

'Informed sources'

Not too long ago, Peter Bridge, a reporter for the Newark, (N.J.) *News*, spent 20 days in jail for refusing to reveal his news sources to a judge. Yesterday he told an Omaha group that it's time to start working in state legislatures for the passage of journalistic shield laws.

The type of statute to which Bridge referred would enable newsmen to legally maintain the confidentiality of both their sources and unpublished information.

In recent years private citizens as well as government workers and officials have grown increasingly reluctant to co-operate with reporters in the news gathering process. Their reluctance, sometimes due to fear of official reprisals for public statements, has given rise to changes in reporting procedures. The "informed sources" and "officials close to the White House" quoted in the daily papers and news broadcasts are real people—real people who for one reason or another have agreed to talk with newsmen only if they are not quoted by name.

As Bridge and other reporters have pugnantly found, news stories occasionally result in court actions. In most states the concept of journalistic privilege currently is not recognized legally. So recent court cases and grand jury proceedings have forced newsmen to choose between losing their news sources by giving testimony and going to jail if they don't.

In a recent ruling concerning shield laws, the U.S. Supreme Court decided that the issue

of journalistic privilege falls within the domain of the individual state legislatures. The Nebraska Unicameral currently has before it for consideration a Free Flow of Information Act.

LB380, introduced by State Sen. John Savage of Omaha, asks that the Legislature, make it the public policy of the State of Nebraska "to insure the free flow of news and other information to the public." Sen. Savage's proposal states that "compelling (news reporters) to disclose a source of information or disclose unpublished information is contrary to the public interest and inhibits the free flow of information to the public."

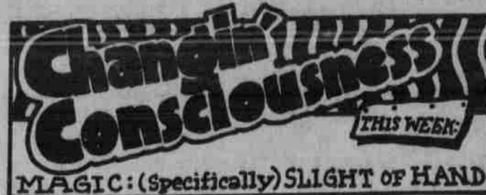
As Bridge pointed out during his remarks in Omaha, "the issue here is not the reporters' rights. It is every citizen's right to have free flow of information."

The Legislature should pass LB380. If newsmen are inhibited in any way in their efforts to gather and disseminate information one of the purposes of the First Amendment guarantee of a free press has been defeated.

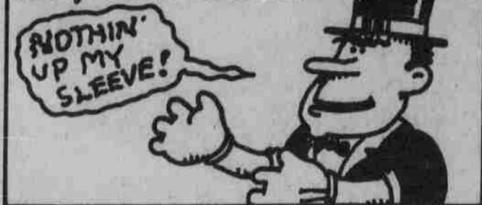
The gay life

In today's Friday magazine, the *Daily Nebraskan* examines homosexuality. The content of the magazine is meant neither as a statement of endorsement nor opposition to the legalization, or the concept itself, of homosexuality. However, it is important that UNL students understand the meaning and life-style of the homosexual. This issue of Friday was produced as an effort to promote such an understanding.

Tom Lansworth



1. A Magician is normally a person with a lot of practice in deceiving the public. One of the more simple deceptions is the Slight of hand trick. This involves making something APPEAR, which really doesn't APPEAR at all.



2. Presto Chango Fooled Again!



Congress and other outmoded programs

The long and bitter fight between Nixon and Congress ended at last when Nixon merely impounded the funds Congress had appropriated to run Congress.

"Pat and I," Nixon soberly told his television audience, "have always had a warm spot in our hearts for Congress. Some of our best friends over the years have been Congressmen."

"But there can be no room for sentimentality when it comes to making the lonely and agonizing decisions of where to cut spendthrift programs in the budget I have proposed to myself."

"As I have said, 'You can't solve problems by throwing money at them.' And when I considered the problems we were throwing money at, one led all the rest."

"Congress, my fellow Americans, has simply outlived its

usefulness."

The political experts were forced to agree. Congress had long since abdicated its powers to make war or peace. Its legislative programs almost always required money, which the President merely impounded if he disagreed.

Any investigation into the executive branch was pointless as witnesses invariably cited "executive privilege" and remained silent. And while the Senate still had the power to ratify treaties, no Presidents negotiated any, preferring "executive agreements" with foreign powers instead.

Thus Congress, having lost its war-making, appropriating, legislative, investigative and ratifying powers, had little to show any more for its labors.

When the President impounded congressional funds for salaries, staffs, telephones, postage and particularly air travel, Congress had no choice but to go out of business.

The public reaction to this development was best summed up by a Gallup Poll which asked the question, "Will you miss not having your congressman in Washington to represent you?"

The response was, "Yes," 6.2 per cent; "No" 4.3 per cent; and "Who?" 89.5 per cent.

Congress, of course, was not about to take the President's fiat lying down. A delegation of congressional leaders tottered over the the White House to demand, at the very least, air fare home.

"Don't ask what your government can do for you," said the President sternly, "go find a job."

But this was easier said than done. After years in Congress, few members are qualified for honest work. As one business executive said, "Who wants to hire a middle-aged has-been without any practical experience or any record of accomplishments?"

A group of misguided constitutionalists made an abortive attempt to take the case to the Supreme Court. Unfortunately, the President, angered by the court's decision on abortions, had impounded the dry-cleaning funds for the justices' robes. And they had naturally voted unanimously to hold no further sessions.

arthur hoppe innocent bystander

Actually, the elimination of the legislative and the judiciary seemed to make little difference. The President governed, as he mostly had during his administration, by issuing executive orders.

One of his first was to declare the Capitol an historic landmark "in tribute to our precious heritage of democracy."

And thus Congress, even with the congressmen gone, continued to carry out its major function of recent years—that of serving as one of Washington's three leading tourist attractions.

(Copyright Chronicle Publishing Co. 1973)



"First of all, Mr. President, we want our dome back!"