

Crowd of 20 gathers to discuss Union renovation

About 20 students and other interested persons gathered in the main lounge of the Nebraska Union Wednesday to question proposed building changes in the Union, with several demanding more student input on the issues.

The open hearing was called by the Union Board in an attempt to enable students to express their opinions about such Union additions as a plant shop, delicatessen, variety store and travel agency on the main floor of the Union.

The changes also would include moving

the barber shop from the basement to the now-defunct record lending library across from the south desk. The changes were accepted tentatively at the last Union Board meeting.

Several students said that student input should be directed to the board through channels such as a student vote or a questionnaire.

One UNL graduate student felt that building additions and rental lease space in the Union was not a solution to Union deficit problems.

"At what point do you want to stop prostituting the Union to make it financially viable?" graduate student Bob Simonson asked the board.

Simonson and another student, who would not be identified, expressed the opinion that although the additions would not raise student fees immediately, they would eventually cause another student fees increase, while failing to alleviate any future deficits.

Simonson said the board should examine the bad financial situation of the

Union and determine the function of the Union.

But Vance Colling, Union Board vice president, said that building additions and possible lease space in the Union was the board's solution to financial problems.

Colling said it was a question of cutting services or the additions and leasing Union space to generate revenue.

"We need to do something quick," said Colling, of the proposal to lease rental space.

Concerning other proposed changes, two women students were opposed to the renovation of the women's lounge across from the South Desk to add a travel agency, saying that the lounge was a good place for off-campus women students to relax between classes. Under the new plan part of the lounge area would remain.

Another student feared that a variety store, which would be apart of the north desk area renovation, would compete with the university bookstore during daytime hours. The proposed variety store also would be open during evenings and on weekends.

Bakery missing cash; police suspect theft

About \$180 was found missing from the Nebraska Union Bakery between 5 and 5:30 p.m. Tuesday. University police are unsure if it was stolen.

Sgt. Al Broadstone said the money was in a cash box below the counter. It may have been taken to the bank by an employee, but police suspect it was taken by a customer while the cashier was away from the counter, Broadstone said.

University Police were notified of the incident at 5:25 p.m. after the cashier noticed the box missing. At 7 p.m. Wednesday, police still were trying to contact employees who may have taken the box to the bank.



Photo by Mark Billingsley

Things that go bump in the night . . . One UNL student found that a chase is not so merry if it ends abruptly. Michael McRoberts, 19, of 8521 Navajo Trail, was riding his motorcycle on 14th and T streets at about 10 p.m. when a Lincoln Police Department patrolman tried to stop him for a traffic violation. Lt. Peter Larimer said McRoberts refused to stop and led the patrolman on a chase across campus. McRoberts hit a bump upon entering R Street and crashed, thus ending the chase. McRoberts was uninjured but was taken away in the patrolcar. His cycle received about \$175 damage. Larimer said McRoberts will be arraigned this morning on charges of fleeing to avoid arrest.

Partisan system better—Bereuter

By Rex Henderson

A debate begun in 1915 over the form of the Nebraska Legislature—one house or two, partisan or nonpartisan—still is being fought.

Douglas Bereuter of Utica, who hopes to leave the Nebraska Legislature for the U.S. House of Representatives as a Republican for the 1st District next January, has switched sides.

Bereuter says he entered the Legislature a supporter of Nebraska's unique single-house, nonpartisan system. His four-year tenure has convinced him otherwise.

"This year I see the emergence of techniques in the Legislature that are not in the public interest," Bereuter said. Among the techniques he named are "vindictive attacks" and "coercion."

Bereuter complained that the nonpartisan Legislature creates a clublike atmosphere, where the force of personalities, rather than platforms or substantive legislative programs dominates debate.

"I came in at the end of the Terry Carpenter (former state senator from Scottsbluff) era. He was a power vacuum in the Legislature at the time.

"As no other man he (Carpenter) dominated the entire flow of the Legislature. This year there are several people attempting to emulate him."

The Carpenter tactic Bereuter said he objects to is intimidation.

Without the discipline of parties, Bereuter said the quality of debate, traditions of senatorial courtesy and the committee system are breaking down.

Too many bills that should be held in committee are being advanced to the full Legislature, he said. Also, too many bills that would be killed in a partisan system are being passed through vote-trading and log-rolling, he added.

