

## Mixed panel supports liberalized abortion laws

by H.J. Cummins

A panel ranging from a Catholic priest to a problem pregnancy counselor spoke on liberalized abortion laws as part of a week-long drive by proponents of legalized abortion.

Father John Gilsdorf, Lincoln, said to allow abortion is to "throw out the rights of the unborn."

He said "a liberalized abortion law or no law at all is just as much a sectarian, moral stand taken by society as is the present law."

And he said abortions are inherently wrong since they deny the fetus its Constitutional rights of "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

A University professor of bio-chemistry said he, too, feels "from the point of conception the fetus is a new individual in the human species."

Mike Daley added he was concerned that "if we can justify an early termination of life," he feared other reasons would be found to terminate the lives of an elderly man, a 21-year-old diabetic, etc.

Bruce Hamilton complained the present Nebraska law 1) discriminates against the poor in that only the wealthy can afford to travel to where abortions are legal, 2) is unconstitutional because it states abortions are legal to "preserve the life of a woman" which is too vague a definition of legality, and 3) is an invasion of a woman's rights to privacy.

Hamilton, director of Lincoln's Legal Aid Program, also complained the law makes no provision for rape, incest or danger to the mental health of a woman.

"Society has largely ignored the anguish and fear of a woman with an unwanted pregnancy," said Jeanne Bredthauer, a member of the Clergy Consultation Service.

She said women are "humiliated" and cowed into having unsafe abortion methods in their sincere "concern for the quality of the life possible for the unborn child" as they seek to terminate a problem pregnancy.

State Senator Wally Barnett of Lincoln said despite the political reality that liberalized abortion is unlikely in Nebraska, he sees birth determination as "the right of every woman."

He said the representation in the Legislature and other high-level positions shows "men are making the rules for what women can do with their bodies."

Dr. Joseph Rogers, a gynecologist, said abortion is "one of the safest procedures that can be medically performed."

In New York, since the legalization of abortion, he said, the maternal and infancy mortality rates have been considerably reduced.

The ease of obtaining abortions, he added, has allowed women to seek help sooner, which has reduced the number of complications in administered abortions.



Panelists . . . Mike Daley, Bruce Hamilton and Father John Gilsdorf discuss current abortion laws Tuesday.



## Draft dodgers find haven in Winnipeg

*The following story, the first of three, was written as an assignment in the depth reporting class at the UNL School of Journalism. The author is a senior from North Platte.*

By Mary Huffman

Winnipeg, Manitoba—Kirk Johnson's car, its gas tank empty, sputtered to a halt on the American side near the U.S.-Canadian border. It was 3 a.m., May 20, 1970, and Johnson, a 22-year-old

Nebraskan scheduled for induction into the armed forces that very day in Lincoln, Neb., panicked.

His goal was Canada—and safety from the U.S. draft.

THERE HAD been panic earlier, too, at a motel down the road where he had considered checking in—only to find that it was lined with U.S. government cars. He said he couldn't turn his car around fast enough. His thoughts: "If I get caught, I'll tell them I was heading back to Lincoln to be drafted."

In shirtsleeves, Johnson stepped from his car, the near-freezing temperature a reminder of how close he was to Canada. He flagged a passing car for a ride and by 8 a.m. was ready to go again.

Kirk Johnson of Lincoln was neither the first nor the last Nebraskan to cross the border at Pembina, N.D.—into permanent exile from America. There were at least five other Nebraskans in Winnipeg, his destination, but Johnson was alone and knew only slightly of the others.

AFTER HE bought gas, it was time to check in at another motel—one without U.S. government cars—to prepare for his crossing-over interview. Immigrating to Canada is a suit-and-tie affair. Jeans, sandals and a T-shirt won't do.

During the few hours at the motel, the husky, dark-haired Nebraskan remembers, he shattered his shaving mug (he still has the pieces) and left behind 16 shirts. A Canadian friend returned for the shirts.

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## Alcoholism afflicts 5,000 in Lincoln

by Duane Leibhart

An estimated 5,000 persons in the Lincoln community are afflicted with alcoholism, according to the Director of the Chemical Dependency Unit at Lincoln General Hospital.

Even with the large number of Lincoln residents affected by the problem, Director Marty Heist said there has been no rush to use the facilities at the hospital. Many people are not aware of the program initiated last June, he said.

ALSO the director said, people in Lincoln are "conservative," and tend to hide alcoholism. Wives tend to aid their husbands in hiding the problem because they are ashamed of their husbands' dependence on alcohol, he said.

Fifty-two per cent of the patients have been married, 40 per cent have been divorced and 8 per cent are single, according to Heist.

The average age of male patients treated for alcoholism has been 50, for females, 40.

Heist said women have comprised 44 per cent of the patients treated so far, but he suspects the percentage of female alcoholics is higher than his figures indicate. Women can hide their alcoholism in the home, whereas men run into trouble with their employers and have it forced into the open, the director said.

FOUR per cent of the cases treated thus far have been UNL students, he said. According to the director, the treatment takes about 30 days during which the patient takes part in group therapy sessions. We have to get alcoholics to re-evaluate themselves and face their problems or else they will go back to their old ways, he said.

Patients have been averaging 75 per cent recovery, while the national average runs at under 60 per cent, Heist said. Drying out isn't enough. "We believe it is a disease and we treat it that way."

Seventy-five per cent of patients treated are on both alcohol and other drugs, he said. One disease can't be treated successfully without treating the other because they are all so closely related, Heist said. If the released patient takes a drink he will be tempted to use drugs and vice versa, said the director.

BECAUSE about half of his patients are unemployed, Heist said, funding is a problem. "We would really hate to turn anyone away because we didn't have the money," he said. "The Lancaster County Welfare Office has sent several patients to us, but sometimes their funds run short and the hospital has to pick up the tab."

The director said the hospital has applied to the federal Health Education and Welfare Department for funds to help support the program but won't know the answer until September. The hospital is now investigating means of financing the program through contributions from local foundations and individuals, Heist said.

Although alcoholism is usually considered a vice no worse than smoking, resulting addiction can be as serious as heroin addiction, according to experts in the field.

## Board announces Nebraskan execs

Senior staff for the second semester Daily Nebraskan staff was chosen Tuesday by the UNL Publications Board.

Chosen to serve as editor of the staff was Barry Pilger. Jim Gray was selected as managing editor and Bart Becker was chosen as news editor. Business Manager will be Bill Carver.

Interviews for other staff positions will be held before the end of first semester.

