

opinion/editorial

Regent's vote twists logic; student leaders earn pay

The NU Board of Regents, that governing body of great wisdom, had a golden opportunity to right a past regental wrong last Friday but chose to continue on their misguided course regarding salaries for student regents.

The regents, who withdrew the salaries from the student regents at the UNL, UNO and NU Medical Center campuses beginning next year, voted 6-2 against restoring the salaries.

UNL and UNO student regents Rick Mockler and Florene Langford were supported by regents Robert Koefoot of Grand Island and John Payne of Kearney in seeking restoration of the salaries.

At the heart of the dispute is the dual role the student president must serve and the stipulations contained in Article 7 of the Nebraska Constitution.

Article 7 says regents shall receive no compensation but that only clouds the issue of the differences in the job of each student president.

At each of NU's three campuses, the student president is elected by a vote of the students. That student then serves as the campus' non-voting student member on the board.

So, because the student president is also the student regent,

a majority of the regents do not think the student representatives are entitled to a salary.

Once again the regents have sided against NU students with their trademark—twisted logic.

The position of student presidents was created in 1967. With the job came a salary for the work they do.

Then, in 1974, when the position of student regent was created, no increase in salary was given to the new position. So, the student regents are only getting what they deserve—being paid for their job as student presidents.

The regents vote Friday is just another step in trying to stifle their opposition.

By denying salaries to student presidents, the regents will effectively diminish the number of students interested in the position. Most students work to support themselves through school and student presidents are no different.

As a matter of fact, the wording of the resolution passed in February states regents "shall receive no funds under the control of the Board of Regents. . ."

This denies the student representatives the chance to find an on-campus job to help pay college costs.



While the regents continually complain about lack of student support for elective student offices, they don't realize they are to blame for the poor support.

Students attending NU campuses have a regent who cannot vote

and who is no longer paid for the work they do.

No wonder voter turnout is so paltry.

How are students to think that they have a say in their university when their legal representatives from campus cannot vote and work out of the kindness of their hearts?

Campaign plans to fight shrunken alligator rage

The scene: A zoo in a major metropolitan city. Two alligators have crawled out of the water, and are sunning themselves as gawking crowds pass by.

"This is the life, isn't it?" says one alligator, rhetorically.

"Why do you say that?" the other says glumly.

pat clark

"We sit around all day, they throw food at us. We've got no predators. . ."

"So you think," says the other one. "We got predators aplenty."

"Can't be," says the first. "You can't go poaching for alligators in the middle of a big city. That's the only reason I came here in the first place."

The other alligator, an elderly sort named Biff, points out at the crowd. "See those people?" he says.

"Of course," says the first one, a young alligator named Harrison.

"See their shirts?" says Biff.

"Sure," says Harrison.

"See those little patches on the shirts?"

"Look, I can see fine," says Harrison. "There are people out there wearing shirts, the shirts have patches on them shaped like alligators. . ."

"Precisely!" says Biff.

Harrison slaps the water with his tail. "C'mon, you think those patches mean anything?"

"Sure I do. I think they are killing alligators, shrinking them down, and pinning them to their shirts."

"Preposterous," says Harrison.

"So you think. But I'm telling you, people put a lot of stock in those little alligators. It's a very prestigious thing to have one, and everybody who is anybody is getting in on the shrunken alligator trade."

Harrison, a patient sort, tries another form of argument. "Okay, let's suppose that you are right," he says.

"Don't suppose," says Biff. "I know I'm right. I've been around awhile, and I've seen it all before. Twenty-five years ago, alligator skin was all the rage; it was on shoes, handbags, golf bags, you name it."

"But that's the past. It's dead and gone."

"The past lives again," says Biff. "Don't you read the papers? Ever since the 1980 election, everything is going

back to the way it was. The Cold War is back, civil rights is a dead issue, the government kowtows to the needs of big business, and. . ."

"And alligators are fair game," says Harrison, finishing the thought.

"That's right. Not just fair game, but the preferred game. I've seen them on hats, belts, socks, coats, everything. And if you ask me, it could get us any day."

"What can we do?" says Harrison.

"We've got to organize," says Biff. "We've got to alarm the alligators in other zoos. Send envoys to the Everglades to explain the situation and coordinate a national effort. We'll start small, with passive resistance. Sit-down strikes in the swamps. Boycott of any stores that sell Izod shirts. When we gather enough support, we'll march on the leading private colleges on the Eastern seaboard, where their power base is located."

"We'll have a propaganda campaign, with bumper stickers, posters, T-shirts, radio and television spots. We'll. . . we'll get interviewed by Ted Koppel!"

"Wow!" says Harrison, excited. "Do you think it will help?"

"Nah."

Work is nine-to-five, not suit and tie

You may have seen him on the CBS evening news the day the government released figures showing that more than half of America's job-seeking black teen-agers can't find work. He was standing there in the unemployment line, good-looking, well-dressed, explaining to reporter Ray Brady what he was looking for:

william raspberry

"You know, I want a job where—how I am now—dressed with a tie and a suit, you know. I want a job where I can go to work every day, you know, and have a nice set of clothes on, have a nice house, have a nice family, you know, and come home, you know. And I want to live like I want to live—like I should live."

I don't want to judge the young man too harshly. Maybe he is qualified, or at least eminently trainable, to work as an assistant buyer, an administrative aide, an

architect, or some other job that would allow him to wear a tie and a suit, you know.

All I know is that he had several seconds of precious network time to sell himself as a potential employee, and all he could think about was how he wanted to live, and particularly how he wanted to dress. Not a word about specific aptitudes or experience, no hint of any willingness to learn a skill, or to work hard, or anything else that an employer would be interested in.

He was, to hear him, looking not so much for work as for a position and the benefits that he was sure would follow. And the clear impression was that he thought he had it coming.

Some who watched the news that evening may have thought the young man insufferably arrogant, or concluded that he didn't really want a job.

I saw him as merely an exaggeration of the kind of attitude I see so often in inner-city youngsters like him. Their problem isn't arrogance or laziness or lack of ambition. Their problem is they have no sense of what work is really about.

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