

OPINION PACKAGES

OUR VIEW

Red ink

Deficit decline means diddly to national debt

The federal deficit for the current fiscal year is expected to be the smallest annual imbalance in seven years.

This is to be the fourth straight annual decline after the deficit peaked at a record \$290.4 billion in 1992.

But don't start celebrating yet.

The red ink so far this year is 15.9 percent below the \$171.1 billion during the same period of 1995, the Treasury Department reported Monday.

If you do the math, that should bring the deficit for fiscal 1996 to about \$144 billion.

That's no pocket change.

Should students have any interest in the deficit?

You'd better believe it.

But each year's deficit is just a drop in the bucket when you consider the big picture — the big ugly picture otherwise known as the national debt, the sum of all this country's annual deficits, plus borrowings from government trust funds.

Though it may be slowing, the \$5.2-trillion monster is still growing, and those of us now getting into the work force are going to be the ones to pay for it.

Interest alone on the debt is at \$323.3 billion for the fiscal year so far. Just last month \$23.1 billion worth of interest accumulated.

Got your interest now?

How about this: Your share of the federal debt is \$19,651. That's enough to cover four years at this university and have enough left over for a textbook or two.

And that number isn't getting any smaller.

If no other issue gets your interest this election year, the money you are paying into this vacuum we call the federal government should.

It's still the economy, stupid.

“
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Tracking the national debt

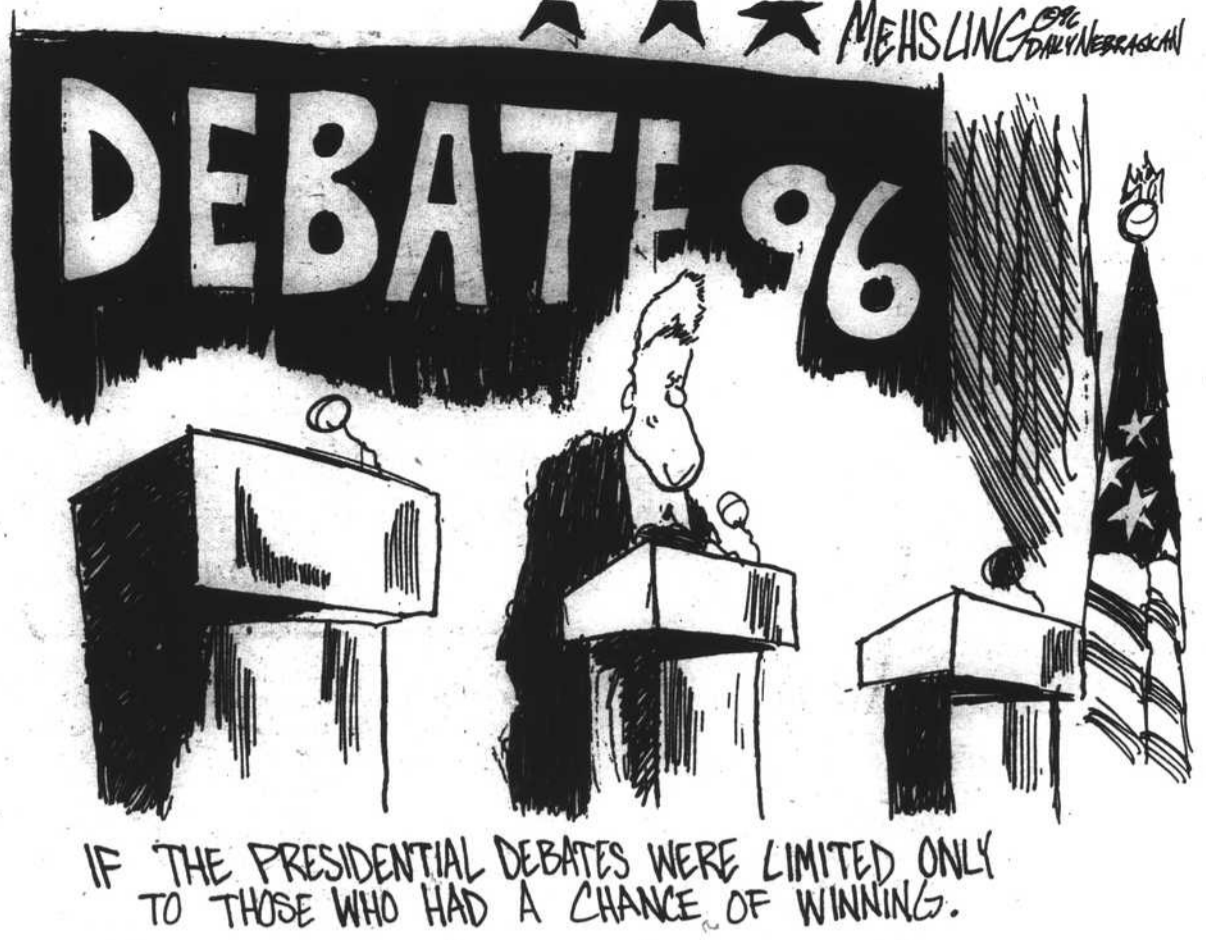
U.S. national debt increased in Aug. 1996 by: \$41,802,998,838

