

Ex-prisoner asks society-penitentiary interaction

by Linda Larson

Someone must let convicts know that people outside care, David Brewer told a small audience at the Cotner Chapel, Nebraska School of Religion Monday.

Brewer was released from a federal prison in Oklahoma last August and has since been working for prison reform in Nebraska.

PEOPLE in Lincoln should become more involved with the inmates at the penitentiary, according to Brewer.

Society has a dim view of inmates and inmates have a dim view of society, he said. This is mainly because people put all convicts in a class, Brewer added.

The biggest concern is making the return to society easier for the inmate, Brewer said.

PEOPLE should go to the penitentiary and talk with the inmates on a one-to-one basis, he said.

"Pretty soon inmates will drop their guard and become more relaxed with outsiders," he added.

Brewer said being put in a federal prison after long stays in state prisons reformed him. He cited many differences between the two.

FEDERAL institutions have better educational

opportunities and "will back you in anything you want to do," he said.

When a prisoner first comes in he is given a series of tests to find what type of work he will like, according to Brewer. He is then placed in the laundry, license plate factory, kitchen, bakery, or office, he said.

Teachers come into federal institutions and hold classes on criminology, sociology, and other topics, Brewer said. Prisoners can get certificates for their study which are recognized by many colleges, Brewer added.

"THESE certificates can get a job for you when you get out," he added.

"I think the federal system has a much more concrete system of helping a guy when he gets out than the state institution does. They make you appreciate what you become involved in."

But state institutions are behind times, Brewer said.

"PEOPLE took Attica for granted for so long," he said. "They just thought everything was all right."

"We got a new warden at our institution," he said. "He was primarily concerned with racial tension in the institution and asked the most influential black-me-to tell him what the men wanted."

There were things the men needed and couldn't get at the commissary and "I told him," Brewer said. The warden

ordered them the same day and they arrived quickly, he added.

BREWER said there were 1,047 inmates in the prison when he was there and 800 of them carried knives. Knives were carried for self-protection and aggression, he said.

There were also about 500 homosexuals, Brewer said. The majority of this number became homosexuals after they got into prison, he added.

Many of these problems could be lessened through prison reform, according to Brewer.

HE CITED two ways the state institutions in Lincoln could be improved besides sending citizens to visit.

There should be more training courses, Brewer said. The officers should keep their eyes on the job market and then train inmates for the types of jobs that are open, he said.

More good reading material is necessary, Brewer said. "The library behind the walls is very small and you have to get most books from downtown," he said. "I think they should have more books on prison reform available."

Brewer said that he thought at least 22 of the 24 demands recently asked by inmates in the state penitentiary should be met immediately. He said the demands were reasonable and that the inmates were talking about them when he was there.

For U.S. Senate

Peterson announces candidacy

by Steve Kadel

Wallace Peterson, chairman of the UNL Economics Department, announced Tuesday that he is a candidate for the Democratic nomination for the United States Senate.

"Nebraska needs a new Senator dedicated to the simple proposition that, above all else, government in a free society must tell its citizens the truth about what it is doing—in spite of political cost or embarrassment," he said during a press conference at the Cornhusker Hotel.

"Two years ago in this very room I made this same announcement of candidacy," he said. "But I was completely

unknown politically at that time. Now I'm better acquainted with the members of the Democratic party and better acquainted with the problems and their solutions.

"As an economist I feel I'm well qualified to handle problems in that area, and in the next decade economic problems will be the most important ones facing the American people," Peterson said.

Peterson plans to take an unpaid leave of absence from UNL and conduct his campaign on a full-time basis. He only campaigned part-time during his first try for the Senate two years ago.

"I've mapped out extensive plans which will take me to every part of the state," he said. "I believe that in Nebraska the personal campaign is very important."

"I've continually spoken out against the war in Vietnam which continues to kill and maim young Americans and Vietnamese to save a regime that has become a one-man dictatorship," Peterson said in a prepared statement.

"The war should end, along with the military draft which disrupts young lives in unfair fashion and does violence to

our finest traditions."

Peterson called inflation "our domestic Vietnam," and claimed that the course presently being taken will not solve the problem.

"I've suggested tax reform that would eliminate inflation-prone payroll taxes, a system of deferred compensation to fight inflation, a diversified program for rural economic development, and an urban bank system for financing major improvements in our cities," Peterson said.

Peterson is the fourth Democrat to announce his candidacy for the U.S. Senate in Nebraska.

Senator stresses student conduct

Students should conduct themselves so others will want to deal with them if positive attitudes are to be developed about the University in the next legislative session, according to State Senator Fern Hubbard Orme, of Lincoln.

Orme was a dinner guest of Delta Gamma sorority recently, where she spoke after the meal to interested students. Her visit was part of the ASUN Legislative Liaison Committee's senator visitation program being held this school year.

"You have to be interested

in the other guy," Orme told the students. "It's a good idea to visit with the state senators on a one-to-one basis. The Legislature will be more sympathetic to the University if students get through to the senators."

Orme pointed out that the University is just one of several state interests that the Legislature must approve funds for. It must compete for state support like any other lobbying group, she said.

"People don't understand that all the research going on here at the University is for the benefit of the state," Orme

said. "A lot of senators have never been on this campus."

"Give a senator specific questions on problems you feel are important, both in letters and personal visits," Orme said. "Also, talk on his terms. Relate to him."

Orme praised ASUN's visitation program for senators as a "great step" in the direction of communication between students and state senators.

Before the year is over ASUN's Legislative Liaison Committee hopes to have all of the state senators as guests of various campus living units.

Mark Hoeger, the committee's head of public relations, said his groups' main goal is to make state senators sympathetic with the University community rather than to directly confront them with issues.

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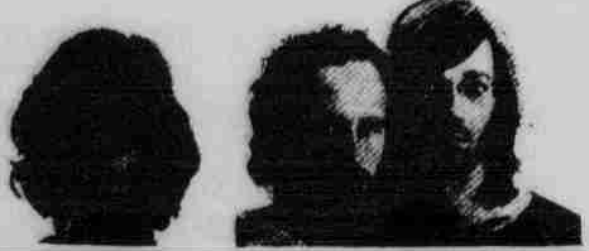
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