

Campus police role questioned

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University students usually only make fun of the "campus cops." But recently students have come to the defense of these men in blue.

The status of the campus police is being threatened by the Spelts Commission, which investigated the disruptive ac-

tions on the Lincoln Campus last spring. The Commission recommended the University explore the possibility of relieving the campus police of law enforcement functions and depend entirely on the city and county police for law enforcement.

ASUN President Steve Tiwald opposes the Com-

mission's recommendation.

"It's important that a community like the University have a police force that knows how to handle the special problems which arise on the campus," he said.

Campus police Chief Gail Gade defended his force by saying: "We feel that since we are here we should do the job and not have to call in an outside law enforcement agency."

"The city and the county don't have the men to spare to cover the campus, added Gade. "In order for them to adequately cover their jurisdiction and the campus they would have to hire more men."

The Board of Regents have the authority to alter the structure of the campus police. But one regent, Edward Schwartzkopf of Lincoln, opposes stripping the campus police of their law enforcement functions.

"You have to give the University community the chance to govern itself," said Schwartzkopf. "The campus police ought to be given the chance to handle any disruptive action."

Another controversial proposal to the Spelts Commission recommends that University police be studied with a view to eliminate channels of discussion and University discipline now used before police are called on campus for any purpose. The Commission stated that present University policy on disruptive actions can be interpreted as making the campus a "quasi-sanctuary" for law violators.

The Lincoln Police have jurisdiction on campus, but do not usually go onto the campus unless requested by University authorities. This is the same for the State Patrol which legally has the power to enforce the law anywhere in the state.

Schwartzkopf said there was "nothing wrong" with the sequence of steps the University uses in coping with disruptive actions. However, he added that timing can be a problem in the University's policy on campus disorders.

Although the Spelts Commission recommended new ways to handle future disruptions, it concluded that the Ad-

ministration's use of discussion and negotiation of issues were effective in bringing the Military and Naval Science Building occupation to a peaceful end last May.

"It seems to me," said Tiwald, "that what the Spelts Commission did was congratulate everyone for keeping the campus peaceful and then turned around and recommended that all the flexibility which was important in keeping the peace be done away with."

"I interpret the Spelts Commission report as saying that under the circumstances the Administration did a good job, but in future incidents, with experience behind us, we could improve our policies," said University Chancellor Durward B. Varner.

"Many if not most of the recommendations make sense, added Varner, "but I have some reservations."

Whatever the regents decide to do regarding the Spelts Commission recommendations, it is almost certain that legislation dealing with campus disorders will be introduced in the 1971 Nebraska Unicameral.

Sen. C. W. Holmquist of the Legislative Council's executive board said he would not call for a legislative investigation into the spring demonstrations on campus.

However, the Oakland senator said he favored a law providing for the mandatory expulsion of students who violate laws during a campus disruption. "I imagine there will be several laws introduced like that," said Holmquist.

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