

# HEW to get explanation on NU student loan interest

By Diane Andersen

A letter of reply to the federal Department of Health, Education and Welfare will be sent within a few days, outlining NU's position on charges of misuse of HEW student loan funds by the university, UNL administrators said.

Assistant Vice-Chancellor for Business and Finance Robert Lovitt said the response to the letter will determine NU's action regarding repayment of interest on National Direct Student Loans since 1968.

"We still think we weren't wrong," Lovitt said.

The HEW charges were prompted by al-

legations by Jack Ritchie, former UNL director of scholarships and financial aids, made in July of 1978. Ritchie said UNL invested interest collected on NSDL loans in a lump sum with other idle cash funds and channeled the money back into the general university funds, rather than paying the interest back into the loan fund according to HEW regulations.

Lovitt said NU, including UNO and the University Medical Center, will appeal the charges because "the rules conflict."

There is no precedent for this case, he said, because the mistake has never turned up in an HEW audit.

Ritchie had said the amount of repayment could be between \$200,000 and

\$500,000.

Lovitt said the NSDL interest money has been "similarly handled" in about eighty percent of the other universities he has contacted.

"They (HEW) have never said we did it intentionally," Lovitt said.

The controversy is about the propriety of using the money for the general budget rather than creating additional student loan funds with the interest.

UNL Chancellor Roy Young said he agrees things will start to happen when NU receives the HEW reply. He said it might mean two to three months of waiting, while Lovitt thought the reply could arrive

within weeks.

Young said the university business office is attempting to determine the amount of interest accumulated on the NSDL loans.

Both Young and Lovitt expressed confidence that UNL will have no trouble getting future loan money from HEW.

"In fact, HEW sent us a complimentary letter on our loan program in general," Young said.

"I don't think anyone feels we did anything deliberately wrong," he said.

However, Young said the HEW reply to NU's plea of innocence might "get us into some litigations." He said a court settlement is possible.

## Beer company facing attacks

Anheuser-Busch has come under attack from three expert nutritionists for "false and deceptive" advertising in connection with its campaigns for Budweiser, Natural Light, Busch and Michelob beer.

The conclusions of the three experts on food and nutrition were part of a supplemental memorandum filed last week by the Federal Trade Commission and Miller Brewing Company.

According to the expert testimony, the Anheuser-Busch "natural" campaign for its four beers is inaccurate, deceives consumers and is the kind of abuse of the term that led to the necessity of a proposed rule to end the term "natural" for food advertising.

"It is inaccurate and plain deceptive to allow Anheuser-Busch to assert that its beer is natural," said Dr. George Briggs, Professor of Nutrition and Assistant Dean of the College of Natural Resources at the University of California.

Dr. Briggs added that "there is no reason why the same considerations (which underlie the "natural" advertising rule for food) should not apply to beer."

Dr. Angela Little, food scientist in the Agricultural Experiment station and Professor in food science at the University of California, described Anheuser-Busch as "one of the worst offenders" in the term

"natural."

"In fact," said Dr. Little, "the beer sold to the consumer by Anheuser-Busch is far removed from anything identified as natural by scientists and consumers."

Anheuser-Busch disagrees with the Miller Brewery Company's interpretation of "natural" and filed a document with the Federal Trade Commission supporting their advertising claims earlier this summer.

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