

A Brief History of Saunders' "Lease" of Airplane N777AQ During a Recession

Part 4

Why Is There So Little Trust In Leaders?

We organize the history by documenting representations made by President Saunders and Provost Lyman in their report to a Faculty Senate meeting on [December 5, 2008](#) (page 2, para. 7). See Parts [1](#), [2](#) and [3](#) which provide a context for Part 4 and the documents obtained from USM in a Mississippi Open Records that are the sources of information concerning the plane and passenger usage, costs, lease agreements, etc.

At the Faculty Senate meeting on December 5, 2008, Saunders/Lyman protest that the plane N777AQ is "... a 1980 King Air Airplane, like the one we had for many years." What kind of plane did USM have for many years? Who paid for it? How much? And how wise was that decision? And if the plane was "like the one we had for many years", then Drs. Saunders and Lyman had access to detailed cost figures that should have provided a much more accurate budget of costs than they palmed off on the faculty senators.

Or were both planes merely similar in the sense that they were purchases that added to waste of taxpayer and tuition funds, which made future economic recessions more difficult to deal with?

In an equally absurd argument presented to the faculty senators, "President Saunders stressed the extensive amount of travel (over \$8 million last year alone) among the faculty, administration and other offices including athletics and development." Why include this bit of information? Is Saunders proposing her airplane will save the \$8 million in travel costs? Of course not. But why make such a statement if it is not meant to divert attention from the facts that should be considered when purchasing N777AQ? Irrelevant information overload serves the purpose of distracting the audience and confusing the relevant issues.

The faculty senators were entirely too polite to let this nonsense pass for relevant information.