

Job dissatisfaction culprit of UHC problems

February 6, 1974

Dear Dr. Fuenning:

It is with regret that I feel I must sever my relationship with the University Health Center.

After meeting with the Chancellor of UNL on Feb. 4, I cannot have faith in the integrity and sincerity of some of the leaders in the University, especially as concerns the University Health Center.

Certain statements made and actions taken at this meeting lead me to conclude that my participation in this health program for 28 years appears to be of little consequence to the University.

Thank you for a job well done to the students of the University of Nebraska in Lincoln. Your type of service and devotion to the patient care will be missed.

Sincerely,
Frank P. Stone, M.D.

As we file this letter of resignation with those of Dr. Kenneth Rose and Dr. Robert Garlinghouse, it becomes clear that something is very wrong at the University Health Center (UHC).

For nearly five years, besides trying to maintain and upgrade services, the UHC staff has been forced to fight one administrative brush fire after another.

What began as an honest effort to upgrade services has been fanned into an all-consuming bureaucratic power struggle; pitting two regents, a chancellor, a vice chancellor and various dupes against UHC administration and staff.

In Stone's letter of resignation, he indicates a lack of faith in the "integrity and sincerity" of several members of the University administration. When made by a professional of Stone's stature, such a charge must not be taken lightly.

What could possibly cause this lack of faith? Could Stone be recalling the system management study which employed a former hotel manager to evaluate

john michael o'shea distant thunder

the health center? Or could he be recalling a late night visit by a particular regent? Or the placing of hand-picked, unqualified administrators in key UHC positions. Or was it the medical research controversy that saw nationally recognized Rose finally resign because of the constant harassment of the two regents. Believe it or not, the list is much longer; it also includes the July 26 Ken Bader break-up attempt, featuring a nonnegotiable restructuring proposal, based not on the recommendations of the Board of Regents, but rather on the orders of two particular regents. Bader is vice chancellor of Student Affairs.

If we lift the administrative rock and look beneath, we will find the true culprit of the continuing UHC affair has been job dissatisfaction. There seems to be a great reluctance on the part of various UNL administrators to do their own job.

First we see two regents, Dr. Robert Prokop and Dr. Robert Koefoot, who for all appearances would rather head the UHC than carry out the real duties of their elected offices.

We see Bader, who out of nostalgia for the student confrontation days, keeps in practice by issuing at frequent intervals nondiscussable, nonnegotiable "proposals" for UHC restructuring.

But the most slippery silverfish of them all is UNL Chancellor James H. Zumberge. One must conclude from his actions that he either hates his job or that he hasn't the foggiest idea of what it is. His consistent refusal to make decisions and his buck-passing to the regents have figured largely in many of the University's most nagging problems, including residence hall visitation.

The regents are overseers, representing the Nebraska public. They are not administrators. The chancellor is. University policy should be made by the chancellor and reviewed by the regents, not the other way around. The regents have spent far too much time playing administrator. And the University has suffered for it.

But much of the blame for the lack of administrative integrity must fall on us dupes, who for one reason or another just never got around to asking what was going on. Among our members are the other six regents, ASUN and the bulk of Nebraska voters.

The antagonistic and unreasonable actions of the UNL administration toward the UHC must, to some degree, reflect on us all. And we, unlike the administration, have no rock to hide under.

to the editor



Dear editor,

In the belief that for a better Residence Hall Assoc. (RHA) and ASUN there is a need for better communication between the two groups, we endorse Pat Scanlon as a write-in candidate for RHA president.

We believe that he would execute the duties of the office well. Additionally, through our contacts with him and our knowledge of him, it is our belief that he is the best choice for RHA president.

We encourage all residents of UNL residence halls to vote on Tuesday. Again, it will be necessary to write in Pat Scanlon's name on the ballot.

Ron Clingenpeel
Sharon Johnson
David Howlett

True confession?

Off the record. Confidential. Not for publication. For background purposes only.

These are some of the terms tacked on to statements given reporters and others concerned, outraged or curious about the University Health Center (UHC) resignation fracas—if indeed any information at all can be wormed out of persons who should know the particulars of the situation, they aren't telling.

Who are the closed mouth culprits? Principally there are five: Regent Robert Prokop, Regent Robert Koefoot, UNL Chancellor James H. Zumberge, UNL Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Ken Bader and UHC Director Dr. Sam Fuenning, around whom most of the brouhaha centers.

In such a climate, rumors abound. One administrative has hinted—off the record, of course—that Fuenning is being ousted at the insistence of Prokop, who is rumored to be entertaining a personal vendetta against Fuenning. Why a personal vendetta? If there is one, no one is willing to give details. Others intimate that Zumberge is only acting as a pawn of the regents, and Bader a pawn of Zumberge, in their role in the rhubarb.

