

Editorial

University budget penalizes students

Tuition increase doesn't pay off

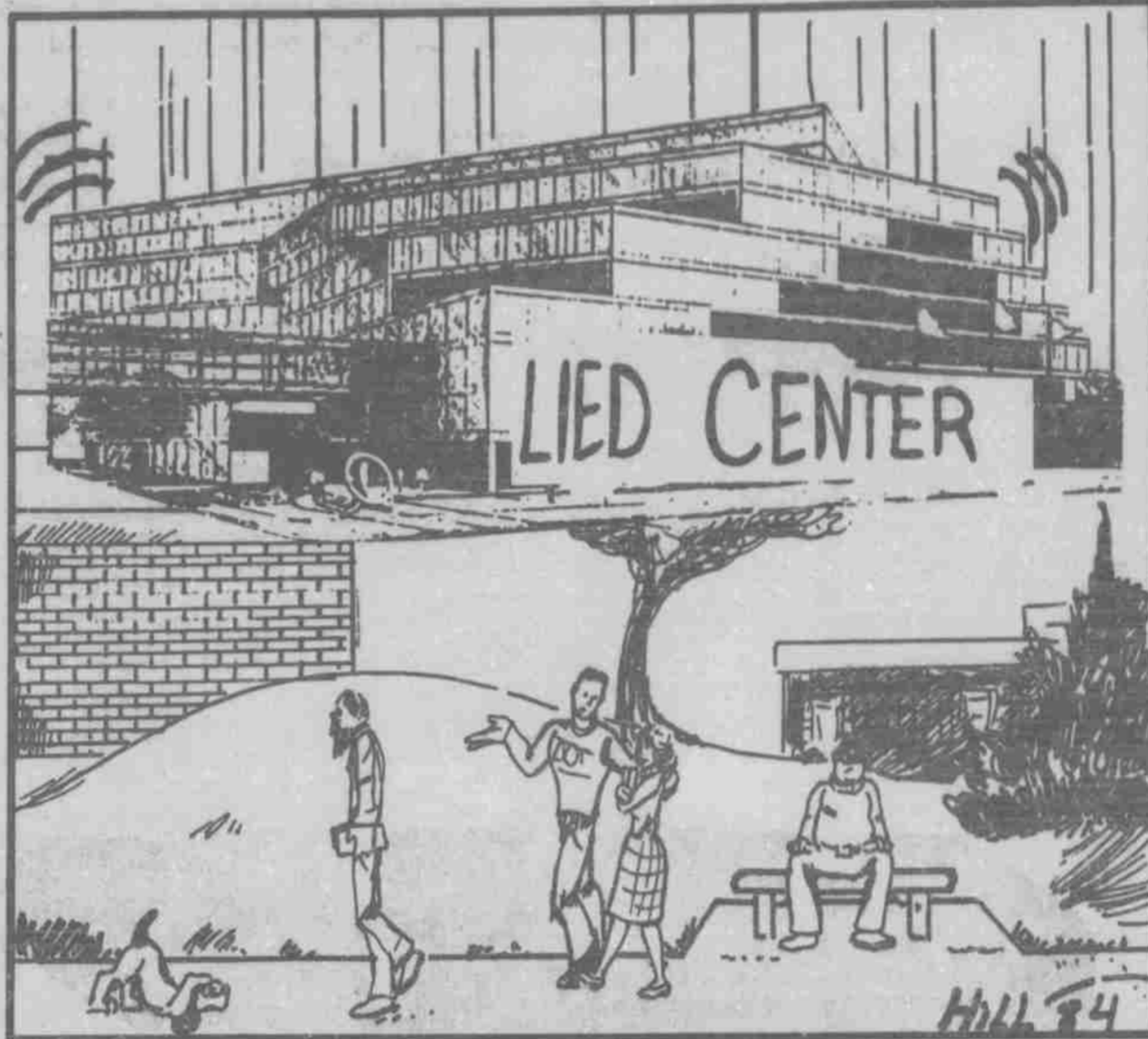
Exercise your fingers and be warned — you'll be digging them deeper into your pockets to find money for tuition next year. Take a second, and a deep breath for the obligatory grunt before pulling out the dough.

You'll manage — work a few extra hours — rearrange some priorities.

ASUN President Mark Scudder, testifying before the Citizens Commission for the Study of Higher Education, said that in the last four years, UNL's tuition has increased 43 percent, and the NU Board of Regents plans to increase tuition by 10 percent next year.

Whether we receive an education or not, we pay to attend the university. It's not hard to realize that costs increase over time. But UNL students are subjected to excessive educational costs relative to the quality of services and facilities they have access to.

Low teacher salaries, outdated facilities and decreasing state funding in general have been increasing the financial burdens of students and the university. So far all concerned (students, taxpayers and philanthropists) have coughed up enough money to keep things from literally falling apart. We live from one fiscal year to another — one tuition hike to another.



It seems that the university and the state will not have much trouble rounding up \$7 to 8 million apiece for construction (and creation of a maintenance fund) of

the Lied Center.

A Wednesday Omaha World-Herald article reported that \$2 million in private donations has already been pledged —

three weeks before the official start of a fund raising campaign by the NU Foundation. The \$20 million Lied Center will be funded by a \$10 million gift from the Lied Foundation, \$7 million committed by the state legislature, but not yet appropriated, and \$3 million of the funds raised by the NU Foundation (whose goal is \$8 million).

