

Public employees up for more state money

by Tricia Ciaravino

If Nevada receives \$8.5 million more in state and gaming taxes than the amount projected in the budget, all public employees will be eligible for a one-time 1 percent bonus April 1.

If by chance there is a surplus in the budget, which exceeds minimum expectations, all public employees will receive up to a 5 percent raise in 1 percent increments July 1, the

beginning of the fiscal year.

However, the employees' chances of getting this money are slim and none.

Gov. Bob Miller has made budget cuts totalling \$52 million this year. Many of these cuts will carry over into the next fiscal year when Miller also has to cut an additional \$76.9 million.

Information for this article was obtained from the Las Vegas Review Journal.

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"I'm not happy about it (the cuts) but I'm not sure anybody would be happy with my solution," he said.

Coffin's solution was to "re-scind pay raises effective Feb. 1, but trigger it back in for the next fiscal year if the economy was better. The reason for that is that we would have been able to avoid most of the cuts we made. We would have saved \$20 million and prevented layoffs."

Coffin said in the next fiscal year, which begins July 1, there will be \$47 million in flexibility that the state doesn't have now.

"They were entitled to their raises but if we had known in June what we know today about the economy we wouldn't have granted the raises or we would have raised more tax money," Coffin said.

A special session was suggested to solve the budget problems, but the idea was discarded for fear the time would be used to discuss other issues, such as the business tax. Also, time was running out and a

lengthy session could have caused more problems. However, Miller had the authority to call a special session which consisted of only one topic and could have advised lawmakers of the urgency of the situation. He simply chose not to.

"I'm sad for the university because we're going to lose a lot of the ground we have gained over the years," Coffin said. "I think the regents should have lobbied the governor for a special session. In a way it was their responsibility to do it, but they're caught in a box."

"We all know what came out of the legislature was different from the original plan," Neel said in regard to Coffin's plan. "It may well be that the impact would have been lessened."

Coffin said he didn't have enough support for his plan.

"Everybody wants to be a team player and get along with the governor," Coffin said. "That's the way the governor wanted it and that's what they did."

Armed robbery occurs on campus

by Tricia Ciaravino

On Jan. 10, in the parking lot behind the Computer Services Building at UNLV, a Whittlesea Blue Cab driver was the victim of an armed robbery. In exchange for his life, he gave his fare, the \$250 he had collected that evening.

The driver said he picked up his fare at the corner of Harmon Avenue and Koval Lane. The passenger requested transportation to the university residence halls.

The driver told University

Police that his passenger pointed a blue steel .38 caliber revolver at him and threatened to blow his head off if he did not hand over the money.

The suspect was last seen fleeing the scene of the crime, north across campus.

He is described as a white male, mid-twenties, six feet tall, 175 pounds, clean cut and shaven. He was wearing a dark brown or black leather jacket. University Police said they do not think he was a UNLV student.



Lera (left) and Slava Korelev from the new commonwealth of states

photo by Bonar Tucker

Young Russian democracy is considered from a UNLV perspective

by Tricia Ciaravino

On Dec. 8, 1991, the Soviet Union and its communist ways were shattered. In its place came the Commonwealth of Independent States and democracy. Boris Yeltsin, the president of Russia who rescued Mikhail Gorbachev from the coup and then pushed him out of the government, is responsible for this new democratic state. It remains to be seen if Yeltsin can make his government policy into a reality for the people.

Mobs have already gathered outside the Kremlin in Moscow to protest this new form of government. Yeltsin's free-market prices have given store owners the right to charge more money for food than they have in stock. Families wait all afternoon for bread that is too stale or moldy to eat.

Democracy sounds fine in theory, but for the people living in the commonwealth, it could become a chaotic nightmare.

"The people are hopeful," said Vyacheslav (Slava) Korolev, a graduate student at UNLV from Novosibirsk, Sibe-

ria. "They see mistakes and that is OK. But the people who remember (former) times remember bread and wine. They aren't interested in the policy of the government. They are interested in stores and bread. It's really sad that these people are protesting against the democratic government."

"It's one thing to hear about people starving. But when it's good friends of yours, it's doubly painful," said Steve Rowland, associate professor of geology, who lived and worked in Siberia for eight months.

He said the letters he received from his friends are grim. They indicate that availability is worse and prices are high. Rowland said that things are not only not getting better, they are getting worse.

"The scientists are having a hard time," Rowland said. "In Moscow, many institutes are not paying well or on time. Those who can get away to the west are. I think Russia's science will suffer."

Rowland said he feels only time will tell if Yeltsin can make democracy work.

"I think it's a very confused

situation right now. I think this Commonwealth of Independent States is in principle a potentially good move but it's just impossible for anybody to predict how it will work out," Rowland said.

"It's early to make a conclusion against Yeltsin's government," Korolev said in agreement. "I'm sure he has plans and experienced people abroad. I would like the people who have more experience to govern."

Part of Yeltsin's problem may be a lack of understanding. "I'm not sure that Yeltsin and his advisors understand their own people and economy," Rowland said, speaking of the people's mistrust of the government and their dealings with the black market. "There is no coordinated effort (between cities) and no evidence of a well thought out plan."

Still, Korolev thinks the problems can be overcome.

"My friends and family and I are hopeful. We will overcome this difficult period in our history. It's probably the most difficult period for our economy and young democracy."



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