

# Crowded scientist field doubted by UNL chemist

By Betsy Ammons

America is producing too many scientists for the available job opportunities, according to Robert C. Cowen, in a Christian Science Monitor news release.

But Gerhard Meisels, chairman of the UNL chemistry department, disagrees. Cowen wrote, "American science is running up against a limit to growth. It is beginning to produce more scientists than the United States can absorb."

Dr. Philip Handler, president of the National Association of Science (NAS) is quoted in Cowen's article as saying, "We have been more or less doubling the pool of trained scientists every decade. The next doubling would be a monster. We can't do it."

Meisels disagrees. He cited Bureau of Labor statistics which predict a 41 per cent increase from 1970 to 1980 in

chemistry job opportunities, creating a job market for 10,000 new chemists a year. Salaries increased

The average salaries for chemists have increased, Meisels said, especially those with doctorate degrees.

It is "popular opinion," he said, that more jobs are available for chemists with bachelor of science degrees because those with more education are over qualified for non-research jobs. However, Ph.D. chemists have the lowest unemployment rate (2.5 per cent) in the profession, he said.

Fewer people have entered the field of chemistry in the past ten years than before, Meisels said. He attributes this to the public association of chemistry with the manufacture of pesticides and war machinery.

Leo Sartori, chairman of the UNL

physics and astronomy departments, said job prospects for physicists are somewhat limited. He said he tries to "make students aware that problems exist" in finding employment. The projected number of physics graduates is larger than the number of jobs, he said.

Graduate education

Sartori said he thinks that more extensive graduate education in physics is the answer.

"Part of the problem of graduate schools is that they need to give students a broader view of their field," he said, adding there is too much specialization.

He suggested developing interdisciplinary or joint-study programs between physics and the other science departments.

Cowen said in the Christian Science Monitor that NAS president Handler would "have universities cut the number of

research students and drop all research not contributing to education."

Both Meisels and Sartori agreed that research in their departments relates to education, because it is done by graduate students.

"If research is worth doing, you have to train people to do it," Sartori said.

Handler stated in the newspaper article that moving research back to government laboratories would dampen the production of scientists and provide off-campus jobs for existing scientists.

Sartori said abolishing university research would be "disastrous."

"Research and graded material for graduate students are complementary things," he said. He said he thinks it is not important to curtail the production of scientists because the demand can change at any time.

## Caravan visits

An armed forces caravan will be in Lincoln Friday from 2 to 8 p.m. and Saturday from noon to 6 p.m. The four-van caravan will be parked on 15th Street between N and M streets.

The caravan is a Bicentennial commemoration to the Armed Services and is sponsored by the Department of Defense, according to Army Captain Ron Klobe.

The vans contain slide presentations, displays and materials that portray the history of the Armed Forces.

The four vans, one each from the Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force, will be in Lincoln as part of a 16-van fleet that is touring the country. The vans travel in fours, each group covering a different geographic section.

The caravan is staffed by personnel from all branches of the service who will be present to provide information and answer questions for the public.



Photo by Liz Beard

Richard Fleming, director of university information

## Information director denies resignation for Illinois job

Richard Fleming ended rumors that he had resigned as director of University Information at UNL.

The Lincoln Star reported Sept. 11 that Fleming was seeking the position of head of agricultural communications at the University of Illinois (UI) at Champagne-Urbana.

"I was visiting with them (UI), but it didn't work out," Fleming said. Negotiations ended when he and UI officials "failed to agree on the details of the job," he said.

Fleming said he is now considering any other job offers.

"I have no reason to leave unless I am offered another job that is a promotion in money or position," he said.

Orville Bentley, Dean of the College of Agriculture at UI, said that Fleming requested interviews. According to Bentley, Fleming asked for rank as professor in addition to his communications post.

"There are many questions being raised at UI about giving professorial rank to employes in non-academic jobs," Bentley said. "It is done at other universities, but not at UI."

Bentley said that through Fleming was the only person being interviewed, the university has many potential candidates. He said the final decision will be made at the UI regents' meeting Oct. 20.

The job at UI would mean an increase in salary and responsibilities over his present job, Fleming said. He added that it was "a much larger operation."

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