

Editorial

Increased faculty benefits produce quality education

The effort to form a collective bargaining unit at UNL has ended for now, but members of the American Association of University Professors should not consider their card campaign a failure.

Linda Pratt, president of the UNL chapter of the AAUP, announced Saturday that the card campaign would be cancelled. It had been in progress since January.

According to state law, the AAUP needed the signatures of only 30 percent of the people who would be included in the bargaining unit to call an election. The AAUP, however, said it wanted a clear majority before putting the issue before the faculty. About 43 percent of the proposed bargaining unit signed the cards.

While the campaign has been suspended, one can't help but believe that the threat of collective bargaining at UNL has forced the administration and the NU Board of Regents to listen to faculty concerns.

For the first time in a long time, the administration was successful in its efforts to receive a sizable increase in appropriations from the Legislature. As a result, faculty salaries at all three campuses will go up.

All state employees, including NU

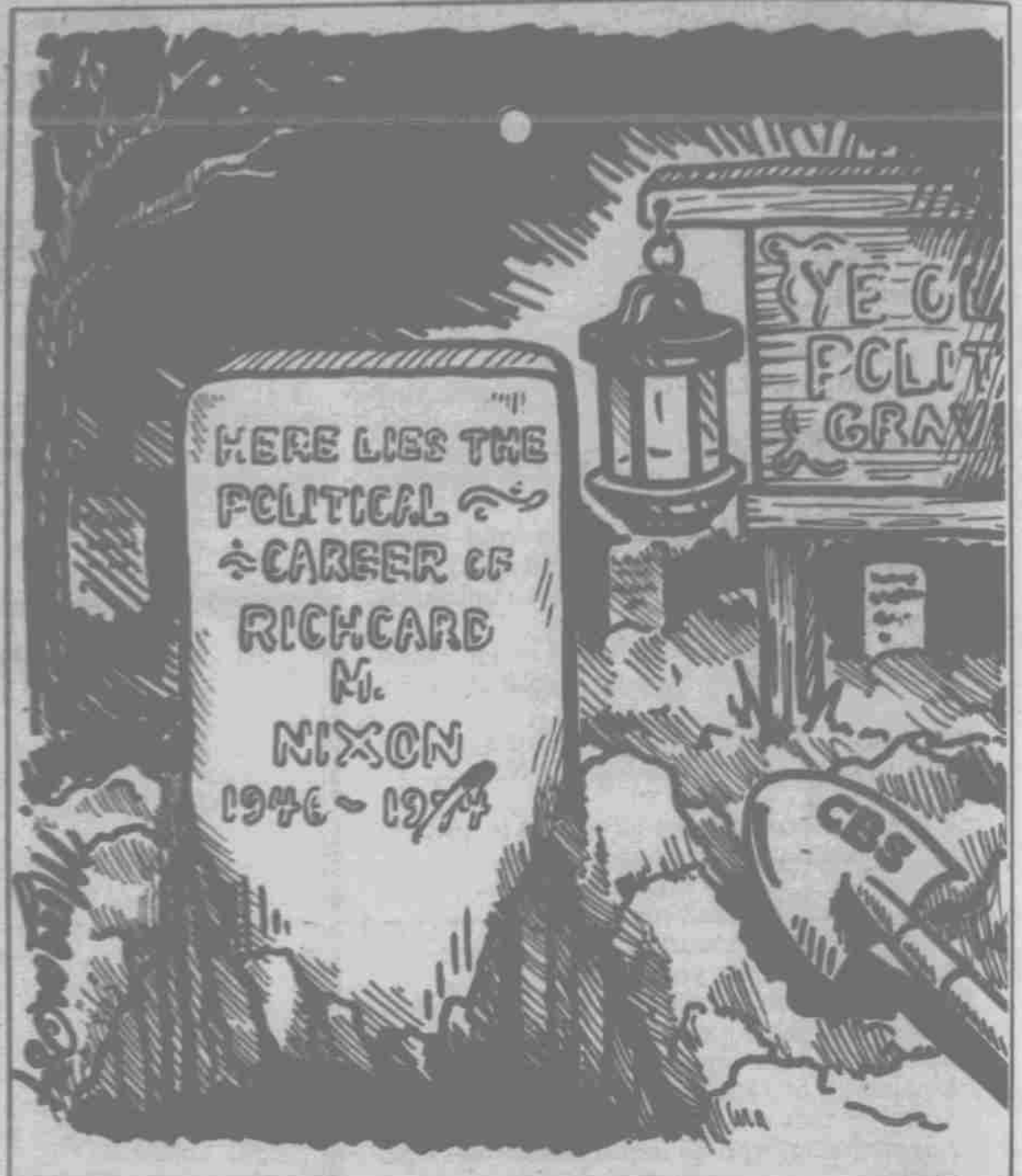
faculty members, got a 3 percent raise effective March 1. UNL faculty members will get additional increases averaging 8 percent, while staff at the NU Medical Center will receive an additional 6 percent.

Saturday, the regents approved a contract with the UNO AAUP for the first time since collective bargaining was organized on that campus in 1979. In addition to the March 1 raise, UNO will receive 3.5 percent for all faculty, 1.25 percent for merit raises and 0.25 percent to be given at the discretion of the vice chancellor of academic affairs. The contract also contains specific guidelines for governance and grievances.

UNL faculty members should not give up now. They should continue to fight for the things they've been working toward — higher salaries and a larger role in governance.

The regents and administration also should continue their efforts toward improving the situation at UNL. Within three years, UNL faculty members should have salaries and governance procedures comparable to those at similar institutions.

If that is achieved, it will benefit more than the faculty. It will mean a higher quality university for the students and the residents of Nebraska.



