

# Halt to university testing of Soviet tractors is proposed

By Randy Essex  
Managing editor

Passage of a legislative resolution calling for the NU Tractor Testing Laboratory on East Campus to stop accepting business from the Soviet Union would have little, if any, effect on the Soviets, the lab's chief engineer said.

The measure, introduced by Imperial Sen. Rex Haberman, blames the Soviets — because of their aggression in Afghanistan — for costing Nebraska farmers "billions of dollars."

Haberman said President Carter was forced to impose economic sanctions, including the embargo of some 17 million metric tons of grain promised to the Soviet Union.

"I think we should stop buying Russian vodka," Haberman said, explaining that he thinks a variety of "little things" can be

done that will have an impact on the Soviets.

### Worldwide effect

He said approval of tractors by the NU lab has "a worldwide sales effect," because the NU lab is the only testing institute in the world and tractors probably will not sell without that approval.

The resolution, LR184, not only asks that no more Russian tractors be tested, but proposes that the reports on two tractors already at the lab be withheld, so the tractors cannot be sold.

If passed, LR184 would direct the institute to "inform the appropriate Soviet Union officials that their tractors currently at the laboratory must be removed in 15 days . . . or they will be sold as salvage."

But Louis Leviticus, the institute's director, said the report on one of the two Russian tractors now at the institute already has been released, and the other one

needs only final approval before it is released.

### Release required

Furthermore, Leviticus said he is required by law to release the reports as soon as they are approved by a three-member board of engineers. A resolution does not have the power to repeal laws; a bill would be required.

He said only four Soviet tractors have been tested at the unit since 1975, and only one before that.

And, "I don't envision another Russian tractor in the next couple years," he added.

"I personally don't feel the Russians will be too badly hurt by this," he said. "The value of the motion is that it showed the senator's anger toward the Russians."

"Even though Nebraska is an agricultural state, and is hurt by the grain embargo, this shows that the state still is in principle behind the government," Leviticus said.

### Embargo hurts

Haberman pointed out that he has been

hurt by the embargo, with 10,000 bushels of his corn not sold and the grain market falling. He said the embargo is "costing me 12 percent" on a loan he cannot pay until his corn is sold.

"I think it's a good resolution," Haberman said. "Many little things can be done that can have an impact."

The NU Board of Regents refused to get involved in the political arena Saturday and disregarded the resolution.

Regent Robert Simmons of Scottsbluff said he was asked by a state legislator to present a resolution concerning the Russian tractors. However, Simmons refused to introduce the resolution because the resolution was "not the subject of an academic institution."

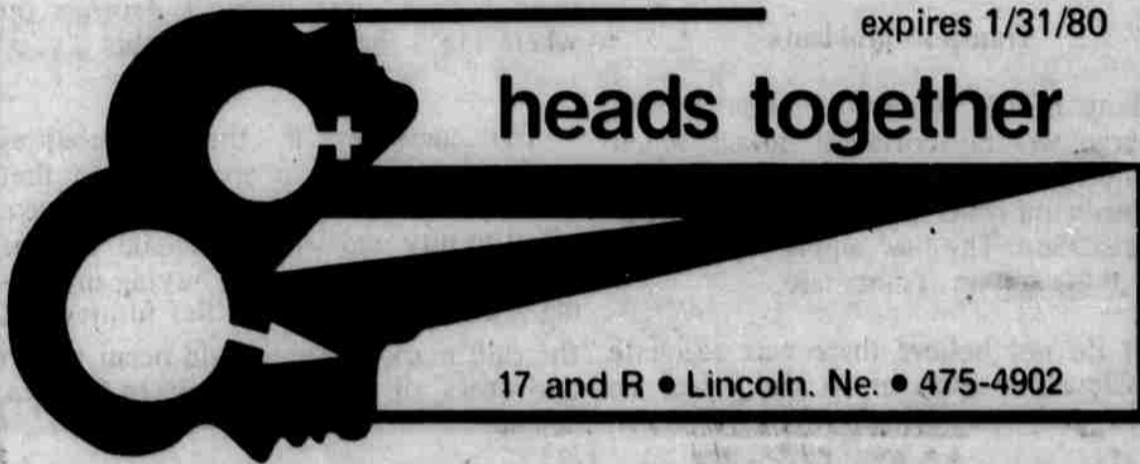
The NU lab is the only consumer-oriented lab in the world, Leviticus said. Europe has some similar facilities, but they are used mostly to allow trade, he said.

The Soviet Union paid \$10,000 for tests on the tractor already approved and \$6,000 for the tests on the other tractor. Both machines still are at the lab.

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## Woods dismissal said unfair

By Gordon Johnson

matter over to the state ombudsman.

Reasons given for the firing of Girlean Woods, a UNL custodial department employee, are indicative of discrimination, according to a report issued by the State Ombudsman's Office.

The report, issued on Dec. 3, indicates that Woods was fired for the same things her white co-workers also had done.

Murrel McNeil, the state ombudsman, said the actions taken against Woods by the university were discriminatory, but it is hard to determine whether or not the motives behind the actions were discriminatory.

### Needed reasons

According to the report, Woods' supervisor, Heinz Matthiesen, and Assistant Manager John Marker were looking for reasons to fire her. The entire incident could have been avoided if the two men had not been looking for reasons to fire her, according to the report.

"This entire matter resulted because of poor judgment, failure to follow the personnel handbook, faulty management techniques and suspect organizational structuring," the report said.

Girlean Woods was fired as a custodial leader, because she took too long on some coffee breaks and allowed unauthorized personnel to be in Oldfather Hall after closing hours.

Woods took her grievance to State Sen. Ernie Chambers of Omaha, who turned the

### No cooperation

However, the ombudsman's office was unable to investigate the matter because the university refused to cooperate in the investigation. But after an investigation into the matter by the UNL Affirmative Action Liaison Committee, the university allowed the principles in the case to be questioned by the ombudsman.

The committee decided that Woods was unfairly discharged but because the firing was not discriminatory, she should be rehired on probation.

Woods refused to go back to work under the findings made by the committee.

To rectify the matter, the university agreed to conditions recommended by the ombudsman's office. Those conditions include:

- rehiring Woods at the same rank and pay;
- placing her on the day shift;
- not placing her on probation unless she is promoted;
- paying her for back pay from the time she was fired;
- restoring all vacation and sick leave time;
- removing all materials about the incident from her personnel file.

The ombudsman's office also recommended that some organizational and management techniques be changed in order to avoid similar problems.



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