, be you homosexual or homophobe. God wants us to be free of sin, but since we are all imperfect, we fall short. To engage in homosexual acts is a sin, but God forgives sins, therefore even homosexuals can enter the kingdom of God if they choose the right path.

Finally, Paula Lavigne's one-sided portrayal of the story ("Lied show sparks protest from anti-gay

group," March 29) is disgusting. Her interview with Phelps' 7-year-old daughter displays the same journalistic ineptitude as Connie Chung in her coaxing of Newt Gingrich's mother.

Robert B. Nickeson
senior
physics and astronomy



Amy Schmidt/DN

'Klds were used'

I am writing in response to the article "Lied show sparks protest from anti-gay group" (March 29).

I find it truly pathetic how parents use their children to fight their battles or spew their beliefs for them. Instead of teaching their children to hate, Fred Phelps (a pastor, no less) and his church should teach the acceptance and love that God attempts to profess.

As for the parents of those children, fight your battles on your own — with your opinion. And have respect for your children by allowing them to have theirs.

Kristen R. Johnson
sophomore
general studies

Double standards

This country was founded on the principles of justice, equality and

freedom as written in the Constitution. Why is it that the act of an American citizen caught red-handed while illegally crossing international borders is termed as an innocent mistake and that of a non-U.S. citizen is called a spying mission?

What will happen if a Russian weapon contractor crosses the border of the United States illegally? Will this be an "innocent mistake"? Everyone knows the answer. We will go to great lengths to find out all the secrets and details and make sure that justice is served.

Why not take full responsibility for all the "innocent mistakes" we have committed and make sure to bring all those responsible to justice?

The path of double standards leads to injustice, bigotry and hatred. Let us use our resources to make peace and prosperity in this world and not destruction and chaos.

Abbas Ali
graduate student
mechanical engineering

Sin

We are writing in response to the protests outside the Lied Center Tuesday evening. As Christians we would like to voice our disagreement with the statement "God hates fags."

Although we do not condone homosexual behavior, none of us is righteous. Because all sin is equal in God's eyes, we are sinners just as homosexuals are. God doesn't hate homosexuals, he hates sin.

We hope that the demonstration did not reflect the idea that all Christians feel the same way as the protestors stated above. Jesus died for our sins. We are saved not by our righteous deeds, but by God's grace.

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