

Editorial

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Jeff Korbelik, Editor, 472-1766
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Offer misread Pay plan much the same

The NU Board of Regents' proposal that the Legislature approve extra money for pay increases based on merit has drawn some fire from faculty members. But if what NU Director of Public Affairs Joe Rowson says is true, it's fire based on a mistaken premise.

The understanding has been that the regents' proposal would give the top 25 percent of NU faculty members an extra 10 percent pay raise the "top" to be determined by a list of guidelines that have yet to be drawn up. Based on this understanding, some faculty members have protested on the grounds that it implies that "50 to 75 percent of our faculty are not meritorious," UNL Faculty Senate President Allen Blezek said. An effort has been made to put the senate on record as opposing the plan.

If that were the entire picture, some faculty members would have reason to be upset. But Rowson said there's been some confusion over the plan's particulars that give the plan a different appearance that was intended. In essence, he said, very little would change in the way faculty members are paid — except the amount of money available.

NU already has a "merit pay" plan, Rowson said. When the university asks the Legislature for a pay increase of a certain percentage, it actually distributes the money based on faculty performance. The raise granted last spring by the legislature averaged 3 percent, but some faculty members conceivably

could have received nothing and some more than 3 percent.

The regents' proposal this year begins by asking the Legislature to grant a pay increase for faculty and staff members that at least equals that given other state employees. Here's where the confusion begins. The regents then asked the Legislature to approve a pool of extra money that would be distributed to faculty members along much the same performance standards as before. The exact standards, Rowson said, could be set by the individual colleges. But the basic distribution plan wouldn't change.

The amount of that pool of extra money, Rowson said, would be calculated by taking 25 percent of the number of total faculty members and multiplying it by a 10 percent raise. In other words, it's not a cut-and-dried proposal that gives 25 percent of the faculty members an extra 10 percent and leaves anyone else out. Depending upon how well a faculty member performs, the pay raise he gets could vary widely. There would just be more money to give.

All of this extra money, of course, depends upon the Legislature giving it to NU. Given the state's continuing budget problems, the university shouldn't count on getting more money this year than other state employees get. But if NU gets the extra money, a big step would be taken toward making NU's faculty salaries more competitive with those of other schools. That's good.

Ag exports declining Candidates evading issue

There's some good news and some bad news. The good news is that worldwide output of foodstuffs exceeds population requirements. And the bad news is that worldwide output of foodstuffs exceeds population requirements.

First, the good news. Recent studies indicate that food production has increased greatly, especially among less developed nations.

This news is really good in light of the dire predictions made a decade or so ago of "Malthusian nightmares" casting a pall over the world. Like the 19th century economist Thomas Malthus, modern doomsayers predicted imminent and severe famines in such books as "Famine, 1976."

Instead of famine, the world underwent a "green revolution" and agriculture production blossomed.