Scene of child abuse provokes columnist to question his values

It's funny the way your values and opinions are formed. Little scenes from a summer day might direct the way you look at many things.



Bill Allen

An old beat-up Gran Torino pulled off the interstate in front of the restaurant. You could see its exhaust, so that means it wasn't in great shape, I think. I know little about cars. It was also rusty and the tires were bare. The back sank lower than the front. The windshield was dirty.

A man with no shirt and faded jeans with holes got out of the driver's side and went to use the phone located outside the building. The woman, similarly dressed, but with a shirt, went around the corner to the bathroom.

This all happened last summer when it was hot. There was a gas station and

a convenience store with the restaurant. Several times people got out of cars barefoot and after a few steps on the hot pavement, went back to their cars for shoes. There wasn't much shade, either. The restaurant was air-conditioned, but the store wasn't.

There was a baby in that old Gran Torino wearing a dirty diaper, not a Pampers, and eating one of those life-savers on a stick. His hands and face were sticky and he wiped his hands on the driver's-side car window, which was half down. You could see that he was hot. His curly hair was set and stuck to his forehead. He stood on the car seat and looked in at us standing in the air-conditioned restaurant.

His parents were gone a long time. The sun must have been magnified through that windshield onto his young skin like that hot pavement on those bare feet. The kid didn't cry, but he didn't look happy.

Continued on Page 5



Letters

Department shoddy

I am very disappointed in the computer science department at our university. For the size of the college and the growing dependence on computers, the department here is relatively small.

I understand that the facilities this year represent a substantial improvement over those of previous years, but are they going to stop at this point? From what I gather, the department has no desire to expand. They are not offering nearly enough classes or supplying enough teachers to meet students' growing desire to major in computer science.

Instead of encouraging computer science majors, the department is discouraging them. In order to take a 200-level computer science class next year and then a 300- or 400-level class the following year, a student must maintain a 2.5 GPA in computer science classes. Even if the student meets these

requirements and others, he is still not assured of placement in a desired class, even upon turning in his registration the first day possible.

I am not against the 2.5 GPA requirement, because this will only help the student in the long run, but when the college cannot even handle those students who fulfill the requirements, something needs to be done. I believe the department could use about twice as many terminals as it has. This would bring us a little bit closer to the standard set by other Big Eight Conference schools with facilities far superior to ours. A college that operates on a scale as large as that of this university should be able to make the necessary changes to suit the changing student body. If the appropriate improvements are not met, I can see no reason (other than the Nebraska football ticket) for continuing my studies here.

Dave Wilmes
freshman
computer science

Indecisive politicians better never than late

For a people who religiously observe the first commandment of modern life — Thou Shalt Grow and Change — we are remarkably critical of politicians who do just that. We seem to react to leaders the way we once reacted to our parents. We criticize them if they're out of step and criticize them if they begin to trip the light punk rock.



Ellen Goodman

Remember what happened to Jimmy Carter when he changed the part in his hair? This year any number of candidates will be judged for changing their minds.

It's begun already. In the "kinship struggle" (as Jesse Jackson calls it) between Mondale and Hart, the two men have engaged in an argument that sounds like the old Abbott and Costello routine, "Who's on First?" Each has claimed that he was on the "right side" first, and each has chastised the other for being "late" on the issues. In New York, Hart accused Mondale of being "late" on Vietnam and Mondale accused Hart of being "late" on the nuclear freeze.

In Massachusetts, where a number of Democrats have plunged into the race for Paul Tsongas' Senate

seat, there's been a similar controversy over abortion between supporters of Rep. James Shannon and Rep. Edward Markey. The curious thing is that both candidates are pro-choice. But Markey is criticized as "late" on the issue. He converted last year. As a Markey supporter says, "The way things look now, you are as likely to get knee-capped as praised for changing."

Some of this who's-on-first campaign rhetoric comes from men who are trying, sometimes desperately, to highlight differences. A lot of it is normal Democratic Party squabbling. Kinship struggles may be the most vicious of civil wars.

Out of season, we often allow politicians to change their positions, especially if they are changing in sync with their times or with our own opinions. George Wallace has made the most heralded trip from segregationist to born-again populist. Ronald Reagan, a model of rigidity, made a once-and-forever mid-life switch before he got into politics.

But often, the people who were "there" on an issue first have trouble accepting the leaders who followed them. They are more uncomfortable with new allies than old enemies.

Admittedly, someone who is late on an issue may be too late. Once I sat next to a boss who was notorious for keeping women, some of whom I'd known, out of top jobs. He was, he told me benignly, quite wrong in "the old days" and he had changed. I

felt torn between loyalty to those he'd hurt, and understanding. He was late. For some, he was too late.

So I can imagine how difficult it is for someone who had lost a son or a limb or innocence in the Vietnam War to accept the explanations of those who now say they made "a mistake." It must be hard for those most intensely involved in any cause, whether it's the nuclear freeze or abortion or civil rights or Central America, to welcome the pols-come-lately. Where were you when we needed you?

But it makes more sense to welcome a changing mind. Not one that's fickle or fuzzy but one that's open to reason. After all, politics is about change. Political advocates struggle to persuade their opponents. There is something peculiar about turning around and penalizing your own converts. Ed Markey, for example, lost the right-to-life vote only to be characterized as a late bloomer by some pro-choice people. The next politician may worry less about his conscience and more about his consistency constituency.

Not every turnaround is an expedient flip-flop. Not every opinion is formed through polls. On matters as complex as those of war and peace, life and death, many politicians are like the rest of us. They keep on thinking and get stuck in the process. Growing and changing.

© 1984, The Boston Globe Newspaper Company/
Washington Post Writers Group