

guest opinion

by Robert J. Prokop

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In my opinion, the conflict of interest statute has cost the state of Nebraska two excellent civic leaders in the fields of penal reform and industrial relations. The resignations of law professors Wallace Rudolph and John Gradwohl from the Parole Board and the Court of Industrial Relations are regrettable and not in the best interests of the state of Nebraska. Both men have had excellent records in their professional careers.

The Unicameral, in attempting to stop payment of two checks for two jobs to one state employee or to stop utilization of a position to improve financial considerations, has uncovered a gross inequity in its own statutes. LB 686, which is currently under consideration by the Unicameral, still maintains a harsh interpretation of this statute by not giving any consideration of service to the state by men such as these excellent law professors.

The history of this legislation began with a state senator who was elected to that position while a member of the faculty at a state supported institution. A number of years later, this law was brought to light by an office holder running for re-election for political purposes in order to discredit his opponent. The news media, in some cases, utilized this issue to put political pressure on a newly elected official who had disagreed with the media and the University on vital issues before the electorate of the state of Nebraska.

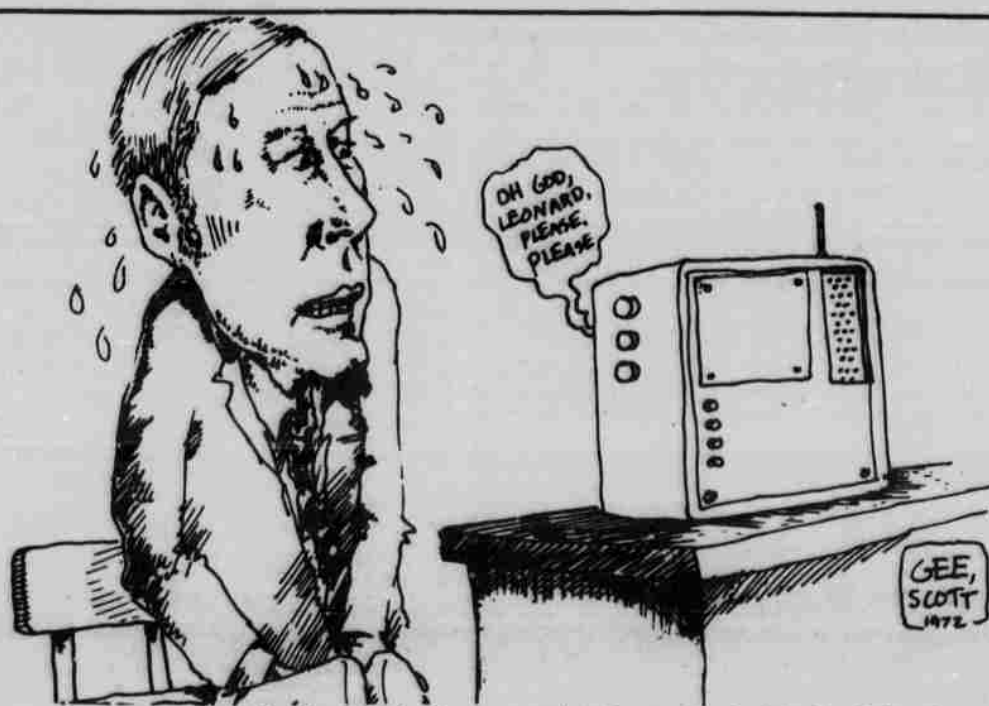
The issue was again brought up in the case of another state office holder who had opposed the thinking of some segments of the news media and the University. Those same individuals never questioned the nine excellent years of service by John Gradwohl which now was determined as a conflict of interest.

This brings up other interesting points concerning the Unicameral and the University. Sen. Richard Proud asked his colleagues recently to stand in the chamber if they had no conflict of interest. Unfortunately, no member took

up his challenge.

What about conflicts of interest which might be established for other state officers, including University administrators such as deans, chancellors or presidents if the law was strictly interpreted? Could one serve on any board of directors, etc., which has any business dealings directly or indirectly with the University of Nebraska? To expand this point further, can members of the University system be paid by the state when other employers are paying salaries or per diems for the same service? Is it possible to receive fringe benefits such as insurance on leased cars which are loaned to state employees without legislative approval or do the state citizens have no voice in this matter? Are honorariums considered conflicts of interest?

The Unicameral and attorney general's office should clarify the law pertaining to all state employees and state officers immediately so that no additional repercussions occur or utilization of a political blackmail be instituted against the state officials.



In the spirit of cooperation I am submitting the following set of guidelines that could be used as a basis for coed visitation. They were sent to me by a reader and I have only slightly altered them:

Personalized social intercourse between the sexes will be permitted for not more than six hours per day during the week; specific hours are assigned by the chancellor.

Note: Under no circumstances will such intercourse be accepted as an excuse for lateness to, or absence from football games.

For the general good and welfare, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln has seen fit to impose a few simple rules, which all students are expected to know and obey:

1) To avoid wasting time in idle dalliance, each student wishing to fraternize will go at once, when the bell sounds for the Social Hours, to the room of the person he or she wishes to see.

2) Immediately upon closing the door, each person will, without delay, remove all clothing and either hand it neatly or fold it and lay it on some flat surface not likely to be

disturbed. No physical contact is permitted while either student retains any garment on his person or in his hands. Further, it may tend to wrinkle or otherwise soil the garments, and thus is likely to endanger the reputation for neatness of which the University of Nebraska is justifiably proud.

3) Once the clothing has been suitably disposed of, both parties must repair the bed, the coverings of which must be turned down to expose the lower sheet. This has been found to be the most practical way to avoid unusual wear and tear, and/or cleaning costs, on the bedspreads and blankets.

4) No contact of any sort is permitted anywhere in the room except on the lower bedsheet, for the same reasons. Note well: It is strictly forbidden to make, or attempt to make, any contacts on the floor. Not only is this highly unsanitary, but it also leads to colds, bronchitis and ailments; and the capacity of student health is limited.

5) Having complied with Rules 1-4 listed above, the parties are then free to fraternize in any reasonable fashion, excluding only those activities from the vicinity of which Lot and his daughters were forced to flee. (See Genesis 19:1-30.)

6) There will be no smoking, drinking of beverages (excluding water, orange juice, the Kool-Aid and milk), boisterous behavior or indecent language.

7) The ventilator in the ceiling of each room is also the eye of a closed-circuit television system terminating in the office of the chancellor. Any violation of the stated rules, or any serious breach of good taste, will be called to the violator's attention by five sharp rings on his room buzzer.

7-A) Note: One condition imposed by the Board of Regents when they agreed to this system of "permissive fraternization" was that any one, or all, of the regents be permitted to observe, at will, the viewing screen in the chancellor's office.

7-B) No parents of students are to have, at any time, access to the viewing screen (except in the improbable instance of a parent also being a regent).

7-C) Note: Video tapes may be, from time to time, made as a matter of record. Any such tapes become the property of the individual student or students concerned, at the time of graduation.

8) Violation of these rules may be punished by withdrawal of the social-hours privileges for as long as the chancellor may decree. Note also: the rules for individual conduct apply to groups as well. The lounges are covered by TV cameras with special wide-angle lenses.

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