The result has been poor legislation coming out of the Legislature, Bereuter said.

Partisan election to the Legislature also would make

senators more directly responsible to the voters, Bereuter said. The party affiliation gives voters a clearer idea of their senator's position on specific issues, he said.

The nonpartisan Unicameral also is more subject to special interest pressure, he said. Lobbyists need only pressure a few of the dominant personalities in a single-house legislature.

In a two-house, partisan system, lobbyists have to convince more people of their positions.

Bereuter warned that Nebraskans should not let pride and emotion over Nebraska's unique legislative system stand in the way of an objective view of it.

"It's discouraging to see how little research is being done on the system," he said.

A long-time sympathizer with Bereuter's point of view is Sen. Richard Marvel of Hastings.

Marvel has served in the Legislature since 1953, most of that time with Carpenter.

Marvel said power in the Legislature has been spread more evenly since Carpenter has left.

But he agreed with Bereuter that the Legislature passes a large percentage of the bills introduced, and that too many get through committee without opposition.

Marvel said he supports a partisan legislature because "I don't know another mechanism to promote discussion we are not getting in committee."

In a partisan system each bill would face organized opposition, he said.

Sen. Dave Newell of Omaha has introduced bills the past two years to put a constitutional amendment before Nebraska voters to make the Legislature partisan. Neither bill moved out of committee.

Many senators know that a partisan system is better, Newell said, but they are too comfortable with the non-partisan system to change it.

Under the present system most senators can avoid taking a definite stand on issues. A partisan system would force them to support their party's legislative program, and defend that program to voters, he said.

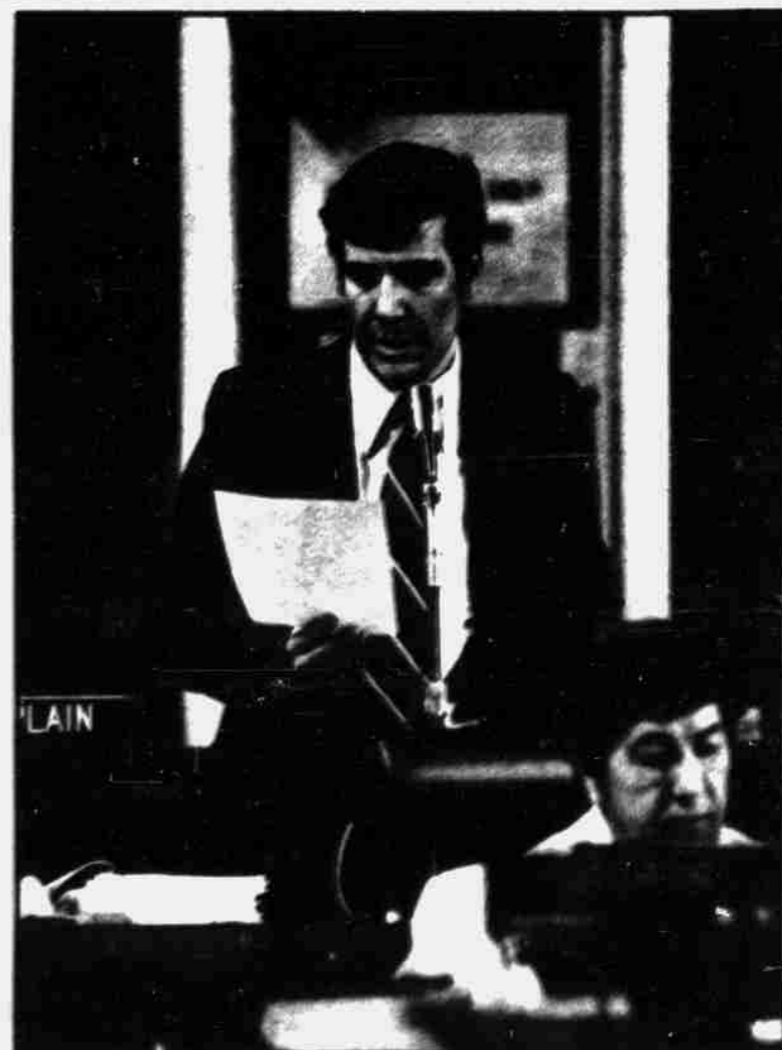


Photo by Ted Kirk

Sen. Douglas Bereuter of Utica

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