

50 turnout to hear Hansen debate empty chair

by Sara Schwieder

Regent Kermit Hansen of Omaha turned to an empty chair and asked it these questions Monday night at Harper Hall:

"Do you believe wholeheartedly in supporting state schools?"

"Do you think a University education should be more than courses oriented to a job?"

The chair, of course, didn't reply, but Hansen's point was clear. The chair was supposed to have been filled by Clifton Batchelder of Omaha, Hansen's Board of Regents opponent in Tuesday's general election. Batchelder declined an invitation to debate with Hansen Monday night.

"I think the answer Batchelder would have to give to these questions is 'no,'" Hansen said.

Hansen said he and Batchelder are "poles apart" on issues concerning the concept of the University and the role of the administration. He also attacked Batchelder for "trying to restrict this University."

"I believe in giving every youngster who is willing to learn an education," Hansen told a group of about 50 students. "There should be a career thrust, but more importantly, we've got to have an atmosphere in which intellectual pursuits of all kinds may take place."

Hansen said Batchelder favors a vocationally-oriented institution.

Hansen cited examples of the quality of the University administration in rebuttal to adverse comments Batchelder made to the press about administrators.

"I am a supporter of the



Students asked questions . . .

administration because I think they have demonstrated excellent leadership," Hansen said emphatically.

After Hansen's remarks, the floor was opened to questions from students, which are listed below with answers given by Hansen and Regent Ed Schwartzkopf, who also attended the meeting.

"Would you be in favor of having a student, in an advisory capacity only, on the Board of Regents?"

Hansen said there already is a Student Advisory Council which meets with the regents for an hour before each monthly meeting.

"Would you be in favor of an elected student on the board?"

"I see nothing wrong with it," Hansen said. "I support it." But Hansen said there are certain technical aspects that must be solved for a student to be a member of the board. He thought an amendment would be necessary to change the six-year term to a two or three year term for a student regent who would graduate in four years.

He also suggested that the State Constitution could be modified so the governor could appoint a student to the Board of Regents for perhaps a two year term.

"Will you explain the jealousy between UNL and UNO?" When Hansen said he didn't know where the jealousy between the two campuses stemmed, a student offered an answer.

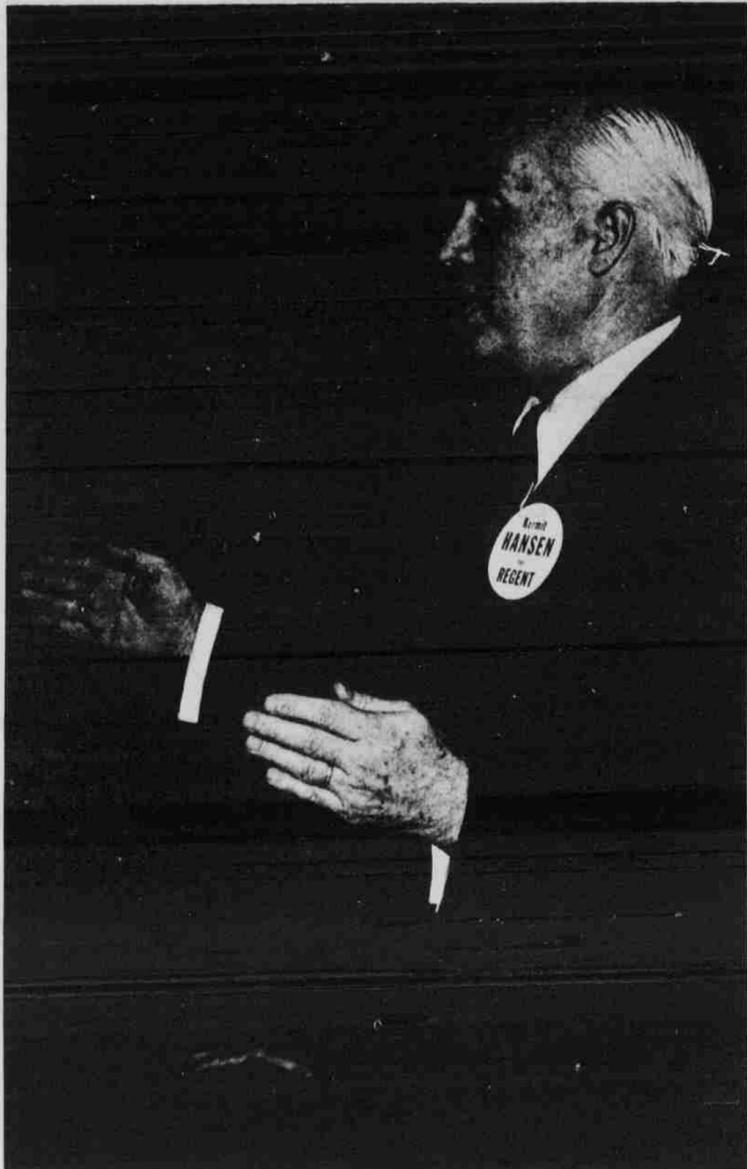
"I used to go to UNO," the student said. "It seemed like 90 per cent of the money and all the good facilities are here, so I transferred to Lincoln."

Schwartzkopf said the merger between the two institutions took place only a short while ago and that people "must consider where Omaha U. was when we merged." He pointed out that UNO's budget for this year increased 19 per cent, while UNL's increased only 5.3 per cent.

"When will there be academic equality between UNO and UNL?" The student said he meant "equality" in that credit for courses would be interchangeable between the two campuses. Several students said they had lost credits earned at UNO when they transferred to UNL, or the credits they had didn't satisfy graduation requirements at UNL.

"If we don't have transferability now, something's wrong," Hansen said. "We want the same courses on the same levels at both campuses."

Hansen said increased traveling between the campuses would improve both campuses. Schwartzkopf said the greatest benefit of the merger is that we're "getting the best of both," and using staff and buildings to their best advantage. He cited the School of Nursing as an example: After the Medical Center Nursing School merged with UNO's nursing school, Nebraska's nurses ranked first in the nation.



Regent Hansen . . . "I am a supporter of the administration because I think they have demonstrated excellent leadership."

"What's the board's stance on co-ed visitation?"

Hansen said he would leave it to the student to "develop his own life patterns as long as he doesn't disturb others." Schwartzkopf said a survey taken of parents was requested by students when the visitation issue came up last spring. Parents were not in favor of visitation, so the board abided by the rules and didn't permit it.

"Why don't you allow alcohol in the dorms?"

"This is our home," one student told the regents. "Why aren't we allowed to have the liberties that we can have off campus?" Students said that if they are 19, they may legally use alcohol everywhere but in their

"own homes"—the dorms.

Schwartzkopf said he wasn't in favor of alcohol in the dormitories because he didn't "want to encourage breaking the law" by tempting 18-year-olds to drink because some of their friends of legal age would be permitted to have alcohol.

One student said: "The laws are there, just let us live by them." Schwartzkopf suggested the students devise a plan for alcohol in the dormitories, Hansen said, "We ought to work it out."

A student asked about plagiarism charges against Regent Robert Prokop, and both Schwartzkopf and Hansen said they disapproved of it, but that "he is elected by the people, so let them judge it."



. . . Regents Schwartzkopf and Hansen offered answers.