

Editorially Speaking

Shackles on Professors; Is the Status Quo Utopia?

Nothing ever happens at the University of Nebraska. There are no opinions in the faculty that cause a ruffle in the stalwart conservatism of the state. No radicals here, thank God. It isn't that there is repression. The university is just a wholesome community of satisfied scholars.

In the first place, there is complete harmony among all the colleges. In the second place there is complete harmony between the professors and the administration. In the third place all professors say what they think, especially those in the social sciences. The latest theories of government are fully taught and freely commented upon; university economists never clash with state administrators because they see eye to eye on all problems. This includes the pay as you go policy of Nebraska, which differs so strangely from that of the other 47 states who benefitted from federal improvement money by matching Uncle Sam's grants by going further into debt.

The opinions of the university's sociologists, economists, and political scientists is that of the legislators and of the dear people of the state. All goes smoothly. All is quiet at Nebraska.

In connection with the picture of our serene bog of self-satisfaction. The Nebraskan reprints excerpts from an article in the bulletin of the American Association of University professors, which shows the dire plight of teachers in other schools. This article by John Ise, professor of economics at the University of Kansas, since it does, after all, deal with the condition of professors over the country may incidentally throw some light even on Nebraska's satisfactory situation.

Dr. Ise:

.....Financial poverty and insecurity are not the worst aspects of his (the professor's) job. If he could enjoy the rich privilege of freedom of thought and expression, he might still enjoy a good life. But of this precious freedom he has little—less than most people in financially remunerative callings. He must hold the views that governing bodies hold, or keep his peace. He is a hired man, hired to present, not his own independent views, but the views of those who control the purse strings, hired to teach conformity to dominating ideas and traditions; hired, all too frequently, to inoculate the students against thinking about anything important.

The attitude of the people, and particularly of the most influential people, is strangely inconsistent in this matter. They tax themselves to support educational institutions, skimp to send their children to college to get an "education"—which presumably should mean some ideas that they did not have before and could not get at home, yet when the children come home with new ideas on important questions, the parents are likely to get into action promptly. The president of a college or university who tries to make it an educational institution, as far as the social sciences are concerned, must

fight formidable opposition; and he usually finds that financial support is granted in inverse proportion to the amount of worthwhile work that the institution is doing.

Naturally the shackles on professors encourage mental and spiritual atrophy and dishonesty. Thinking is hard work at best—not the favorite pastime even of professors—and mental atrophy the general tendency of age. The professor finds it useless to do much thinking when ruling powers have already written his answers. In fact, thinking is worse than useless; it is dangerous, for he might arrive at the wrong conclusions. He may, to be sure, think and speak and write about certain things; the communism of Plato, the rugged individualism of Aristotle, the population problem of the Aztecs; but he will do well to be guarded in his approach to such important present day problems as socialism, communism, fascism, sex, military preparedness, or economic inequality. If he be wise, if he has a proper regard for his family or for his own peace of mind, he will learn to think mostly about unimportant questions—and perhaps guardedly about these.

He will learn to be politically sexless. He will become community-minded; join the chamber of commerce and the Rotary club, play bridge, and make speeches before the women's clubs; he will attend faculty meetings religiously, seek membership on committees, and help to guard the morals of the students. If he is able to suppress all his critical faculties he may become a secure and respectable member of the faculty, and perhaps rise to administrative greatness. If he is not able to achieve the required standard of conformity, he may become furtive, dishonest, cynical, and unhappy in his role of intellectual prostitute.

To some extent our professors are free enough, after all—to the extent that they are recognized as impotent, ineffectual, innocuous. No one can doubt that if our social science teachers attracted a public following strong enough to threaten important vested interests, they would be promptly suppressed. A feeling of helplessness and futility weighs heavily on some of our professors, and well it may, for there is discouraging evidence of the flunky role that they play in human affairs.

For instance, almost all English and American economists since Adam Smith have argued against the tariff; in literally hundreds of books and articles—to what effect? International tariffs are the highest in a hundred years. Almost all economists, similarly, have seen that the war debts were uncollectible, have insisted since the very time of the Versailles Treaty that the debts be forgotten—to what effect? None whatever.

Sociologists have often pointed out the disastrous consequences of the high birth rate in poverty-stricken rural communities; but Montgomery Ward catalogue advertisements of feminine hygiene have had more effect on the birth rate than all the learned treatises on population. Professors may make surveys, collect data, read scholarly papers at their meetings and publish them in their journals for other professors to read; but important public policies are determined by economic interests, and not by professional lucubration...

IN THE INFIRMARY

Robert Hansen, Lyons.
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Nadine Boodleman, Deadwood, S. D.
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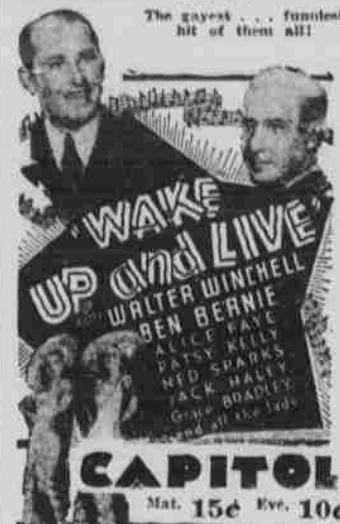
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LINCOLN

Daily Nebraskan

Entered as second-class matter at the postoffice at Lincoln, Nebraska, under act of congress, March 3, 1879, and at

PAULINE WALTERS REIGNS AS QUEEN OF FORMAL AT AG

(Continued from Page 1.)

dent affairs on the Ag campus, where she is affiliated with Phi Upsilon Omicron, home economics honorary sorority. She also served as secretary of the Farmer's fair board, and as a member of the Coll-Agri-Fun board.

Miss Bennett Attendant.

Genevieve Bennett, senior in home economics from Belleville,

Ill., was second high in the voting and attended the queen as maid of honor. Other attendants were Naomi Richmond, Campbell; Nita Spader, Waverly; Donna Hiatt, Beatrice, and Rachel Peterson, Lincoln. All are students in the home economics department.

The presentation of the queen, which was planned by Harold Benn and DeLoris Bors, was made from a stage which was decorated to represent a gypsy camp. The five attendants formed a circle around Miss Walters and just before the announcement was made they dropped to their knees, and the new queen stepped forward into the spotlight.

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