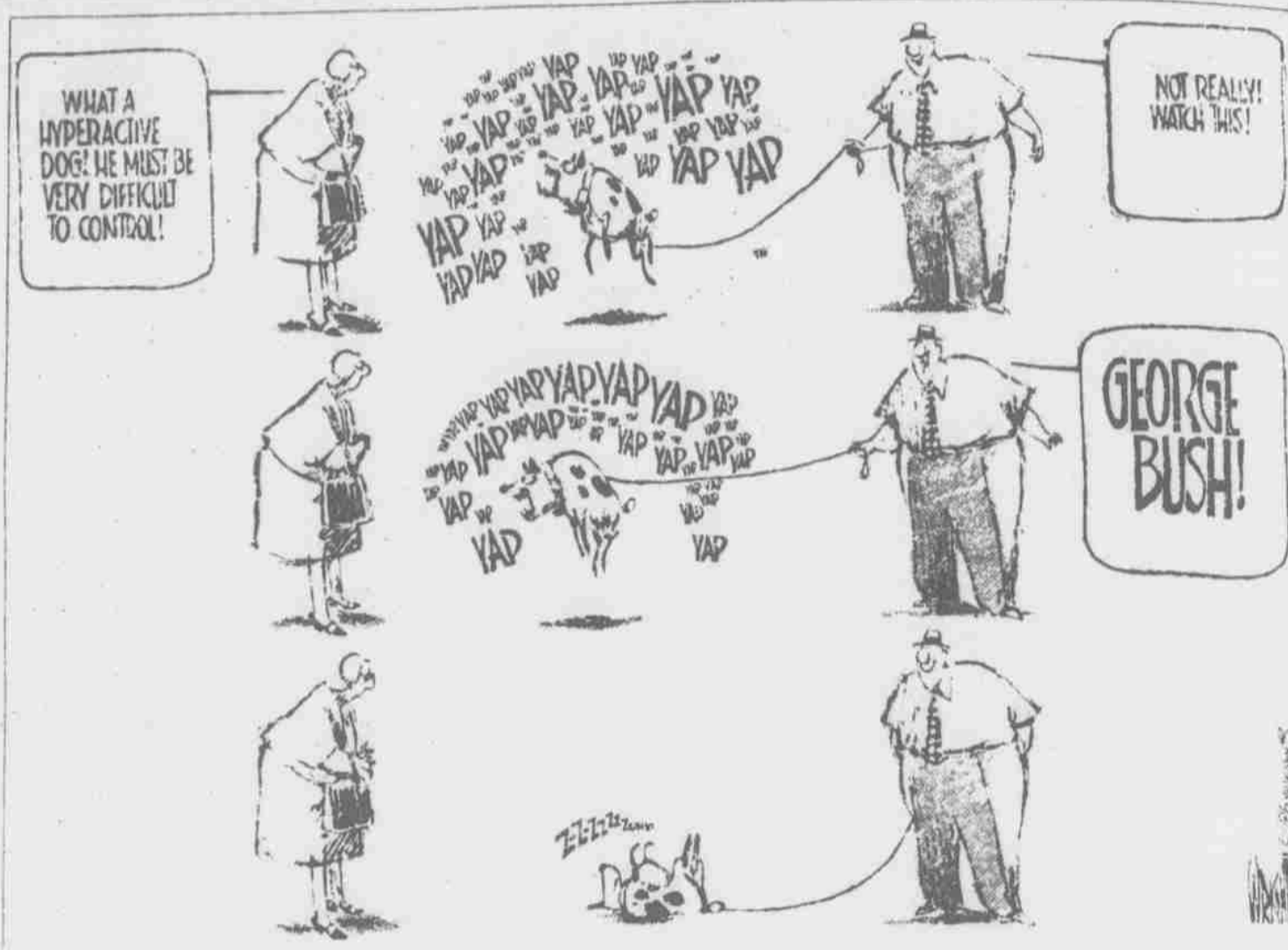
While the green revolution did not stop famine from occurring, (and the analysts don't deny the reality of famines such as the recent one in Ethiopia) what needs to be underscored is that recent famines are mainly due to political or geographical inability to get the food to where it is needed.

There were a number of accounts, for example, of communist Ethiopian leaders refusing to unload or transport the wealth of grain that was sent to their nation to relieve the famine.

The bad news is much more local in orientation. The increased agricultural production is bad news for states like Nebraska where significant worldwide demand has historically propped up grain prices. Grain prices were kept high both because of sales to other countries and through surplus grain giveaway programs like PL 480 (Food for Peace).

While both gubernatorial candidate promise to increase Nebraska's exports, in reality all they are promising to do is to chase a ghost on behalf of farmers and ranchers. The question no longer is one of finding markets for Nebraska's agricultural goods, but how to adapt to the reality of decreasing market opportunities. A world-wide agricultural transformation is occurring, and no governor can prevent it from greatly affecting Nebraska.

Sadly, however, neither candidate has addressed the reality that is reshaping the face of the world and will reshape the economy of Nebraska.



Daniloff affair raises questions

United States and Russia have fundamental disagreements

"The Daniloff Affair." By now this is as household an expression as "styling mousse" and "Helen Boosalis is not for raising taxes." Like many Americans, I have watched the whole Daniloff/Zakharov, Reagan/Gorbachev, Schultz/whatever-his-Russian-counterpart's-name-is scenario with great concern, intense interest and not a little amusement. I do not wish to make light of this political and personal tragedy, so please do not misread my purpose. But I would like to point out some incredible incongruities that must not escape our notice and must be filed for future reference.

I find the role of the press interesting throughout. There has been no shortage of editorial column inches dedicated to the unthinkable of the Soviet action against a member of the American press corps. This, of course, is not only justified, but quite expected.

