

## Re-evaluation of rape laws urged

By Rex Henderson

The Nebraska Legislature's Judiciary Committee Friday heard testimony urging changes in the state's rape laws during the final hearing on the new criminal code.

Gothenburg Sen. Herbert Duis said rape laws should be stiffened. Duis said rapists should be held for psychiatric evaluation after the first conviction. Current laws call for the evaluation after the second conviction.

Duis also suggested bail requirements be stiffened. Nebraska laws now require 10 percent of bail to be posted for release.

The coordinators of rape centers in Lincoln and Omaha said there should be three classifications of sexual assault, instead of the two currently in Nebraska law.

Jill Fenner, coordinator of the Rape Education Center in Omaha, said acts currently classified as a second degree sexual assault, should be broken into two separate classifications.

Second degree sexual assault, a felony, should include forced sexual contact where the victim is seriously injured or under age 14. When the victim is over 14 and unhurt, the assailant should be charged with misdemeanor sexual assault, she said.

Fenner also urged the Legislature to reword a portion of the law which defines serious personal injury as "extreme mental anguish."

Fenner said the word "extreme" should be dropped. Mental anguish should be defined as any trauma that requires professional treatment, she said.

A tougher prostitution law was requested by Omaha city prosecutor Gary Bucchino.



Photo by Tim Ford

State Senators Wally Barnett (left) and John DeCamp

Bucchino suggested that second offenses for prostitution be punishable by imprisonment.

The Nebraska Civil Liberties Union executive director Barbara Gaither disagreed with Bucchino, saying that prostitution is a "victimless crime" and should not be subject to criminal penalties.

Gaither also voiced support for determinant sentencing. There is "too much disparity in sentencing by judges," and "too much discretion by the parole boards," she said.

Sen. John DeCamp of Neligh appeared before the committee to discuss new gambling laws he is drafting.

The new laws would distinguish between professional gambling and casual, social gambling.

Both would remain illegal under DeCamp's bill, but the penalty for social gambling would be less severe.

Omaha Sen. William Brennan appeared in his position as state AFL-CIO president to oppose requirements that picketers stay 50 feet from the entrance to plant entrances and 50 feet apart.

## Security problems blocking attempts to open lounge

By Joe Starita

Security problems at Nebraska Hall are blocking an ASUN attempt which would allow students to have their coffee and drink it too.

At issue is equalizing late-night study areas between the City Campus and East Campus, said Ken Christoffersen, ASUN vice president.

The study area at Nebraska Hall is open until 2 a.m., Christoffersen said, but there are no vending lounge areas available. Students must trek to the East Campus Law

College, where candy and coffee make studies a little easier to swallow at two in the morning, he said.

As a result, "the city campus undergrads using the law study lounge are crowding out the law students," he said.

Opening the lounge area at Nebraska Hall (closed four years ago because of recurrent vandalism) would take the pressure off of East Campus, he said, "and make for a better situation all the way around."

Love Library lounge

Originally, ASUN pushed for a study

lounge in Love Library but lack of space and concern by library officials that scattered food debris would deteriorate "some prized old books" shelved that plan, he said.

"Love (Memorial Library) is out of the picture now unless some money comes in to restructure the library," he added.

Gene Meerkatz, director of vending services at UNL, said Nebraska Hall has had a lot of vandalism in the past and security of the building would be the major obstacle to overcome.

"Prospects for opening the lounge area look dim at this point," he said. He added that Campus Police has requested a wall or steel fence be erected first.

"A structure like that would cost \$4,000 or \$5,000, and we don't have enough money to do it. Even if we did, the restrooms would then be sealed off."

Two-sided question

"I would be willing to give it another try, but I don't think Campus Security is going to," Meerkatz said.

The question of opening the lounge is a two-sided question for Campus Police,

said Capt. Robert Edmunds, of the UNL Campus Police.

"If we don't open the lounge, then the students come down on us," he explained, "but if we go ahead and open it without proper security, then we'll get complaints from people using the high-priority equipment (museum and communications) stored in the building."

Edmunds suggested an attempt first be made to determine how much of a demand there is to have a lounge area available in Nebraska Hall.

"I don't want to see an entire building opened up for half a dozen people," he said. "A study should be made to find out how many people would use it and whether or not it would be profit-making."

"If there is a demand, then there should be a fence, or gate of some kind to assure security for the rest of the building."

That demand exists, according to Christoffersen.

"I think students look for something like a lounge area to help them study," he said. "I know I'm asleep in half an hour without a cup of coffee."

## Office change not immediate

By Anne Carothers

No immediate action will be taken on the reorganization of the student activities office, following its placement under the administrative control of the Nebraska Unions Director Al Bennett.

Although the "possibility of change is real", Bennett said he has requested a 90-day study period before any changes are made.

Nov. 1, the student activities office will be placed under Bennett's administrative control by Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Richard Armstrong's directive.

Bennett said he didn't expect any changes would be made until second semester. He said he and his staff will be using the 90 days to study the present level of operation of the student activities office.

Bennett also corrected a previously published statement that Armstrong's

directive ordered the merging of the student activities office and the Union Program Council office.

Although there are services in the two offices that overlap, the offices will not automatically be merged, he said.

One of the overlapping areas is advising, Bennett said. He explained that both offices do similar kinds of student advising.

Another overlap area is in office space, receptionist and secretarial help. The Union office, the programming office, and the student activities offices each use different offices, each have a receptionist and their own secretarial pools.

Bennett said although changes could mean some people's jobs may be jeopardized, he is concerned with "real-live people doing real-live jobs."

He said he also is concerned with reorganization that will provide more efficient service to the students for their money.

The Nebraska Unions and the student activities offices are financed through B fund monies of student fees. The programming office is financed through A fund monies which are allocated by the Fees Allocation Board, Bennett said.

Bennett said he would be happy if changes "would just stop the inflationary curve" of those programs' budgets. He said he doubted if the reorganization would decrease the amount of money the programs use in student fees, but hopes that extra services could be added without an increase in cost.

Bennett said organizational changes would be submitted to Armstrong for his approval before they could be fitted into the budget next spring.

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Photo by Ted Kirk

Last year's Homecoming King, Kevin Meyer, crowns 1977 Homecoming queen Donna Larsen, as 1977 king Brad Hoppens looks on.

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