

'Universal service' to be re-introduced

By Cindy Coglianese

Within the month, a Nebraska Congressman will re-introduce legislation to provide a system of "universal service."

Rep. John Cavanaugh emphasized Thursday that his legislation would not provide for a compulsory draft but "would provide for an individual to have the opportunity to elect between the military and civil services."

"Every member of society has a personal obligation to meeting the needs and requirements of all society," Cavanaugh said.

The requirements for the Cavanaugh universal system proposal will include a general registration of all males and females before their 18th birthday. An individual would indicate a six-month period between the ages of 18 and 26 that they would be eligible for selection by the U.S. government.

Alternatives

The proposal "would give individuals

the freedom to choose at what point in their life they want to subject themselves," Cavanaugh said.

He said alternatives to the six-month period would be volunteer service either in the armed forces, forestry or other governmental agencies.

"An individual could choose from health services, veteran services, any form of clerical duty or law enforcement. The universal system offers opportunities as broad and as all-encompassing as the government itself."

Under the proposal, those chosen for duty during their six-month conscription period would be inducted for two years of service. If their six-month period lapsed without notification by the government, there is no compulsory obligation for that individual.

Low on government personnel

The government would choose from that six-month pool for deficiencies and inadequate supplies of governmental personnel.

Cavanaugh said only those with severe mental and physical handicaps would be exempt from service.

Cavanaugh said that the makeup of the military services under the volunteer system has become "increasingly narrower." He said the armed services are primarily made up of lower-income individuals and minority groups who have "the least favorable opportunities" in private enterprises.

"It is a controversial subject," Cavanaugh said. Though no legislation will be introduced until later this month, Cavanaugh has sent a letter to President Carter stating the intentions of his proposal. Cavanaugh said Carter has not had time to respond to the proposal.

Cavanaugh said the proposal, once it gets past first impressions, will probably be favorably viewed by the American public and Congress.

"It certainly entails some political danger," Cavanaugh said, "but it is something that Americans have to confront."



Daily Nebraskan photo
Representative John Cavanaugh.



Photo by Ted Kirk

With their lights flaring, the American Agriculture Movement moved through Lincoln on schedule at 5 p.m. Thursday only to be greeted by freezing rain and slippery streets. The tractorcade is enroute to Washington D.C. to protest low farm prices and a lack of concern by President Carter for the farmer.

Police task force requests more room

By Val Swinton

UNL police, citing overcrowded conditions, are interested in a new location on campus, but additional space is in short supply.

A task force of three officers recently completed a report, which Director of UNL Police Gale Gade forwarded to business manager, Ray Coffey.

"While the purpose of this letter is not to submit a formal request for a specific area, it is a plea for assistance," the report reads. "The relocation of the University Police Department to a larger facility would not only relieve the immediate problem, but would also allow for future expansion and greatly improve the image and morale of the department."

According to figures provided in the report, the General Services Administration of the federal government recommends that approximately 150 sq. ft. be allocated for each police investigator. The report states UNL police have four investigators sharing 110 sq. ft.

The report also lists a total working space of 1,207 sq. ft. for the entire department. The task force emphasizes they are not requesting a new building, but only the chance to move into an existing structure if the space should become available.

"That (a new building) was so far out of the question it wasn't even brought out," said investigator Robert Fey, task force member.

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NORML to lobby for therapeutic marijuana use in state

By Randy Essex

Lobbyists representing the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws began their effort Thursday to get a bill through the Legislature allowing therapeutic use of marijuana in the state.

Don Fiedler, NORML's state director, and William Craven, the Midwest Regional Coordinator for NORML, said they want the state to allow doctors who want to prescribe the drug to patients who would like to use it—and who could benefit medically from its use.

Craven said four states, New Mexico, Illinois, Florida and Louisiana considered the idea and all passed it. None of those states has a statute that removes criminal penalties for possession of small amounts of marijuana, and Nebraska does, Craven said.

The bill allows doctors to prescribe marijuana to patients suffering from glaucoma or those undergoing chemotherapy for cancer.

Craven said medical evidence shows a direct relationship between inner eye pressure and marijuana use in glaucoma suffer-

ers. Pressure is reduced greatly after use of the drug, he said.

Cancer patients

Patients subjected to chemotherapy for cancer suffer nausea, vomiting and loss of appetite after their radiation treatments.

Craven said a study of 20 chemotherapy patients showed that 14 of the group were comfortable and able to eat after being administered THC (tetrahydrocannabinol, the active ingredient in marijuana).

"It's a travesty that these people aren't allowed to use marijuana to relieve their symptoms when evidence exists showing that they can be allowed that dignity," Craven said.

Craven pointed out that not every patient will be interested in the use of marijuana, and not every doctor will be willing to prescribe it.

"The doctor-patient relationship is at the heart of our proposal," Craven said.

Although Wednesday was the last day for introduction of bills, Fiedler was optimistic about chances of getting the proposal to the floor. He said the measure could be discussed either through amendment or through special permission to introduce the bill.

"Simply because of its humanitarian na-

ture, we expect it to reach the floor," Fiedler said.

Doctors testify

He said he has contacted two doctors to testify concerning the benefits of the drug's use in treating glaucoma and as a supplement to chemotherapy.

Craven said the measure will not meet with opposition from the medical profession. He said the bill passed with relative ease in Illinois, which he called a conservative state.

Craven said if the bill is passed marijuana could be supplied either by the federal government or from supplies of marijuana confiscated by law enforcement officials in the state. He said the federal government supplies marijuana to New Mexico for glaucoma patients, but not for chemotherapy patients.

"This is a compassionate intermediate step," Craven said.

The NORML representatives also discussed Nebraska's new marijuana law, which removes the criminal penalty and record for persons convicted of possession of less than one ounce.

Dramatic improvement

Craven said the law is a dramatic improvement from the old law, and is a step in the direction that NORML con-

siders ultimate marijuana policy.

However, Fiedler said he would like to see judges given more discretion in setting fines for offenses.

The new law sets a flat \$100 fine for those convicted of possession of less than an ounce. The fine for simple possession of between one ounce and one pound is "up to \$300," meaning a person convicted of possession of two ounces could be fined less than the person with one ounce.

Fiedler said the fine for less than an ounce should be changed to "up to \$100," giving the judge more latitude.

"The new law is a victim of compromise," Fiedler said.

inside friday

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