

Daily Nebraskan

Friday, October 21, 1983

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Vol. 83 No. 39

AAUP supports collective bargaining

By Mary Louise Knapp

Collective bargaining can serve the needs of the faculty at UNL and of the American Association of University Professors, said Victor Stone, president of the national AAUP.

Stone spoke Thursday night at a dinner for the UNL AAUP at the Nebraska Center for Continuing Education.

The UNL chapter of the AAUP recently voted to begin procedures for collective bargaining.

"The national AAUP stands behind and with you in all respects," Stone said. "We are entirely in support of the decision," he said.

Stone said that collective bargaining, like other methods of faculty governance, requires the "continuing responsibility" of the faculty to maintain its control. One of the fears many people have of collective bargaining is that it would lead to "bossism," or the taking over of the bargaining unit by professional agents, he said.

"It wouldn't happen with faculty who want to be their own masters," he said.

Another myth about collective bargaining is that it would cause "leveling" — the end of rewards and incentives for faculty members, Stone said.

"It's (collective bargaining) what you make it," Stone said. Leveling of any sort would be entirely up to the faculty members who created a bargaining unit, he said.

The historic purpose of the AAUP is to protect academic freedom and tenure for faculty, as well as to provide a voice through which faculty members can express their concerns to administrators, Stone said. Collective bargaining can serve to aid the AAUP in that mission, he said.

The AAUP was founded to protect the independence of universities from influence by private groups and wealthy individuals, Stone said. Today, most universities are likely to be vulnerable to political influence, which is equally as dangerous to their autonomy, he said.

The withdrawal of financial assistance from state-supported universities is the most striking peril facing higher education today, Stone said.

"There is not a state in the nation in which to some extent, higher education has not suffered . . . and some percentage of state budgets to higher education has not fallen down in the last decade," he said. "This is a threat to America's future."

Stone said the reduction in support to universities shows a lack of optimism and of faith in the benefits of higher education. While those benefits perhaps have been "oversold" in the past, the "extreme" attitude shown by legislators and other government bodies in cutting funds to universities is far more dangerous, he said.

The AAUP also faces perils, Stone said. "It is a fact that professional societies are in financial trouble," he said. This is largely because of declining membership and dues paying by those who do not see an "immediate across-the-table return" from their membership, Stone said.

U.S., Japanese experts discuss PIK, exports

By Jeff Obrecht

The conflict between the United States grain export policies and the payment-in-kind program was the focus of a panel discussion Thursday at UNL's East Union.

Sponsored by the Department of Agricultural Communications, the panel's featured speakers were Leo Mayer, deputy administrator of the USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service, and Hisao Azuma, consul for Agriculture and Fisheries, Embassy of Japan.

Mayer opened the discussion saying that Japan and the United States have very much in common but have not always seen eye to eye on the topic of agriculture.

The Japanese have a \$20 billion balance of trade advantage over the United States because our nation imports more industrial products from Japan than Japan imports our agricultural products from the United States, Mayer said.

"With that money, they are buying up an awful lot of our food chain," he said.

Mayer explained that the Japanese are buying and investing in our food processors but are very restrictive about foreign investments in their own country.

"Trade policies must be directed to a global system of free trade," he said. "In the long run, protectionist policies might kill the goose that lays the golden egg."

The open market system offers the best use of resources, both agricultural and industrial, and all countries involved will benefit from it, Mayer said.

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Staff photo by Craig Anderson

UNL Professor Adrian George works in his lab.

Hydrazine breakthrough discovered

By James A. Fussell

A new scientific discovery has been made during the last 18 months by a UNL chemistry professor and his students.

Professor Adrian George said in an interview Wednesday that a new method of making hydrazine, a colorless corrosive compound useful in pharmacology, agriculture and as a component of rocket fuels, has been developed.

While hydrazine itself is probably not that important, George said, its derivatives are very important. One such derivative is isoniazid, an agent developed in the 1950s that acts to kill tuberculosis bacteria.

The current process for making hydrazine was developed at the turn of the century by F. Raschig, a German scientist. Although a great breakthrough at the time, it is now an inefficient method, George said. He explained that the current process necessitates the making of ammonia from hydrogen and nitrogen before the hydrazine can be made.

"The process we are looking at now goes right from nitrogen to hydrazine," he said. "The fewer the steps, the cheaper and faster the process should be." George said that the new process, which is still experimental, essentially circumvents the preparation of ammonia.

Hydrazine and its derivatives are useful in making plastics, pesticides, pharmaceuticals, explosives, propellants and in the treatment of water. George said he considers the new process to be a major discovery with a good chance of reducing the cost of future hydrazine production. Although the new process

may not yield any practical uses for 10 or 12 years, "the ball is rolling," he said.

George said that hydrazine may have many more capabilities, but at its present cost, its full potential may never be realized. Currently, he said, hydrazine is ten times more expensive than ammonia.

"If you could come up with a pill to cure the common cold, but it cost \$1,000 a tablet, it wouldn't sell very much to the common man," he said. George said he hopes to make hydrazine cheaper.

George said hydrazine is often described as a blowing agent. That is an agent, he said, that when decomposed produces a gas that expands and increases volume.

"It's like baking a cake with baking soda," he said. "The baking soda gives off carbon dioxide gas, and it, in turn, increases the volume of the cake." In this way, he said, the baking soda acts as a blowing agent in a manner similar to that of hydrazine.

Although he has received three grants from the National Science Foundation totaling \$352,000, George credits "seed money" from the University Research Council as helping to start his initial research in nitrogen fixation 12 years ago.

He credits others for helping with the new discovery. He said credit for making the initial hydrazine-forming reaction goes to Daniel B. Howell, a Nebraska Wesleyan University chemistry professor who was a visiting faculty member at UNL in 1981-82.

But, the English-born George, in his 16th year at UNL, reserved his greatest praise for his graduate and undergraduate students.

"My students do all the work," he said. "I just sit in my office and watch the coal trains go by."

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