

Editorial

Justices' action averts doubt in Douglas trial

With all the questionable activities of state government surrounding the failure of Commonwealth Savings Co., a decision made last week by three Nebraska Supreme Court justices was a refreshing change of pace.

Thursday, Chief Justice Norman Krivosha and Judge D. Nick Caporale disqualified themselves from the impeachment proceedings against Attorney General Paul Douglas because of their friendship with him. Judge C. Thomas White disqualified himself from the case because his daughter is an assistant attorney general.

District Judge Robert Moran of Alliance and Keith Howard of Omaha and retired District Judge William Colwell of Pawnee City will fill the three vacancies for the Douglas case.

The case came about because of a 27-19 vote by the Legislature Wednesday to begin the impeachment process. By Nebraska law, Douglas was immediately suspended from office, but the state's high court will have the final say on his fate.

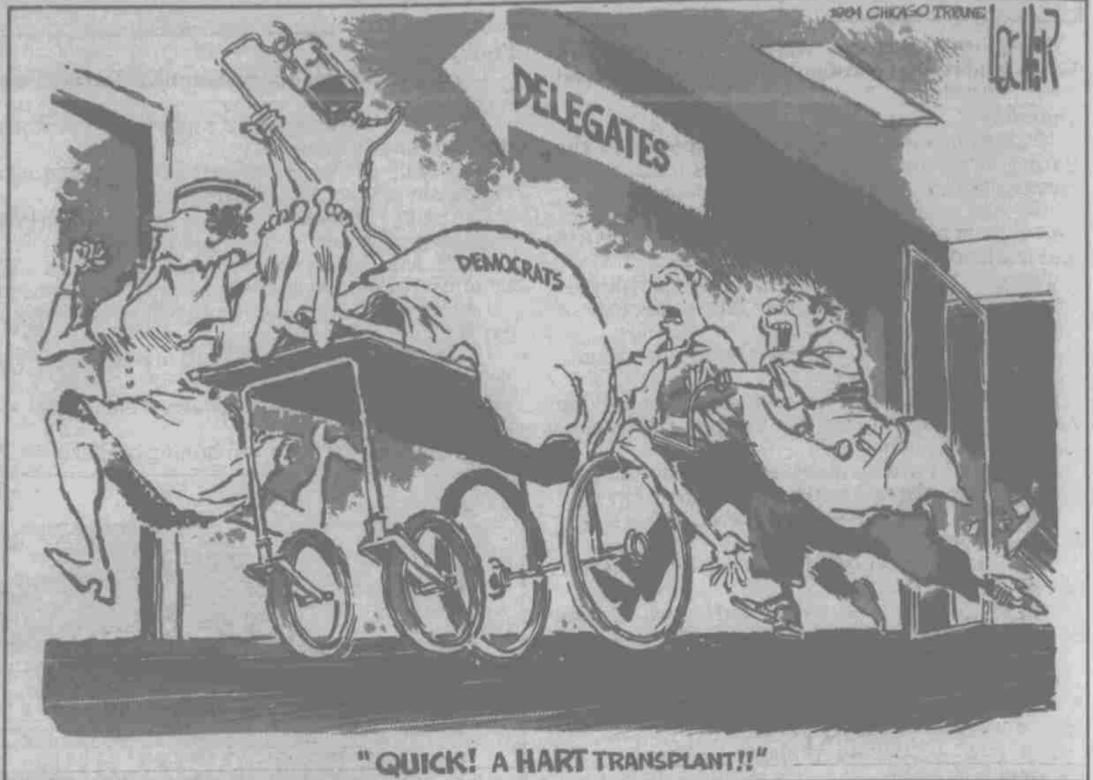
The disqualification of the three justices has caused some grumbling at the Legislature. Sen. Marge Higgins of Omaha complained that she forced herself to vote for Douglas' impeachment, despite the fact that she considered the attorney general a good friend. The justices, she said, also should be able to separate friendship from obligation and make an objective decision.

Higgins is to be commended for placing the state's best interests ahead of personal friendships, but the justices, too, deserve praise for removing the possibility of any conflicts of interest in the case.

Justices the caliber of Krivosha, White and Caporale probably would have been able to remain objective, but they were wise to remove any doubt. The Commonwealth situation already has caused too many hardships, too much distrust of state government, for the state's high court to take any chances.

Douglas may very well be cleared of the charges against him and be allowed to return to office. Had he been cleared by a court that contained three justices with possible conflicts of interest, the public would have been outraged. With all the other problems surrounding the case, that's the last thing this state needs.

All Nebraska citizens — especially Paul Douglas — should be satisfied with the current arrangement. The public can rest assured that seven highly-qualified men will hear the case and make a judgment based on facts, not on personal relationships. Douglas can take comfort in knowing that if the court clears his name, the decision is more likely to be acceptable to the public than it would have been if the three justices had not disqualified themselves.



"QUICK! A HART TRANSPLANT!!"



