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lincoln, nebraska vol. 97, no. 10Students move step closer
to seat on Board of Regents

By Greg Wees

Student representation on the Board of Regents moved a step closer to reality Wednesday. The Unicameral voted 34-0 to advance a bill by State Sen. Richard Marvel of Hastings. The bill proposes adding three students to the board in nonvoting capacities.

LB323 faces two more floor tests before it can be placed on the November general election ballot. Changing the structure of an elected state body requires a constitutional amendment. A statewide vote is needed to ratify such an amendment.

The original bill would have split one vote among three unspecified student representatives who would have been on equal footing with the eight other regents.

Marvel amended the bill, however, to eliminate voting powers and specify the student body presidents of UNL, University of Nebraska at Omaha, and the NU Medical Center as the board members.

Of the two versions of the bill, Marvel said the original measure was stronger because the student regent could vote. But he also said the original version was not as likely to pass as the amended one.

"There is enough opposition to a student regent in the Legislature that, if the amendment was not made, the bill could easily have been defeated," Marvel said.

"You have to move a little slower with the

bill in the present form, but at least you won't lose the entire measure because of one issue," he said.

Most of the 15 state senators who spoke on the bill Wednesday recommended the bill or said they would vote for LB323 if it is advanced for final reading.

Only State Sens. George Syas of Omaha and Ralph Kelly of Grand Island expressed doubts about the bill.

Syas suggested that NU faculty also should have a place on the board if student regents are accepted.

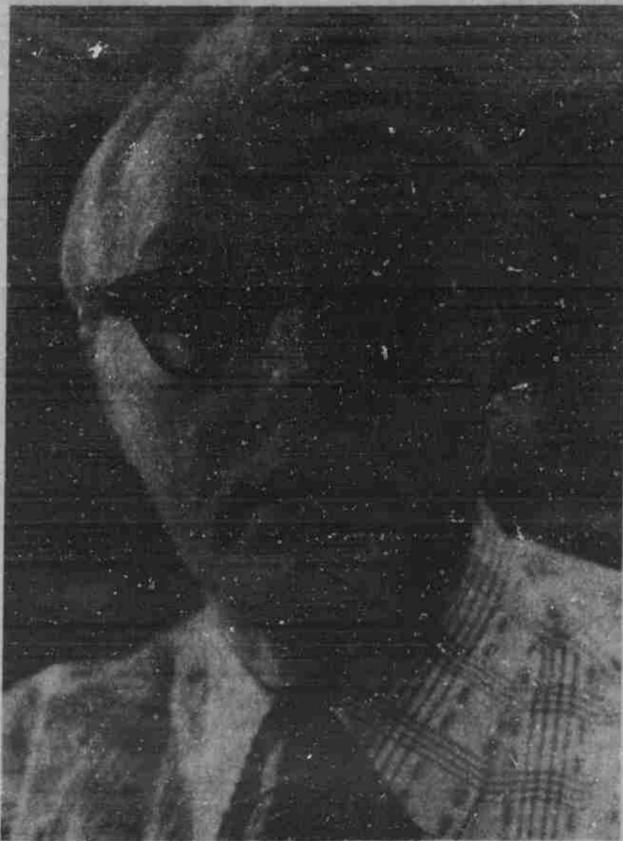
Marvel replied that no faculty members had contacted him about membership and said Syas's concern was unfounded.

Kelly said he did not "believe that students have any right to have a seat on the board. The board should be reserved for taxpayers."

Next, Kelly said he doubted that a constitutional amendment was needed to place a student on the Board of Regents. He proposed that regents invite student advisers to their meetings.

"This approach has not proven satisfactory," said Marvel, who explained that the regents legally could not be compelled to invite student representatives to their sessions.

State Sen. Steve Fowler of Lincoln supported Marvel, saying that past performance by the board has forced students to solicit membership via the constitutional amendment.



State Sen. Richard Marvel

Teachers' federations
coexist peacefully

By Wes Albers

"Divide and conquer" may seem to be an infallible maxim. But UNL professors apparently haven't suffered from their division into two rival teachers' associations.

Peaceful coexistence rather than divisive competition marks relations between the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and the American Assoc. of University Professors (AAUP), association members and officials said Tuesday.

"We are in agreement with almost all AAUP goals," said AFT President Robert Haller. "There is no open competition. Basically, we work separately toward common goals."

Prof. John Scholz, AAUP president-elect, said the two groups occasionally form coalitions and pointed out that "a lot of faculty are members of both groups."

AAUP President Royce Ronning was

unavailable for comment, due to a death in his family.

The two UNL chapters are part of national organizations of professors.

Haller said the AFT, an affiliate of the AFL-CIO, came to UNL three years ago and has 75 active members here.

The AAUP has been on campus longer than any of the present officials can remember. AAUP Secretary Lyle Schreiner said the chapter has 221 active members.

Haller said open competition could develop if elections were forced between the two groups.

Prof. Richard Gilbert, AAUP member and ex-president, said that, barring forced elections, the two groups could "unite for victory if the chips were really down."

Both organizations have pushed for a broad range of interests, including academic freedom, tenure, improved salary scales, due process in faculty/administration disputes and

faculty participation in budget-making.

The difference between the two groups lies in how the demands are promoted. The AFT is known for its union background and emphasis on collective bargaining.

"We formed here because some (UNL faculty members) felt a need for a more militant organization directly aimed at collective bargaining on campus," Haller said.

Gilbert said the AAUP sees itself as more of an association, but chapters across the nation also are moving toward collective bargaining. This may happen at UNL, he added.

Gilbert said he joined the AAUP 10 years ago because he "liked the professional background."

Calling it "traditionally the professional organization for college teachers," he said AAUP has been a staunch defender of academic freedom nationally for "70 or 80 years."

Religious groups get official 'no'
to bringing in campus sheaves

By Lynn Silhasak

Religion. Does it belong on campuses as well as in churches?

University administration officials last year put religion unofficially off limits to NU campuses when they refused to let members of Athletes in Action speak on their religious beliefs before a public gathering.

Since then, the Board of Regents has issued a policy statement about religious activities on NU campuses.

Athletes in Action, part of the national Campus Crusade for Christ, had planned to speak during a half-time at a wrestling match on the University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) campus last year. UNO officials refused them the opportunity to speak.

According to UNO Chancellor Ronald Roskens, the refusal was in keeping with constitutional separation of church and state.

The group's members then asked for a copy of the University system policy on campus groups organized around religious beliefs. They waited six months for an answer.

The delay was caused because NU had no official policy on religion then, according to administration officials. Not until last July did the Board of Regents approve a policy

forbidding any group from using University property to promote any one religious belief.

The policy does allow religion in course study, and within private quarters on campus. The policy also allows moments of nonsectarian silent meditation at University functions.

"In the past, a general understanding of the delicacy of the balance between church and state" operated in place of a policy, said NU President D.B. Varner.

However, the sensitivity of the religion issue made the policy necessary, Roskens said.

Under the policy, University officials decide whether a group requesting use of University property for religious activities is attempting to promote a certain religious belief among other students, or is merely planning a program, said Ken Bader, UNL vice chancellor of student affairs.

Since July, only one other group has asked for and been refused use of University property under the policy, according to Ronald Beer, UNO vice chancellor for educational and student services.

Members of the Church of Christ Scientist were refused the use of property on the UNO campus, Beer said.

