

## In the courts

The story of the fight for dormitory visitation rights is a long one. It goes back more than six years. Most of the tactics used have been basically the same and have gotten basically the same results: students, by putting pressure on the UNL administration and the Board of Regents, have been able to inch closer to self-determination.

Now the Residence Hall Assn. (RHA) has announced it plans to file a suit in federal district court in an attempt to force the Board of Regents to change the current visitation policy. This is a praiseworthy move. Many other tactics have been used, but none had the potential for complete success that this one does. A court victory could mean an end to many ridiculous regulations residence hall students are forced to obey.

The ASUN Senate voted Wednesday night to join RHA as co-plaintiffs. This also is a sagacious move. The student government for some years has been teetering on the brink of losing the remnants of its credibility. By joining in the suit it has shown that it indeed cares about the living conditions in UNL dormitories, something which should find favor in the eyes of the persons who live there. Considering some of the senate's past actions one could not have helped but wonder where that group stood on this issue.

All in all, the actions taken by both groups Wednesday night are laudable. However, there is a major danger inherent in beginning litigation on such an issue. Whenever something of this nature is taken to court, many persons immediately begin to oppose other sorts of actions that might help bring about a change in policy. They say that taking any sort of action contrary to the current regulations might endanger the suit. This must not happen in this case.

RHA President Carolyn Grace has said the RHA Visitation Committee still is thinking of other possible tactics to help bring about a change in policy. That committee must not sit

back now that the issue is headed for the courts. The adage says "the wheels of justice grind slowly." But sometimes they grind too slowly, and students must not be forced to wait years for rights which now should be their's.

While deciding to file the law suit was a wise decision, students must remember that the only way they have gained the rights they have now has been through hard work, mass action and threat of mass action. Just because a suit has been filed is no reason to suspend the fight for rights to which students are entitled.

Michael (O.J.) Nelson

## Explanation

The Daily Nebraskan has received numerous inquiries in regard to Wednesday's editorial, *Legal duty*. Due to a printer's error a line was misplaced. The editorial said, in effect, that the ASUN Senate should rescind a motion passed last week calling for the students' lawyer to study a proposed student bail bond system.

The editorial praised the proposed system but said the lawyer's duty is to counsel and advise students, not to make studies. It suggested a committee draw up the proposal instead.



## An 'unusual event at Casey's' is example of American justice

A week ago today the gang at Casey's was surprised by the appearance of a group of policemen at either door. The curiosity of the crowd grew as one of the officers conferred with the owner, then turned down the juke box. He announced over the loudspeaker that everyone in the place would be checked for identification and busted, i.e., arrested, if their names were on a list of suspected felons. The search for lawbreakers began.

Twenty minutes later it became clear that, if there were lawbreakers in Casey's, they weren't on the list. Disappointed, but certainly not broken-hearted, the police left.

The event was unusual. It's never happened before, it hasn't happened anywhere else in Lincoln (though the same events were repeated several times down the street the same night), but there is no reason to believe it will never happen again. It shouldn't though, for the whole process says things about America which simply are not true.

The bust at Casey's was the end result of a process we can only guess at. But on the basis of the result, and on the word of people involved, it can be reconstructed with some accuracy.

Someone called an undercover agent, "narc," in street language, a young black, a long-hair, or a woman, finds someone who might be a drug dealer. The narc attempts to win the friendship of the suspected dealer and to buy drugs from him, preferably when the narc and the dealer are alone. The assumption, from the care taken to obtain a one-to-one meeting, is that the word of a narc is useful only in the absence of conflicting testimony. The assumption is valid, for narcs are not policemen. Often they are convicted drug users and dealers willing to bust others for lightening of their own sentences. They are called undercover agents and, like Undercover Agent G. Gordon Liddy, they are spies.

After the buy is made the dealer is ignored. Several months later he is busted, long after the buy has been made. Usually the bust is at a party. Almost invariably the bust is at night or on a weekend. The reason for this is simple: the narc may have left town to avoid the rough justice meted out to spies and some guarantee is needed that the dealer spend at least one night in jail before the courts let him go for lack of evidence. And the reason will be lack of evidence, not, God forbid, innocence.

keith landgren

desperate  
remedies

Once arraigned the dealer will be required to post bond, adding a fine (the bondsman's fee plus interest) to the dealer's punishment, even though he is still a "suspect."

American justice doesn't always work this way, as we know. Vice-President Agnew, accused of accepting bribes, was allowed to go free by quitting his job, pleading "I don't know" to a charge of cheating on his income tax, paying his fine and going home. This is American justice as it can be and as it is, for some Americans.

to the  
editor

*Ward*

Dear editor,

I agree with your call for evaluation of the Legal Aid to Students Office (students' lawyer program) during the summer (Daily Nebraskan, Oct. 12). However, I object to both the timing and the tenor of your rationale.

You state that the evaluation should be undertaken in the summer so that "if it fails, it could be discontinued. Possible early discontinuation could save ASUN more than \$3,000."

The program will provide a much needed service for UNL students. Given this premise, any suggestion of early discontinuation is totally uncalled for. One does not discontinue a much needed program.

The negative tenor of your suggestion is also disappointing. Anyone can suggest termination using the often nebulous standard of "failure" as a reason. LASO is a new program with severe limitations. But it has an immense potential as an aid to the university community. To suggest the possibility of termination at this point, is premature as well as detrimental to the program.

Many of us have been quite critical of the LASO program. Our criticism is based upon the severe limitations placed upon the program—particularly in regard to attorney powers. Rather than be a "nabob of negativism" (to coin a phrase), I suggest that the LASO lawyers be put to work planning an expansion of their official duties to serve the university community in a greater number of ways.

In support of this latter viewpoint, ASUN, in a resolution authored by myself, last week directed the LASO office to study the feasibility of a nonprofit bail-bond system for students. (Since the city did away with the practice of releasing students to the custody of the campus security last spring.)

Hopefully, the Daily Nebraskan and the editor in particular, will be able to direct a more positive and helpful attitude in the future.

Brian J. Ward