Letters

Pretty good progress

I would like to comment on Professor Splinter's Guest Opinion concerning Rutgers University and the AAUP. (Daily Nebraskan, March 15).

Having taught at Rutgers in the early '60s, before collective bargaining had been adopted, I can testify from direct experience that their salary scale at that time was near the bottom of Category I institutions. Now, they are in the top 5 percent. I would call that pretty good progress. The average academic year salary for Rutgers full professors in 1982-83 was \$47,300. Maybe the professors weren't driving Cadillacs, as Professor Splinter points out, but I imagine most UNL professors wouldn't mind being so deprived. (Our average was \$34,200.)

Many of the facts presented by Professor Splinter seem to me irrelevant to the debate over collective bargaining. They indicate that Rutgers seems to be

having severe budget problems, as many universities are these days, both with and without collective bargaining. But why blame that on the AAUP? Professor Splinter presents no evidence to suggest that without collective bargaining those problems would not exist.

As for the absence of Kimball Hall or a Sheldon Gallery, I can assure Professor Splinter that, being a 45-minute bus ride from the Metropolitan Museum, Lincoln Center, et al, the Rutgers faculty did not feel culturally deprived. In any case, that too is irrelevant to the issues under consideration.

It seems to me there are legitimate arguments on both sides of the collective bargaining issue, and I have personally decided to support it only after much soul-searching. Dr. Splinter's invective is not, in my view, a useful contribution to the debate.

Leo Sartori
professor
physics

SWAP could lead to future cooperations

Last week I participated in a luncheon discussion which was the culmination of Operation SWAP — a week at UNL when 13 students were paired with administrators for the sole purpose of sharing a small part of their

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lives with one another. It was immediately clear that this simple concept produced an impressive range of activities and involvements as the 26 individuals introduced their partners and briefly described their experiences.

This quick-moving 90 minutes of sharing the examples of meaningful

activities, issues and insights which touched so many aspects of our campus community included the following: an inspiring lecture in the School of Music, the complexity of federal regulations regarding financial aid planning, busy student schedules, hazardous waste, interviewing faculty candidates, the art of Akido, a newly expanded Career Development Seminar, student friendships within their houses and halls, departmental staff meetings, violence against women, public relations in the State Capitol, computers, the impact of long work weeks upon family life and leisure time, an ASUN meeting, study rooms in the library, problems of finding a job upon graduation, unionization, agricultural policy, budget concerns, large classes, faculty men-

tors, an atmosphere of intellectual curiosity, and, of course, *All My Children*. All of these experiences were shared by SWAP partners during the previous week.

The sponsors of SWAP had created a mini living-learning experiment in the truest sense. This was confirmed by a predominant theme that was unanimously communicated by the participants — everyone agreed that they not only enjoyed themselves but, without exception, each person in their own way indicated that they had learned something. Education is interaction; education is communication.

One additional observation was unavoidable. Most of the participants related their newly gained insights in personal terms rather than in the

context of global generalizations. This was perhaps most evident in the descriptors used by students to characterize the administrators they had come to know as warm, caring, sincere, dedicated, hard-working individuals who are deeply committed to making UNL more responsive to their educational needs. I felt compelled to look around the room and focus on my administrative counterparts to provide for myself some type of private validation to the student reports. From my years of personal contacts with these colleagues, I recognized immediately that such qualities were generally accurate even though some of our individual and collective shortcomings as administrators receive considerable public attention.

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Faculty, students gain healthy insights

Editor's Note: Operations SWAP '84 was a project designed by the Innocents Senior Honorary to trade places with the major administrative positions at UNL. Thirteen In-

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nocents members and administrators followed each other to meetings, classes and meals during the week of Feb. 27 to March 2 to learn more about each other's work and

education. Evaluations followed on March 5, and the results of the project were coupled by two of the participants. This guest editorial views the project from a student perspective and the one below views it from an administrator perspective.

For a few brief hours through one week this semester, 26 people at UNL took a crash course in human relations. As part of Operation SWAP, each of them had the chance to see the human side of the university life. For the first time, administrators were able to talk one-on-one with the student body they serve; sharing in student classes, and taking in stu-

dents' personal hopes and problems.

Students, likewise, were able to observe men at work in the administrative bureaucracy of a major university — men who bring to their jobs widely different backgrounds and personal viewpoints.

Operation SWAP was a small project, a limited program with simple goals. We hoped to provide an opportunity for a mix of people and viewpoints that could give each participant a different perspective on the life and work of UNL.

In changing perceptions, at least, Operation SWAP succeeded. At the brown bag lunch that ended the SWAP week, and in evaluations that

summarized it, both administrators and students said the biggest insight they gained from the project was quite simply getting to know other people as individuals. Seeing and hearing first hand the administrator's commitment to their jobs led to comments by the students about the administrators' deep and sincere concern for UNL.

Administrators, in seeing the students' lives close-up, found UNL students surviving real pressures and tough challenges and who are interested in working for and improving their university.

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