

Reporters face resistance with Residence Hall stories

If the doughnut-eating exploits of our aristocratic regents angered you, meet UNLV's newest self-knighted noble—Terry Piper.

Students pay tuition and dorm fees, as well as sales tax, property tax and federal income tax that help keep state-funded universities like ours afloat.

However, Piper, the director of residential life, thinks the peasants have no right to know how the university is being run.

Last semester, *The Rebel Yell* reported that at least one of the residential halls was completely empty. Either no one could afford to, or no one wanted to live in them.

Admittedly, that first story confused the number of empty rooms with the number of empty beds, understating the latter and overstating the former.

But the dorms were empty—of that, there is no doubt.

Piper said it was because of the recession, or because they were building for the future, or because of failed plans to turn Tonopah Hall into an office. As a result they had more room.

Actually, it didn't really matter, said Piper. UNLV would cover the upkeep of the dorms by renting them to conventioners looking for a cheap place to stay.

Well, this semester *The Rebel Yell* asked how many conventioners had actually rented rooms, how much money they had brought in, and if there were still entire buildings collecting dust.

How did Piper respond? He told a reporter from *The Rebel Yell* that until the paper started writing fair and truthful stories he would cooperate as little as possible. Piper said he would only answer direct questions and would not elaborate on anything.

When pressed, Piper admitted that 130 rooms were empty, a misleading figure because when the dorms are full, students sleep two to a room. Now that they are empty, each student can have an entire room to him or herself.

He said he did not yet have the figures on how much money was made from conventioners and would not have them until the end of the year.

Robert Ackerman, vice president for Student Services, Piper's boss, wasn't much better. He could not produce the numbers and said that as far as he was concerned that story was covered last semester.

Students probably have little time to ask Piper or Ackerman how the university is being run. They shouldn't have to.

Think about it. If they won't answer questions from reporters, what chance does the average student have when he or she walks into the royal chambers and asks a question?

The above is the opinion of The Rebel Yell. All other inclusions on the opinion page reflect the opinions of the author or artist indicated and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of The Rebel Yell staff.

Middle East should be more than an elaborate chess game

BY DAVID Z. KANAAN

What ever happened to the cradle of civilization? When the average Joe thinks of the Middle East nowadays, images of SCUD missiles and maniacal dictators fill their heads as do other awful stereotypes. This all stems from the fear of a culture that most Americans don't understand.

The current war with Iraq is once again giving us high-tech warfare. Troops are launching "smart bombs" at targets with the same precision as a child playing an innocent video game. But with all the heroic military accomplishments we've achieved over the last couple of years we shouldn't have to worry about future disobedience, right?

Hardly. A large military buildup is taking place in Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and with other allies of the United States, predominantly with US weaponry (i.e. the M1A2 tank and the F-16E Eagle aircraft), which are the epitome of the American high-tech arsenal.

But these are our friends, right? Don't their governments hold the same high regard for liberty, democracy, and justice that we do?

Not quite. Saudi Arabia for example, doesn't allow women to drive a car, and its vast wealth has held on to a medieval monarchy and a strictly protected two-class society.

Egypt is one of the few semi-democracies in the Arab states that does have elected offices like President-for-life Hosne Mabarac. Yet history has shown more leaders in Egypt have been changed through assassinations than elections.

After the Gulf War we left Saddam in the saddle and put back an inept Emirate of Kuwait. If we are to be involved in other nations' quarrels we should at least not be hypocrites and conveniently forget about the democracy and liberty we assert to be fighting for. We should also treat nations equally regarding UN mandates and not forget certain mandates if the country in question is our friend or financially appealing to us.

There is a big picture to this mess and it is looked over by many who try to stick to small

specifics in order to distract the public from the real causes and solutions. Don't be surprised to find out that Arab people eat, work and care for their children's futures as much as any other people. They also can be cynical about their governments, although much of this is unreported in the press that is far from free in most cases.

The religion of Islam doesn't require annual Christian sacrifices and is often warped by the powers that be into propaganda that even the average peasant in the marketplace hardly ever swallows. The people want peace but their voice is muted with a system of corruption that, unfortunately, our government profits from now and then.

The Middle East was united for centuries under several Islamic empires, some being far larger than what was the Roman Empire, but because of European Imperialism in the early 20th century, coupled with corruption and greed, the area was divided into several small nations that even today feel the pompous cat-o-nine tails known once as Manifest Destiny.

We should treat the latest threats and attacks on Iraq, or elsewhere, as short-sighted political nonsense until we truly fight for a world of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, and not use childish good-guy bad-guy blind nationalistic analogies. We should ask our leaders to provide more than lip service to groups such as Amnesty International, that has for years warned the UN of civil liberty violations in several countries such as Israel, Syria, Iraq and others.

The ugly word here is politics, plain and simple. A few movers and shakers have a lot to gain from an oil-rich Middle East headed by a group of unstable and volatile leaders who will accept kickbacks for cooperation. Several million Arabs, however, look forward only to more violence and civil unrest with this arrangement, and dream of the day the world helps them use their voice to provide their children a country (or countries) they can believe in and respect.

David Kanaan, a freshman majoring in architecture, is a columnist for The Rebel Yell.

Notes from the School of Afrikan Philosophy

BY ULYSSES PALROSE

Dr. John Henrik Clarke, a noted Afrikan historian, asserts that "... the most dangerous of all dependencies is to depend on your powerful oppressor to free you and share power with you, because powerful people never train powerless people to take their

power away from them."

It is some kind of insanity for an oppressed people to ask, to beg, and to cry for their freedom from their oppressor. I maintain the belief that you gain no man's respect in begging, only his pity.

When Afrikans, both here and in the motherland, learn that the freedom we seek will not be granted through the kindness of

another, but will have to be taken and secured with our own hands, then, and only then, can the road to freedom be paved.

Ulysses Palrose is the Minister of Information for the of School Afrikan Philosophy.

Student Spotlight

If you were President Maxson, what would your New Year's resolution be for improving UNLV?



Gil Everardo
junior
theatre arts

I would control the rising price of tuition and books. I would make education affordable for not only the middle class, but the lower class as well. I would focus on more financial aid grants.



Kamal Fakhoury
senior
hotel
administration

I would provide a better price/value relationship in the residence halls, by making the live-in package more attractive.



Daniel Boles
senior
philosophy

To stop running sprinklers and wasting large amounts of water, also to get rid of the concrete benches and replace them with wood benches.



Yu-Wen Pan
sophomore

To build a parking garage, because it is very hard to find a place to park after 8:30 am.



Julie Samuelson
junior
communication studies

I would make amends with Jerry Tarkanian.