

OPINION PACES

Our VIEW

Testimony of shame

Airing Clinton tapes will hurt the nation

When President Clinton's taped testimony before the grand jury is released today, it won't sit idle.

Instead, most major TV networks and national news channels plan to snatch it up as quickly as possible and play it in its four-hour entirety Monday morning, afternoon and night to a nation of prying home viewers.

As of Sunday afternoon, CBS, CNN, MSNBC and C-SPAN planned to show the whole length of his testimony, while ABC and NBC planned to air special news segments with excerpts of his testimony.

Shame on them.

With the help of the media, with each minute of our fallen president's droning, viewers will see the epitome of partisanship and political terror.

Ken Starr's report was explicit enough for readers to know our president lied and for impeachment proceedings to proceed, if need be.

The testimony's release is nothing but a blatant partisan scheme to further embarrass and weaken the president. It's the gruesome outcome of political vultures ready and willing to bury grubby beaks in a dead man if it could result in their own political gain.

Nevermind their gratuitous action will weaken the presidency in the minds of Americans for decades to come. Nevermind their action will further sour Americans on our highest leaders by exposing their selfishness and partisan abuses.

Clinton seemingly dug his grave, having possibly perjured himself before the grand jury. Now Republicans are digging him up again for no reason other than to let voters peek at his dead body.

Viewers also will see a dangerous legal precedent, set by allowing supposedly secret grand jury testimony to be released and broadcast nationwide.

When mob top dogs testify against other mobsters, they are told their taped testimony before the grand jury will not be released. Often — like Clinton — they are told the tapes will be destroyed. Will they be willing to testify, now they know some grand jury tapes can be broadcast freely?

Viewers also will see a failure of journalists, members of the so-called fourth estate, to fulfill their role as watchdogs of the government and political process.

The release of Clinton's taped testimony is big news, and the media are responsible for covering the news thoroughly so Americans can form prudent political, economic and social opinions.

But those obligations do not obligate national TV news to broadcast the whole of Clinton's testimony.

The media should call Congress on its partisanship and refuse to air the taped testimony in its entirety for the sake of the country.

If the media don't help voters check the rantings of politicians, who will?

Mook's VIEW



Change of focus

Efforts of campus officers need to be reconsidered



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In an effort to make campus safe for students, this highly motivated and disciplined bunch patrol campus ready and willing to "protect and serve" at a moment's notice. Of course, I am referring to the highly revered men and women of the University Police. As I shovel the sarcasm from my computer screen, I am forced to question the objectives of the campus police.

I once looked at these individuals as a nuisance, believing that the only ability that they possessed was the innate aptitude to appear engaged, all the while accomplishing absolutely nothing. I was convinced that these jovial officers were nothing more than improvisational wizards at impersonating diligent enforcers of the law. I now realize that the community service officer is a hard-working individual who simply follows the misguided agenda of the dreaded "man."

For example, last year after a lengthy and exhaustive Saturday night of weighing the pros and cons of a Marxist economy on a society, I strolled to my car to sample the sweet nectar of a Bandit cigar.

After a few moments of torching my lungs with its robust fumes, I was accosted by two of UNL's finest. As the two men in blue explained to me that they had had a report of someone smoking a foreign substance in the parking lot, they politely asked to inspect the contents of my last cigar. I obliged, suggesting that at least one of

them probably had something better to do. And after I explained that I did not do on Fridays and heroin on Saturdays, they scurried off with my name and social security number, never to be heard from again.

This is exactly the kind of thing I'm talking about.

I had hoped that this would be the year that set their proverbial priorities straight. Yet, they stray from the path of common sense, which apparently is out of style, and attempt to curb drinking on and around campus. Being the sincere and generous individual that I am, I have formulated a few suggestions for this misguided defense system.

Forget about slowing alcohol use on and around campus. It is quite a novel idea, but halting drinking in these aforementioned zones is like me trying to tackle Dan Alexander in the open field; it ain't gonna happen.

Despite administrative efforts to purge the campus of alcohol and institute academic rigor, UNL will always be, to some extent, an institution of and about football, a grossly oversized greek system, and alcohol, among other things.

Lincoln is chock full of highly intelligent individuals who are begging for more out of the "college life" than a degree. They're looking for a good time while spending their last few years outside the walls of the real world. If that means excelling in Intramural Binge Drinking rather than spending many a lonely night studying for the next exam, then so be it.

By taking a hard-line position on alcohol use, administrators and CSOs alike are simply exposing themselves to the reality of a let down, even with a grant.

In attempt to thwart off the inevitable massive parties, our lovable CSOs have joined forces with the Lincoln Police Department. Teams of officers will now strike fear into the hearts of all partygoers. The tandem also will be implementing the use of "undercover officers" at these parties.

Now, this is a blatant insult to my intelligence.

Even in a drunken stupor I can pick out the cloaked enforcer with the large glass filled to the brim with a "mixed" drink at a multiple keg party. The stench made by the combination of coffee, doughnuts and Preparation-H is wretched enough to send even the most severely impaired individual diving for the bushes.

Take the joker who is poorly playing the role of a college student, give him a uniform, and throw him into the parking lots. Forget about ticketing, the people in parking do a horribly grand job at that. Rather, insure that my vehicle is safe from thieves and the ever present hit-and-run.

More importantly, feverishly patrolling these areas would add an aura of security that is lacking. If the little blue safety lights were doing it, women wouldn't have to fear campus at night and pack their standard issue pepper spray 24-7. They're not referred to as "rape lots" for no reason.

Go ahead and remove your focus from parties and students drinking, and firmly place it on that of drinking and driving.

Folks, here is a true problem that you can invest your time, energy and grants toward. Not to preach, but the number of drunken drivers on any given weekend is sickening, and when some clown who is well into a bottle of Jack hops behind the wheel, he is facing a very good chance of forcibly placing everyone he passes into harm's way.

If you want to end something, end that.

To summarize, college kids are going to drink regardless — any attempt to cease alcohol use by students is foolhardy. Since every group in America must have a cause these days, go ahead and latch onto one, but pick it wisely. Use common sense and place a fatally sharp focus on exterminating genuine problems on and around campus.

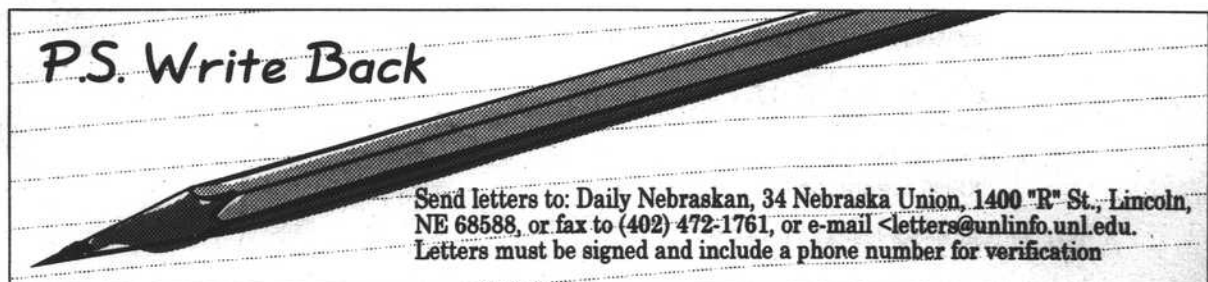
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