

Carpenter alleges suspension over letter

By Brenda Moskovits

A carpenter in the UNL Maintenance Department says he was given a three-day suspension without pay Monday as punishment for writing a letter to the Lincoln Star criticizing the department.

"I think I'm being discriminated against because I exercised my First Amendment rights," James Young told the Daily Nebraskan Monday afternoon.

Young said a decision will be made during the next three days to determine whether he will remain with the maintenance department. He contends that the suspension ought to have been issued with pay and said he plans to "definitely file suit" if he is fired.

Harley Schrader, director of the UNL Physical Plant, and Jerry Delhay, maintenance manager, both declined comment on any of Young's charges,

except to say that the matter is being reviewed. Delhay also said a meeting to review the suspension will be sometime Tuesday.

Young explained the circumstances surrounding the suspension, issued at noon Monday.

"I wrote a letter to the editor of the Star on Dec. 4, 1979, and it made a bunch of charges or allegations about the department," he said. The letter was published a

week before Young went to Hawaii on a family vacation.

Delayed flight

"I was supposed to be back on the 10th (of January) and I was supposed to go to work on the 11th," Young said. But a storm in Honolulu delayed his flight, and he didn't return for work Friday as scheduled.

Young said he went to work as scheduled Monday and after working four hours, was "served notice that I am suspended for three days without pay because I didn't make it to work on Friday."

Young already is on six-month probation.

"They trumped up a thing on me before, in October, an insubordination deal," Young said.

In October, Young said, he had reserved a slot on the NU Board of Regents' Business Affairs Subcommittee's Oct. 12 agenda, but "a vote was taken whether or not to go and the men decided not to go."

At 9:30 a.m., half an hour before the committee meeting was to start, Young was fired. But a call to Corporation Secretary William Swanson led to his probationary reinstatement.

Grievances presented

Young said employees planned to present to the regents grievances similar to those made in his letter to the Lincoln Star.

His charges include that the department has no safety program, that management changes are needed and that an apprenticeship program, receiving federal money, employs experienced workers rather than novices and, hence, is used to keep women out of the department. "Every apprentice they hire, they hire with two years experience," Young said. "They're not taking anyone who doesn't know a trade and teaching."

Few women have enough carpentry, electrician's or other training, "and that's how they're getting around hiring women."

Most important, management needs a changed attitude, Young said. "That's what needs to be changed. . . men are not men they're means of production. And it's been that way for years."

Young's allegations received more attention after the letter was published. Jim Demarest, assistant manager of planning and scheduling for the maintenance department wrote a rebuttal to the Star letter, and a news story on the charges subsequently appeared in the Lincoln Journal.

"When I went on vacation," Young said, "Harley Schrader promised changes were forthcoming. To this date there are no tangible changes."

The only result, Young said, has been circulation of a paper announcing the creation of a concerns and communications task force. The group is to have an organizational meeting at 3:30 p.m. Jan. 23 and representatives from each trade are to be elected for six-month terms by Friday.

Faculty unionization could be delayed

By Randy Essex

Managing editor

A campaign to organize a labor union among UNL faculty has not made the progress expected, and may be put off until the fall semester, the UNL president of the American Association of University Professors said Monday.

Robert Haller, a UNL professor of English, said he is "in doubt" about the campaign, and said he thinks "maybe some (faculty members) are so disillusioned that they don't want to try this route."

The unionization drive began in November, shortly after UNO faculty members voted to accept the AAUP as their collective bargaining agent in contract negotiations with the NU Board of Regents.

Haller speculated that many UNL faculty may want to "wait and see" what effect the UNO vote has on negotiations.

Manpower short

The AAUP chapter president also cited

a manpower shortage as causing some delay in the first step of the campaign. Before a vote by UNL faculty may be scheduled, cards must be circulated asking faculty if they want to vote.

Card distribution was not completed until last week, Haller said, forcing the organization to move its deadline for return of the cards to Feb. 1.

