

## Poverty panel disagrees on politics of poor

Three panel members began the three-day Wesley Foundation's Conference on Poverty by refusing to agree whether poverty is political.

Bruce Hamilton, director of the Lincoln Legal Aid Society, said: "The government is not elected by poor people, and they (government officials) respond to those people who put them in office."

He also said the only welfare payments reduced last year were Aid to Dependent Children (ADC).

"The children got pro-rated but the aged, blind and disabled did not," he said. "ADC children don't vote. The aged, blind and disabled do."

Newman Grove Senator Thomas Kennedy said, "I don't think you have to have money to get to your senator."

Citizens should go directly to their representatives, Kennedy said, adding, "I hate lobbyists."

"My main problem is getting my people to come to me," he said.

Kennedy also said he found the rising welfare budget—which he said is disproportionate to the population growth—alarming, and blamed it largely on skyrocketing doctor and hospital costs.

Carol Yokum, of the Lancaster County Welfare Department, said the "welfare Cadillac" image is a myth. A state welfare investigation last year showed a 1.5-3 per cent error rate in welfare payments, she said, "the bulk of which were agency error, not client fraud."

She said this compares favorably to the Internal Revenue Service's estimate that 29 per cent of all Americans cheat on their income tax returns. Hamilton said the biggest problem for Lincoln's low income people is housing.

Yokum agreed, saying Lincoln now has a 3 per cent vacancy rate and that nationally, anything less than 5 per cent is considered an "emergency."

The approximate 1,100 units of low-income housing, where residents pay what they can afford and the Lincoln Housing Authority uses federal funds to pay the landlord the difference of the rent, are simply not enough for Lincoln's need, she said.

But the severe housing shortage has caused rents to rise above what the federal government will allow in their program, so fewer landlords are letting low-income people rent from them since they can get more on the open market.

Hamilton said the University's "indifference" about their students flooding the housing market, and their refusal to liberalize dormitory policies to keep students on campus has made the University a "large contributor to the problem."



## Pines will yield to paving project

Despite student protest, the 34 Austrian pine trees between 45th and 48th St. on Holdrege St. will be destroyed by a project to widen Holdrege St.

This conclusion came at a meeting of students, faculty and other persons Wednesday.

Lincoln Director of Public Works Bob Obering said that any of the proposals that would save the trees would be "confusing to drivers". He said the corner at 48th and Holdrege St. has the highest accident rate in the city and the proposed projects for saving the trees might increase accidents there.

Sue Torgerson, UNL student, suggested it would be appropriate to promote a mass transit system to curb traffic increases that mean continuous street expansion.

Obering noted the public was hypocritical about using mass transit systems and planting trees. Lincoln's public buses lost \$32,000 last month because there were not enough riders, according to Obering. He added that a city-initiated tree-planting campaign received little public response.

A representative from the Isaac Walton League said the group would prefer the trees to remain unharmed. If that is impossible, they offered to supply pine trees to replace the removed ones and construct a shelter on the League's land with the lumber made from the torndown trees.

When the destruction of the 34 pine trees was first announced, several proposals were offered to save them. Mike Kane, who operates

a landscaping and planting service, told the city council the pines could be safely moved with the proper equipment. A UNL associate professor of horticulture suggested that the trees could be left as an island.

The idea of building a retaining wall around the trees was considered, but it was feared that a large portion of the root system would be destroyed and the trees would die anyway.

The value of the trees has been estimated from \$16,000 to \$68,000.

The University has been committed since 1967 to landscaping the area on the north side of Holdrege St. west of 48th and the entire perimeter of East Campus.

Specific plans for landscaping the area along the north side of Holdrege St. west of 48th St. were developed last summer in connection with negotiations with the city of Lincoln for widening the 48th and Holdrege St. intersection, according to Ronald Wright, UNL assistant director of business and finance.

The plan calls for a 60-foot band of planting north of the University's new property line. Plantings in this area would include large trees, flowering trees and shrubs. The University plans to transplant 15-20 foot trees from its nursery.

## Conference signs speakers

The main goal of the World in Revolution Conference, March 6-13 is to examine as broadly as possible the theme "Justice in America" by listening to people from all over the country with all points of view, according to Dennis Berkheim, chairman.

Final contracts have been received from the following speakers:

Flavel Wright - UNL lawyer  
Gail Gade - UNL chief of campus security

Nebraska State Sen. Dave Stahmer

James Jackson Kilpatrick - journalist from the Washington Star Syndicate

Elizabeth Pittman - municipal court judge

Thomas C. Clark - ex-associate justice of the U.S. Supreme Court

Vincent Hallinan - California reformist lawyer

Florynce Kennedy - black feminist lawyer from New York

Caroline Bird - feminist author

William Kunstler - civil libertarian lawyer; defense lawyer to the Chicago 8

Russel Means - president of the American Indian Movement, from Cleveland, Ohio

Ernest van den Haag - psychoanalyst and professor of social philosophy at New York University

Nebraska State Sen. John DeCamp

## Mead

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Exactly because the problems are so urgent, Mead said she sees hope for the world. If people had 300 years to work things out nothing would be done for 299 of them, she said. But when faced by danger, human societies can mobilize and do incredible things.

"People learn rapidly. In New Guinea, little boys write essays saying 'My father was a cannibal. I'm going to be a doctor.' I have seen peoples move from the Stone Age to the present in one generation."

This world can be completely different in 20 years, she said, providing everybody from grandparents on down changes.

"But you can't put your faith and action into trivia. You'll have to focus on the world—not on the evils of Dow Chemical."

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