

NU budget cut blasted

By Dick Piersol

NU President D.B. Varner, ASUN President Jim Say and UNL and University of Nebraska at Omaha (UNO) students asked the Legislature's Appropriations Committee Thursday not to approve the three per cent NU budget cut suggested by Gov. J. James Exon in LB6.

Exon has asked the Legislature, in special session, to approve budget reductions for all state agencies to avoid a state general fund deficit in January.

Appropriations Committee Chairman Sen. Richard Marvel said Atty. Gen. Paul Douglas issued an opinion that section 66 of LB6, which would have allowed some agency flexibility in determining what programs might be reduced, was an unconstitutional delegation of authority.

Five per cent

Varner said a three per cent budget cut now would actually amount to a five per cent cut in available general funds for the rest of the fiscal year and achieving that reduction would be "an extraordinarily difficult task."

Several other conditions would compound that difficulty, according to Varner.

He said utility costs have increased more than projected, the university is having "to absorb a monumental increase in the cost of malpractice insurance," and there has been an unanticipated record enrollment on the Omaha and Lincoln campuses. Although it is increasingly difficult, those

costs could be absorbed through management devices, he said.

Federal grants

One unexpected financial burden which could not be absorbed, he said, was discontinuation of almost \$1 million of federal augmentation grants for the University of Nebraska Medical Center.

Varner said he saw no alternative to asking the 1976 Legislature to replace that loss with general fund money.

In view of these added costs, he said, he could see no way for the university to

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Keyes cites low tax rate

By Theresa Forsman

Nebraska taxpayers have had extra money to spend for the last three years, Sen. Orval Keyes of Springfield told his fellow members of the Legislature's Revenue Committee at its public hearing Thursday. He was referring to the state's lowered tax rates in the past three years.

In 1973, state income tax rates were lowered from 15 per cent to 13 per cent. In 1974, the income tax rate was 11 per cent, and this year Nebraskans are taxed 12 per cent on their incomes.

According to testimony presented to the committee at its hearing on LB4, one of four bills introduced in the Legislature's special session by Gov. J. James Exon, it appears Nebraskans may not have the extra money much longer.

Exon called the special session to prevent a deficit in the state's general fund early next year because of cash flow problems. These occur when the state does not have a sufficient fund balance to pay its debts as they come due.

LB4 calls for the elimination of the current requirement that five per cent of the total appropriations must be added to projected expenses when determining tax rates.

Under the present law, when the State Board of Equalization meets each November to set the state income and sales tax rates, it must consider as expenditures not only the state budget appropriations, but an additional five per cent of the total appropriations to provide an emergency, reserve fund for the state treasury.

If LB4 is passed, the requirement for a reserve fund would be lifted and the Board of Equalization would not have to raise the income tax rate next month.

Several witnesses appeared before the committee to suggest that the five per cent cushion not be eliminated.

State Auditor Ray Johnson told the committee the reserve should not be eliminated but that it should be a predetermined figure rather than be tied to the amount of fiscal appropriations.

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Photo courtesy of St. Louis Symphony.

Leonard Slatkin (above) will conduct the Saint Louis Symphony in three concerts this weekend at Kimball Recital Hall on Fri. and Sat. at 8 p.m. and Sunday at 3 p.m. The Symphony, making their fourth Lincoln appearance, is sponsored by the Cultural Affairs Committee.

Regents to ask for court clarification

By Randy Blauvelt

"... to know who is to do what and to establish authority and responsibility within an institution are the first basic principles of a good administration..." — Clarence B. Randall, late president of Inland Steel Co. in *The Folklore of Management*.

Within two weeks, the NU Board of Regents will file a request in Lancaster County District Court to have their powers clarified, according to NU attorney Flavel Wright.

The action is a result of the Nebraska Supreme Court's refusal Oct. 24 to accept jurisdiction on the question.

Clarify wording

Wright, on behalf of the regents, had asked the court for a judgement to clarify wording of the Nebraska Constitution concerning the Legislature's responsibility over NU, whether the regents are controlled by the Legislature and if the Legislature can delegate their authority over the university to other state agencies.

The section of the constitution that the regents want clarified states, "The general government of the University of Nebraska

shall, under the direction of the Legislature, be vested in the Board of Regents."

The regents want to know if the university needs approval of the State Division of Administrative Services, Wright said, before initiating certain building projects and architectural plans.

Defendants in case

The defendants in the case are the heads of state administrative agencies which are charged with enforcing laws that the regents think are unconstitutional, he said.

The court did not give reasons for the refusal to accept jurisdiction, Wright said, but may have declined because they either thought the case should go through lower courts or doubted their jurisdiction on the matter.

The constitution allows for original actions to be filed with the Supreme Court, Wright explained, although they can reject it.

NU Regent Robert Koefoot of Grand Island said he was sorry the court did not accept the case and added, "We'll just go ahead and give it to the district court."

"I feel the regents have been elected to govern the university, but that's not the

case," he said. "It's up to the regents to run the university after the funds have been delegated."

Save time, money

Regent Ed Schwartzkopf of Lincoln said he was disappointed that the court did not decide the question because it "would have saved time and money."

Although the Legislature should be responsible for the budget, Schwartzkopf said, the regents know best how to use budget money.

Schwartzkopf said he was angered at a legislative restriction that prohibits the university to use extra tuition income from increased enrollment.

"We had a respectable increase in enrollment, but we can't use the extra money generated to hire staff to accommodate this increase," he said.

Regent Robert Raun of Minden said he wants to see the case decided as soon as possible and agreed that "it will eventually get to them (Supreme Court) anyway."

"I think the way the constitution was drawn-up... the governing of the university is given to the regents and the Legislature can control only the broad outlines," he said.



Photo by Kevin Higley

Larry Young entertains one of 70 community children at the Kappa Alpha Psi annual Halloween party Thursday night. See another spooky feature on page 6.

Police relations 'bad'

Lincoln Police Chief George Hansen told a group of 40 citizens at the Malone Neighborhood Council Thursday night that community relations with police "can be summed up in one word: Bad."

"We've got nowhere to go but up," he said.

What Hansen called a total reorganization of the Police Department will be completed within the next 60 days.

"Teams of officers will be assigned to work in the same neighborhoods on a continuing basis," he said. "Police officers need to get to know the individual members of their assigned community."

Hansen also said job-related testing will start being given to officers during training. He said police will be required to take a screening interview with a psychiatrist after attending a workshop with a psychologist.

"I won't accept an officer who is working for his personal needs and ego instead of the community's," he said.

Hansen said he has designed a task force to develop a neighborhood resource officer program. He asked for community help in establishing the officer program.

"We (the Police Department) have created goals and objectives without taking the community into consideration," Hansen said. "We need the community input."

He said the primary function of police is to work with the communities to provide a "safe and orderly society."

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Weather

Friday: Mostly cloudy and cooler. Southwest winds ranging from 10-20 m.p.h. Temperatures in the mid-70s.

Friday night: Mostly cloudy and cooler. Lows in the mid-30s.

Saturday: Partly sunny with highs in the mid-60s.