

## Regents divide over proposed budget change

by Chris Harper

To pare, or not to pare—that's the question confronting the Board of Regents when they consider the University's 1973-74 budget request at their meeting Monday.

The board's two alternatives are NU President D.B. Varner's \$95.9 million proposal or Regent Kermit Hansen's request for a \$2 million cut in the suggested budget.

Varner's budget would call for an 18.8 per cent increase in state tax fund support and an \$11.6 million raise over the 1972-73 budget.

Four regents say they favor Varner's original request while three opt for Hansen's proposal. One board member was unavailable for comment.

"If we are going to make forward steps we have to accept this budget. We've got to go ahead with the University's Five-Year Plan," according to Regent J.G. Elliott of Scottsbluff. Elliott said, however, that he is not sure what the Legislature would do to the budget.

"It's awfully hard to predict what reaction the Legislature will have," he said. "There might be a chance of the budget being cut, but I hope that they see the need for the increase."

"The people in western Nebraska are very interested in the success of the University," he added. "They don't want to waste money but they would like to see that Nebraska is strong and healthy—so that it is No. 1 academically in the Big Eight."

Hansen countered that the budget "may not be realistic in terms of the Legislature."

"Anyone who makes policy decisions should have at least one alternative," Hansen added. "An increase

from eight per cent to 11, 12 or 13 per cent is nothing to be sneezing at."

Board president Ed Schwartzkopf disagreed with the \$2 million cut.

"The proposed budget is reasonable. It's already been pared down. A budget cut will impair our drive for excellence at the University."

The Lincoln board member said he believes the University has a good opportunity to improve its instructional staff next year. If the University will provide additional money for faculty, Schwartzkopf said, then it could attract more qualified teachers from other universities hampered by tight budgets.

"The state of Nebraska has a golden opportunity to upgrade the quality of the University at this time," he said.

The \$2 million cut would not hurt the University, says Regent Robert Koefoot of Grand Island.

"Varner's budget won't be approved by the Legislature or the governor, so I believe we have to do our work and make sure that the budget is accepted," Koefoot said.

Regent Robert Prokop of Papillion said he would not support Hansen's proposal if the cut would hurt the faculty.

Prokop said he believes the University is expanding administrative personnel rather than faculty members. He added that he believes many older faculty members started teaching at a salary lower than what younger instructors receive, and they have not received a proportionate increase to offset the salary increases afforded to younger staff members.

Regent James Moylan of Omaha said he supports the \$2 million cut but he also pointed to the construction of the law school and library as priority items in the budget.

Another board member, Robert Raun of Minden, said he favors Varner's proposed budget, but is "willing to look at the \$2 million cut to see what effect it might have on the University."

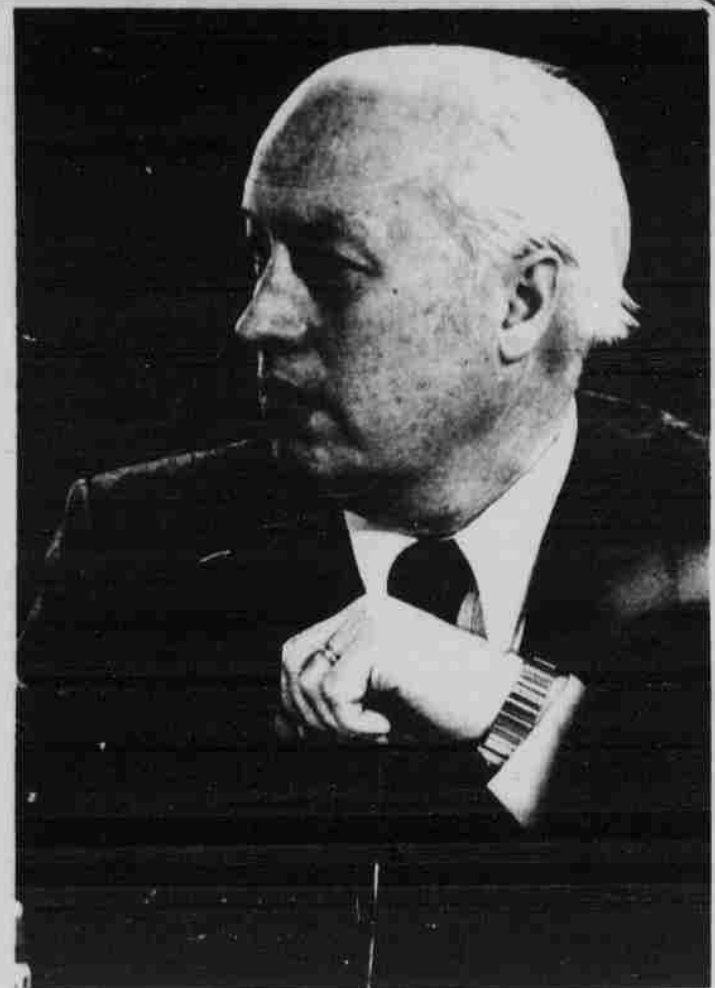
He said he believes that the projected strong economic year for Nebraska will increase tax revenue, and thus help the University. In view of this economic situation, Raun said he believes "the right kind of sales pitch for the budget may create a public reaction that will be quite favorable."