New total: \$4,221,794,998,841

Your share of the federal debt is \$19,651

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MEHSLING'S VIEW



A FRIEND'S RESPONSE

I am writing in response to the column "Life weighs in heavier than image," written by Anne Hjersman in the Daily Nebraskan's Health and Fitness Special Edition (Sept. 20, 1996). Because Anne was not able to contact me before the column was published, I have decided to write and clear up a few points that have bothered me.

I am the friend who Anne writes of whose life, she says, "was spiraling into a mad cycle of bingeing and purging." I feel my experiences as a bulimic should be expressed differently than this. My eating disorder was not my entire life. It may have seemed that way at the time, but when I stepped back and put everything into perspective, it was just a small part of my life that I could control. I learned it was OK to ask for help, but that I was in control of my own life, and I could only get real help when I was ready.

Anne goes on to write that I thought I was in control of my situation. Six years ago, when I began bingeing and purging, I thought I was in control. This is what perpetuated the ritual. However, as time and the illness progressed, I realized I was completely out of control. I believed I was so out of control that there was no help for me. Then I began to believe if I was perfect, I would have control. This neurotic thinking pushed me to achieve more and demand more of myself in all areas of my life. However, I could never attain my goal and therefore was never in control. I realized perfection is not what life is about. It's about stopping to smell the roses, and laughing — whether you are fat, thin, short, tall, black, blue, green, whatever. Just relaxing and putting things into perspective.

The part of the column that bothered me the most was the contradiction between the headline and its contents. Although the headline, "Life weighs in heavier than image," sounds great, not once does the column mention anything about getting past what our society considers an ideal body

LETTERS



AARON STUCKELBERG/DN

image and to what is really important: the personality inside.

I was hurt that Anne had dramatized my illness, as I am still in recovery. My eating disorder is not my life, and I hope an obsession with thinness does not become hers.

Kimberly A. Hovseth
senior
psychology

FAIR WEATHER FANS

It is Monday after the loss, and I am driving back to Lincoln from my 24th Husker game in a row. On the radio I hear negative comments about the Cornhuskers coming from the mouths of so-called fans.

I found it strange that these fans were so quiet in Tempe, despite the fact that a large portion of Sun Devil Stadium was wearing red. The silence was almost as deafening as the student section was during the opener against Michigan State.

It's obvious the fair-weather fans have plenty of voice left to run their mouths off. I'm sickened by the lack

of vocal encouragement our fellow student athletes have received from these apathetic fans.

My voice is still hoarse from yelling "DEFENSE," in a vain effort to disrupt the ASU quarterback. The only person I disrupted was a Nebraska fan in front of me who had the audacity to say I was making too much noise! That comment typified the attitude our team has received for their efforts.

Ask yourself this question: If your son was on the team, would you tell him how disgusted you were with his performance, or would you give him words of encouragement?

Every Nebraska football player and coach gives his time and effort into making this program the best in the nation. No individual player, fan or game will ever change the integrity of the program that Tom Osborne and his coaching staff have built.

I personally challenge every true Husker fan to make this Saturday's game the loudest ever! I promise the team will respond.
GO BIG RED!

Rob Hessman
junior
finance

ALAS, A LOSS

No more winning streak, no number one, Lost our bragging rights, it ain't so fun.

Lost our pride, lost all of our fame, But most of all, we lost the game. We can't seem to run, the offense is lost, Who should we blame, Green or Frost?

It is just a game, it is not the whole world, But watching them lose almost made me hurl. We won't get the three-peat, oh my dear, Guess we'll just win the title again next year.

Nicholaus Yager
freshman
math

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