

Lundy retreats bitterly from library battle

by MIKE WILKINS
Staff Writer

The story of Frank Lundy and his quest for a new Library for the University's Lincoln campus is nearing an end—and not without some bitterness.

Lundy has reached the mandatory retirement age of 65, and after 27 years as director of University Libraries he has also lost his patience in trying to establish a "first-rate" library system at NU.

"This state will not even support one first-rate University," he commented. "I have been begging for sums of money within financial reach for a library, yet a fieldhouse receives an open-ended check."

Involved with the allotment of funds for library construction are the political motives of the Legislature. "The plans were made for a single library at one fixed cost. On the floor of the Legislature that building has been tossed around in the past five years at many different costs and still no building," he said.

Lundy's efforts to gain a new library addition for the

central branch began about ten years ago as he foresaw the expansion of the University as far as students and the number of volumes required for the library. He began to bring the library's problems to the attention of high administration officials.

In 1968, Lundy and his staff prepared a comprehensive study of needs for the proposed expansion of the central branch.

Using this report and funds allotted from the Legislature, plans were made for a \$7.5 million building. Then politics came into the picture and the plans still remain unused in a second floor Love Library office.

Lundy said one of the problems stems from the campaign proposals of Gov. J. J. Exon.

Representatives from Exon's office captured an inaccurate picture of the library situation, he continued.

"These men would walk through the library several times and see that half of the tables were not being used by students and that empty shelves existed in various places in the library."

They then informed Exon that there are plenty of library facilities on this campus, he said.

The problem is not so simple. Lundy indicated that by 1973 all available space for books on this campus will be occupied, while approximately 70,000 volumes will continue to be purchased each year.

Academic attitude is another hindrance to library progress.

"I have observed repeatedly that real academic work on campus doesn't start until football season ends and that libraries are not heavily used the first half of the fall semester and at other times when social and sporting events

are uppermost."

"Students go to the library when teachers require that they do so. But a university with a mediocre teaching program and a library that is not well used perhaps cannot afford to spend its money on a library," he said.

This is only one of the discouraging factors which has fermented in Lundy a bitterness towards the politics within this state and University.

The faculty also has been a source of futility to him. For years criticisms about book supplies, facilities and library personnel have been directed to him and not to the source of the problem. Lundy has suggested that the faculty support the program of the library by recommending and proposing policy.

Even more disheartening to Lundy has been the absence of administration aid in handling the library problems.

"My staff and I regret that the University Libraries have not held a strong position in



Lundy ... the fight is over.

administration circles and thereby have not been able to satisfactorily accomplish their mission," he said.

Lundy's discouragement is also reflected by other members of his staff. Right now six of my best people are asking me to help them try and

get out of here," he said.

When asked if he would have done things differently in the earlier years he was here while looking back at the string of events, his answer was not surprising.

"I should have left this University in 1954."

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