

Professor challenges students

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A class full of life? Definitely. But certainly not an easy class. Writing is stressed in each of his classes and students are treated as adults, he said.

The title 'professor' is taken seriously by Volgyes. He said he is a tough professor. But he said he doesn't flunk students — they flunk themselves.

After 35 years of studying Eastern Europe and either writing or editing 25 books on the subject, Volgyes' political views are strong and definite.

"My job is to understand and explain — not to forgive. That's God's," Volgyes said. "I don't make emotional judgments. I've lived there and I know and understand the people there."

Volgyes doesn't hesitate to call his 25th literary effort his finest. The book is titled "Politics in Eastern Europe." Before he had the final product, Volgyes had put in seven years and done research in the eight eastern nations.

"I'm proud of it," he said. "Nothing has been written on eastern politics since 1966 because a person can't specialize in eight countries. People in the field have come back with strong reviews on the book."

Volgyes' life has been more than giving lectures and grading term papers. He has done research for the U.S. Department of Defense, the State Department and the Office of Education. He said he has been successful and lucky in bringing grants to UNL and to himself.

'Lack of communication' delays train

By Colleen Kenney
Senior Reporter

When the next shipment of nuclear waste from the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant in Pennsylvania rolls up to Nebraska on Union Pacific trains later this summer, Nebraska Gov. Bob Kerrey will know about it.

Kerrey stopped a U.P. train loaded with 10,000 pounds of nuclear waste Tuesday night in Marysville, Kan., 11 miles before it would cross the border into Nebraska.

Kerrey and Nebraska State Patrol officials had no idea the shipment was to pass through Nebraska Tuesday night until late Tuesday afternoon, said Don Nelson, Kerrey's chief of staff.

An official from the U.S. Department of Energy said Nebraska officials were notified twice by phone and once by mail of the impending shipment, but were not given the shipment's exact arrival time because they did not request it. States should ask for the arrival time if they want to know it, said Terry Smith, spokesman for the DOE's Three Mile Island shipping program, Thursday in a telephone interview.

Both sides call this train-stopping incident a communication problem, but on whose side the problem originated is not clear.

Smith said the DOE's traffic manager Al Anselmo called Nebraska state patrol officer Maj. Ron Witkowski July 14 and July 18. Smith said the documented calls showed that Anselmo informed Witkowski of the train's departure from Pennsylvania but did not tell him the exact time of arrival in

Nebraska.

A letter from the DOE to the Governor's office in February explained the shipment program but was not specific about when the first train would come through Nebraska, said Kerrey's press liason Marcia MacKnight.

Nelson said the DOE should have called Nebraska officials 24 to 48 hours before the train reached Nebraska's border. "Their (the DOE) definition of inform and mine are two different things," Nelson said.

Nebraska State Patrol officers said they were not notified at all about the shipment. Witkowski could not be reached for comment, but his colleague, Capt. Eldon Folkers, said Witkowski was never notified.

"The first I knew about it was when I saw the train on TV," Folkers said.

He said the state patrol should be notified on every shipment that comes through Nebraska and has no idea why the state patrol was never notified.

Five of the six states preceding Nebraska on the train's route except for Kansas requested the arrival time information, Smith said. Kansas officials found out about the train's arrival ahead of time through the news media, he said.

"They have to let us know they want it (the arrival time)," Smith said. "We deal with a lot of jurisdictions."

Nelson said he learned of the incident when questioned by a reporter Tuesday afternoon. He said he and Kerrey could not reach DOE officials. Kerrey then decided at 6:15 p.m. to halt the train at the border.

Kerrey's first reaction to the news

was "unprintable," Nelson said.

U.P. officials were called. They halted the DOE-contracted train in Marysville around 9 p.m. to avoid a confrontation at the border. Nelson and Nebraska State Patrol Superintendent Col. Robert Tagg flew by helicopter to the town. Tagg and Nelson then questioned U.P. and DOE officials aboard the train about the time the train was to enter Nebraska, its route and check points, and its security arrangements, Nelson said.

After the discussion, which lasted about 45 minutes, Nelson said he was satisfied the train was safe enough to transport its radioactive load across Nebraska.

The DOE will notify Nebraska officials on every future shipment from TMI, said Nelson.

"I wasn't interested in finding out who screwed up," Nelson said. "I was only interested in carrying out the orders of the governor."

The nuclear waste shipment stopped in Marysville was the first of 35 to 40 shipments from TMI that will travel

through Nebraska over a two and one-half year span, Smith said.

The specially-equipped one-car train will continue travelling a route through Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Nebraska, Colorado, Wyoming and Idaho on its way to the DOE's Idaho National Engineering Laboratory near Idaho Falls.

The radioactive waste from the TMI nuclear accident in 1979 will be researched at the Idaho laboratory about the material's fission product inventory, chemistry and fuel behavior during the accident, Smith said.

This first shipment left Pennsylvania last weekend and arrived at its Idaho destination at 6 a.m. CST Thursday, Smith said. The next shipment will go through Nebraska sometime in August, Smith said.

Smith said he was surprised by Kerrey's action.

"We don't like having delays," he said. The DOE will continue its policy of cooperating with the states to ensure nuclear waste shipments run smoothly in the future, he said.



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