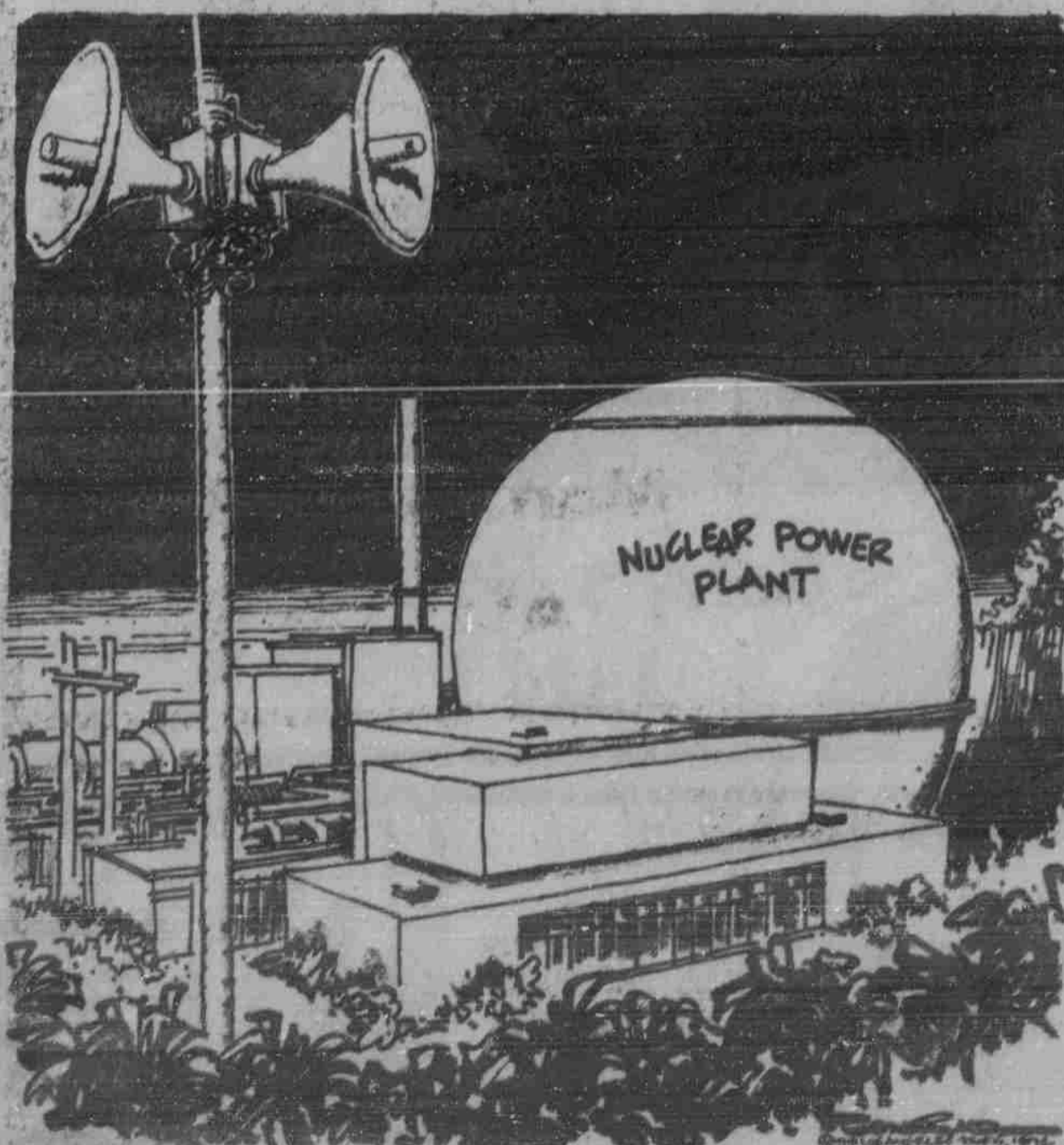
Others claim Fuenning just can't do a good job—strange charge, since Fuenning has been UHC director since 1946 and has built it virtually from the ground up into a nationally recognized (for its excellence) facility.

Two of the three health center doctors who so far have resigned in protest over the problem (but what exactly is it?) say they never have been told after repeated queries why Fuenning supposedly can't do a good job. "When we ask again and again, we are told (by Zumberge and Bader) it is confidential," they say. And then, when the same doctors are questioned about what they know of the story, they too are button lipped.

The 27 members of the UHC medical staff recently said they would resign if undetermined but "new" administrative policies continue. It's difficult to understand why they do not see the folly of their own close-mouthedness. If something truly is amiss on the side of the regents or administrators, a clear presentation of the facts likely would produce a public outcry, and any doubts about Fuenning—who is as quiet as anyone—would be cleared. Therefore the doctors should tell their story. And the fact that Fuenning is a public employe should necessitate the administrators and regents telling the whys and wherefores of their side. No one is benefiting from all this silence.

The facts, of course, lie somewhere. The fault of their not being brought to light—or acted upon—lies with the victims as well as any alleged oppressors.

Mary Voboril



"In case of emergency, repeat after me: Our father . . ."