The fourth estate has historically been its own greatest watchdog for the freedom of the press. After generations of exposing and denouncing the subtle censorship that substantiate American infringement against this basic right, such a blatant and unashamed act of terrorism against the champions of the informed public caught the media with its collective pants down. The unthinkable occurred, and the perpetrators aren't even sorry.

But I am especially intrigued by the press's sudden discovery of just how tough life really is in the Soviet Union. In my entire existence, I have not read as much about the atrocities of life in Leningrad as I have over the last couple of weeks. And no one has it any tougher than the reporters and other newsmen. It is a wonder that we have gotten any news out of there at all, let alone the stunning documentaries and colorful human-interest stories that have so

often filled the precious minutes of the "Nightly News" and its counterparts.

Of course it's tough over there; it's just a shame that it took the Daniloff tragedy to shake the left-leaning news media into leveling with us. Funny, I have not read "But after all, they're like us!" once throughout this whole fiasco.

This brings me to another fascinating aspect of this whole ordeal. About a week ago the papers were filled with the USSR's accusation that the CIA regularly uses foreign correspondents to spy and otherwise commit espionage. For anyone familiar at all with the structure of the American news institution, the preposterousness of this claim is not even worth mentioning.

James Sennett



Regularly, the personnel of the American news media test out far to the left of the American public in terms of political, social and economic leanings. This has long been a source of irritation for many thinking conservatives, and a barb in the side of anyone who still believes the myth of "unbiased news reporting" (I held on to Santa Claus longer than I held on to that one).

But now this phenomenon has come home to roost in a vindication of the journalism profession. That the news media, or any significant number of its members, would even have sympathy of the agenda of the CIA — let alone sacrifice integrity and endanger lives to commit criminal acts on foreign soil

for its propagation — is totally absurd.

Of course it is not difficult to see how the Soviets could come up with such a charge and believe that anyone would buy it. In the context of a system where journalists are not allowed near an airport unless they have pledged their undying support for the policies of the government (and left the addresses of all close relatives, just in case they were cleverly deceptive), the accusation makes sense. "We do it, so you must be doing it."

I am amazed at how often tactics that would never make it into a debate team strategy — would never even be used by any rational person in a heated argument — suddenly become worthy of headlines and capable of halting progress toward world peace when uttered by those in charge of superpower policies. I am just naive enough to think that tripe for the goose is tripe for the gander.

I pray for Nick Daniloff daily. I weep for his family, and I regret the damage to Soviet-American relations that this calamity has caused. But I do think the affair will have been an even bigger tragedy if we do not learn from it the painful lessons it screams to us. There is an irreducible, irreconcilable difference of ideology between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. As long as the Kremlin is willing to rape human rights for no nobler purpose than political profiteering, we must be wary of the possibilities — and the price — of peaceful coexistence.

Of course our own government is not blameless — but the difference is one of quality, not just quantity. We are still the nation to which the defectors come. The guns on the Berlin Wall only point one way.

James Sennett is a graduate student in philosophy and campus minister with College-Career Christian Fellowship.

Daniloff detention, U.S. response resemble past Soviet 'blunders'

WASHINGTON — There they go again, those muscle-bound, muscle-brained Russians, arresting an American journalist and thus undermining their own interests. "Clumsy stupidity," writes James Reston. The Soviets "misjudged badly," says Newsweek. "They miscalculated," offered Daniloff's boss, U.S. News & World Report editor-in-chief Mortimer Zuckerman. They "didn't anticipate the enormous public outcry."

So there you have it. It seems that for the sake of a two-bit Russian spy the great Garbo, P.R. master, has fatally, stupidly compromised his worldwide good-guy campaign.

The second most dismaying thing about the Daniloff affair is that it has invited yet another display of the Amer-



ican habit of equating (Soviet) toughness with stupidity. (Most dismaying, but amply deplored elsewhere, is the administration's surrender to Soviet

terms.) Stupidity? Let's review the scoring thus far on the Garbo Gambit.

Daniloff is now out of a KGB jail, but may not leave Moscow. In return for his release, Soviet spy Gennadi Zakharov was released from an American jail and, more importantly, from FBI investigation. Negotiations are now continuing on how to make the final trade of Daniloff for Zakharov (letting each return home) without President Reagan losing too much face. Reportedly, the administration is trying to get the Soviets to throw a draft choice, perhaps a dissident or two, into the deal.

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