Although the unionization drive has gotten off to a slow start, Haller said Gov. Charles Thone's recommendation for the NU budget—including his recommendation that faculty be given a 7 percent raise for fiscal 1981—"can't hurt us."

UNL faculty members are the second lowest paid in the Big Eight, and the NU Board of Regents had requested a 10 percent pay increase for the faculty.

Not pleased

While Haller said the governor's budget was "certainly expected," he said he wasn't pleased by the recommendations.

"The governor's budget outlook is a little strange," Haller said. The pay in-

crease recommended by Thone is about half of the expected 1979 inflation rate, Haller said, forcing state government to become generally less effective if it stays within a 7 percent budget increase.

"There is no sense of priority in operation of state government," he said, adding that he fails to understand the motive for holding increases in the budget to 7 percent.

Haller also said AAUP has other faculty concerns besides salaries.

He said the faculty has become frustrated because recommendations from the faculty often have been ignored. For example, a Faculty Senate recommendation for distribution of pay raise money last year was ignored, he said.

Frustrations similar

Haller said the faculty's frustration with such incidents is similar to the students' frustration with tuition increases and other policies traditionally opposed by students.

However, he said, the university bylaws give faculty recommendations a legal status student points of view do not have.

The campaign to form a collective bargaining unit and petitions expressing lack of faith in the central administration also are aimed at improving guidelines that sometimes "are devised without any accounting for subtleties of how these things have to be fulfilled."

Collective bargaining law

However, he said some faculty may feel that even formation of a labor union will not have an effect on the faculty's ability to gain redress of grievances or to increase pay.

Asked whether he thought formation of a union would have an effect on the Legislature and the governor in their budget considerations, Haller said the state has an excellent collective bargaining law, which was formulated by the Legislature and signed by former governors.

"I'm assuming that they (the Legislature) understood the general principles when they passed the laws," Haller said. He added that if a union is formed, the AAUP does not intend to go to the Commission of Industrial Relations, which settles contract impasses.



Photo by Mark Billingsley

Not only is the grass greener on the other side of the fence—but it is also more plentiful, as this horse on east Holdrege Street has learned.

Energy bill is changed to accommodate public utilities

By Gordon Johnson

A \$200 million energy bill, now in rough draft form, will undergo major revisions to garner support from public owned utilities, according to Dan Meyer, legislative aide to Sen. John DeCamp of Neligh.

The energy bill, titled the Energy Conservation and Independence Act, met opposition from public utilities, according to Meyer because it would have required them to make loan money available for energy conservation.

The bill originally would have required public utilities to loan money to their customers so they could make their homes and businesses more energy efficient. Under the act, the state would have made part of the \$200 million available to banking institutions for energy conservation loans. The loans were not to exceed \$3,000.

Loan money needed

However, in light of opposition from electric companies the bill was re-worked to allow utilities to also sell bonds to come up with the needed loan money, Meyer said.

"The reason we changed was to make it easier to pass—

utilities won't fight it quite as much," Meyer said.

Another revision of the measure would be to raise the ceiling of the loans from \$3,000 to \$15,000, he said. This is necessary, Meyer said, to enable farmers, ranchers and urban dwellers to conserve energy.

A ceiling of \$3,000 would not go very far toward energy conservation on a farm, he said.

"What we have done is made it a little less stringent and a little more innovative," Meyer said.

More innovative

Increasing the loan limits and allowing for a wider range of conservation methods will allow people to be more innovative in the way they conserve energy, he said.

Meyer said the act has been misunderstood by many in that they believe it will cost the state \$200 million.

In fact, Meyer said, the act will bring \$200 million into the state and help the state's economy to grow because the money will come from the sale of bonds and not through state taxes.

Meyer said current indications are that the state will pay 7.5 to 8 percent interest on the bonds sold but will receive between 9.75 and 10.5 percent interest on the loans

made for energy conservation.

Since 95 percent of the state's energy comes from out of state, such a bill will help keep the state's money at home and become more energy self-sufficient, Meyer said.

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