The extra money raised by the foundation is earmarked to establish a permanent endowment for maintenance of the center. In a Tuesday Lincoln Journal article, NU Foundation President D.B. Woody Varner said, "After considering it carefully, we decided it's not fair to ask the Legislature to bear the maintenance costs of this building, after appropriating \$7 million for construction."

Within months the university has garnered millions of dollars from the public and private sectors for construction of the Lied Center. No problem.

A few thousand extra to buy neighboring property, including compensation for relocation. No sweat.

The university is buying dessert for a malnourished child — itself.

The university's ability to raise money is greater than the students' (obviously) who are being asked to pay more money for less education.

Students are not the only ones who need to be rethinking their financial priorities.

Julie Jordan Hendricks
Daily Nebraskan Senior Editor

Reagan must lower deficit before it's too late

Was Walter Mondale right when he tried to make the federal budget deficit a major issue in the campaign?

Some economists within the Reagan administration are now

Jack Anderson and Joseph Spear

expressing concern that another recession is on the way — and that the main cause will be the continuing budget deficits and the zooming national debt. They predict that the recession could

come as early as next summer.

When Mondale tried to make an issue of the deficits — and proposed tax increases to bring them down — the Republicans cleverly portrayed his argument as a simple call for higher taxes and more spending (even though Mondale had proposed using the additional revenue exclusively for cutting the debt).

Now President Reagan will have to face the situation he so carefully sidestepped throughout the campaign — and it may be too late. Of course, it may have been too late for Mondale's remedies, too, but the shock to the public will be far greater when Reagan finally faces

up to the hard realities.

For the cold fact is, according to administration dissenters' private views, "Reaganomics" simply hasn't brought down the deficit. The tax cuts were not able to stimulate enough economic growth (and thus more tax revenues) to pay for the huge increase in defense spending under Reagan.

These analysts describe the economy as lying between a rock and a hard place. If the president makes only a token effort to cut the deficits — or none at all — higher interest rates will inevitably bring on a recession.

On the other hand, if the presi-

dent slashes government spending and raises taxes enough to have a significant effect on the deficits, this could send such a shock through the economy that it would trigger a recession. Reagan can't afford to do nothing, but he can't afford to do too much.

"It was rationalized that the economic growth resulting from the tax and spending decision would lead to higher incomes, which in turn would boost tax receipts sufficiently to wipe out... most of the deficits," states one internal analysis seen by our associate Michael Binstein.

"It became evident, however,

that the results were not quite turning out that way."

That was putting it diplomatically. Since Reagan arrived in Washington, Congress has had to raise the national debt ceiling nine times. And the national debt is expected to top \$2 trillion by mid-1986 — double what it was when Reagan was inaugurated. By 1989, the Congressional Budget Office expects the debt to hit \$3 trillion.

But if there's a recession or unexpectedly high interest rates before then, these gloomy predictions will be seen as overly optimistic.

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Women's economic gains yield little consolation

A recent Rand Corporation report says women are making economic gains in the workplace. Instead of making a mere 59 cents to every "man's" dollar, a woman now makes a whopping 64 cents for every dollar a man makes.

While I must admit that the 6-cent increase is, at least on paper, progress, I find little consolation in the fact that it took women years to get those six cents. And, given inflation, gaining those pennies may not mean a lot when translated into buying power.

That 6-cent "gain" places today's women in the same



Elizabeth Burden

relative place as women in 1955, according to Betsy Palmer, president of the Nebraska Pay Equity Association. This indicates to me that the road to equity is not only rocky, but very, very long.

The Rand report implies that women should celebrate this event and consider it a triumph of the free enterprise system. The free enterprise system, which of course is dominated and controlled by men, has triumphed alright. They have managed to keep women working harder and harder to stay in the same place.

Nebraska's legislators were given a chance last session to deal with the issue of the wage gap in Nebraska. State Senator Bernice Labedz, of the fifth district, sponsored a

bill that would have established a commission to study the issue, and develop a plan that would bring women's wages in line with those of men counterparts if discrimination was found. (I should say when it was found.) It did not pass. While the bill may have been killed, Palmer said she is sure the setback did not kill the issue.

Apparently the legislators as well as others across the nation, think the current gap is fair (equitable), and therefore that pay equity exists.

As a female college student, it bothers me to know that upon finding a job, I will make (theoretically) only 64 percent of what my male peers will make. This seems strange to me, for we sat in the same classrooms, listened to the same lectures, and sometimes I received a better grade. Maybe I should only have to pay 64 percent of the tuition that he had to pay.

Since it is taking so long to achieve equity, maybe an alternative plan should be proposed. Let's call it the parity pricing program. In this program, there will be two prices for things in the marketplace — one full price to be paid by those receiving 100 cents for every dollar earned, and a discounted price (36 percent off, of course) for those making the 64 cents.

Far-fetched? Hard to administer? You bet it would be. The alternative...? But for my 64 cents, I'm willing to give something new a try.

There are some Nebraskans currently working on the issue. Palmer says that those interested in the subject are welcome to come to association meetings on the third Wednesday of the month at Lincoln's downtown YWCA. Then you can put in your 64-cent's worth.

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