In the 12-28-11 edition of The Times “Capital View” column, Mary Kay Quinlan of Nebraska News Service, poked fun at Republican presidential candidates (even one’s relationship with her God) and the “Republican Nomination Comedy Tour.” Apparently, what began as a UNL student legislative “news” service, has become a springboard for her opinion as bureau chief.

Yes, the candidates are humans. With all their faults, they showed the courage to stand up—seeking a return to the rule of law and freedom for individuals in this country. I for one, want them to be vetted to the greatest degree possible—that we might avoid the terrible mistake made in 2008.

I side with her lamentation for the time when Nebraska had a more important role in the presidential election process and the present over-importance placed on the Iowa caucuses, as if Iowans have more political “insight” than the people of any other state. I’ve been to Iowa. Where I take umbrage, is in her descriptions of and statements about the candidates.

She refers to Ron Paul as “...the darling of the tea party folks who say they hate big government. Except please don’t tamper with their Social Security and Medicare.”

First of all, Ron Paul’s support comes only from Ron Paul supporters among tea partiers, not the movement as a whole (no more than any other organization). Secondly, why wouldn’t people who hate big government be concerned about the money stolen from them, when it could have been placed in a real investment plan? Especially at a time when Obama’s payroll tax cut threatens the funding going into the system.

She then finds an artful way to call Newt Gingrich “slimy.” As for his statement about Palestinians being an invented people and a dig at “...the former history professor’s foreign policy credentials.”? Tell me where to find a credible reference to the nation of “Palestine” being ruled by Palestinians.

She obviously likes Jon Huntsman as “...the only candidate with credible foreign policy experience...” I disagree. Rick Santorum (who I’m surprised wasn’t labeled warhawk) also has foreign policy experience. It’s not that Iowans don’t care about Huntsman. Most people don’t

even know who he is. His comment about Iowa picks corn not presidents and speaking Chinese in debates, probably doesn't help.

In her 01-04-12 column she promoted former Lt. Gov. Kim Robak as a "...respected Lincoln attorney, and surely is an example of the type of people whose credentials plausibly fit them for public office." With all due respect to attorneys, they are the last people we need to see more of in government. I still think Democrats should be pushing Rebekah Davis as a replacement for Senator Ben Nelson.

I do not know Ms. Quinlan, but I get the sense that she may have helped vote in the circus we currently have in Washington. No one is laughing but the clowns.

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Editor's note: The Capital View column, featuring commentary about state and national events and politics, has been written for years by Ed Howard. Recently, he has not been able to offer his comments due to illness. Other writers, through the Nebraska News Service, have been filling in on a temporary basis.