Regent Kermit Wagner of Schuyler was not available for comment on the budget issue.

Another increase—this one for students' tuition rates—also will be considered Monday by the board.

In August the board voted to modify the 1973-74 tuition schedule and will select the new rates at the September meeting.

Four regents said they favored a system that would continue the present tuition schedule of \$18 per hour for residents and \$48.25 per credit hour for nonresidents up to 12 credit hours. The change,



Hansen . . . budget request "not realistic."

however, is that students enrolled between 12 and 16 hours will pay one-half of the regular tuition rate for credit hours in that zone. In the past students have been assessed no additional fees for these hours.

The NU administration originally proposed an assessment system whereby students would have paid full tuition for the former "free hours," with a \$17 per hour resident fee and a \$46 fee for nonresidents.

"I was impressed by the argument by ASUN president Bruce Beecher concerning the impact of a full tuition hike. He was effective in representing the views of the students," Raun said.

Elliott and Prokop cited the need for additional financial support for the University as their primary reason for favoring the increase while Moylan, Koefoot and Hansen said they were unclear about the mechanics of the proposal.

Schwartzkopf said he favored the partial increase if "this is one way to upgrade our institution. If we increase the tuition and then increase the class size then I can't go along with it."



Harding . . . "NOVA students became more self-directing, independent, and outgoing . . ."

## Fund shortage kills NOVA

NOVA, a college credit-based volunteer program established at NU last year, will not be operating this fall.

Last week, ACTION, the federal service agency which has control of the program, notified NOVA that its funds will be cut until January, according to NU NOVA director Theodore Ernst.

Ernst said ACTION wanted NU to revise its entire proposal for resubmission in October, even though students had been recruited to begin their work in low-income communities across Nebraska this month.

Several bureaucratic obstacles have existed since the pilot program began, according to former NOVA director Gene Harding.

"Faculty members found the program hard to adopt to their departments, we didn't recruit enough people or give them enough time, and we had obstacles with ACTION," Harding said Tuesday.

Ernst said there have been several differences of opinion on what the 1972-73 program should be like, but there was no indication until last week that ACTION might cut NOVA funds.

Due to these obstacles, Ernst decided to

call back the new volunteers in his own School of Social Work.

Teachers College students were notified of the cut this weekend and met Tuesday to try to get into fall classes.

"The University of Nebraska is reconsidering its whole association with ACTION," Ernst said.

Negotiations with ACTION are still open for a possible January start. According to Ernst, UNO may operate its own program without the federal funding.

Harding, who turned over his position in July, said he firmly believes that there are enough people committed to NOVA to start again in January.

"It is a great program, and a real loss if it doesn't start," commented Harding.

NU's NOVA was the first program funded last year under University Year for Action.

The 40 students involved in the program last year, Harding said, "are far more self-directing, independent, and outgoing than they were when they started."

ACTION's own investigation of the Lincoln program, Harding said, showed that the UNL students involved ranked at the top of the federal evaluation scale among 12 similar programs at other universities.