

Nebraska Carter campaign underway

By Barb Richardson

Pres. Jimmy Carter's campaign force entered Nebraska last weekend.

Scott Burnett, Carter's regional coordinator for Missouri, Kansas, Nebraska and the Dakotas, visited Omaha and Lincoln Nov. 9 and 10 to work on Carter's Nebraska campaign, according to DiAnna Schimek, First Congressional associate chair of the Nebraska State Democratic Committee.

Nebraska State Democratic Committee Chairman Dick White said Tuesday that Burnett phoned him last Monday or Tuesday about the visit.

White was out of town during Burnett's visit.

Schimek, who was a member of Carter's steering committee during the '76 campaign, said Burnett was a member of the campaign in 1976. She added that she does not plan to be on the committee again because she plans to run for the chair of the Nebraska State Democratic Com-

mittee.

"He's from Kansas, very mid-western and people find him easy to relate to," Schimek said about Burnett.

Burnett came to Nebraska this weekend to start a Nebraska steering committee for the campaign and to get a sense of what Nebraskans are thinking about Jimmy Carter, she said.

"The bulk of his work here was to re-establish contacts with previous Carter supporters and current supporters," Pat McCarthy, Second Congressional district chairman of the Nebraska State Democratic Committee, said Tuesday.

McCarthy added that Burnett also wanted to find people who would be willing to write him in Washington about issues they feel should be addressed by Carter.

"He didn't indicate so much what Carter was concerned about, but wanted to know what Nebraskans were concerned about," Schimek said.

She added that Burnett said he found Nebraskans

were mostly concerned about abortion and the present situation in Iran.

Although Burnett did not specifically address Sen. Edward Kennedy's campaign, Schimek said Burnett mentioned that he was surprised at the Irish-Catholics in Omaha supporting Carter, rather than Kennedy. She added that it was not necessarily the number of Irish-Catholics, but the "politically important" Irish-Catholics supporting Carter.

"Scott mentioned that there will probably be a full time state coordinator in Nebraska sometime in February," she said. "I would expect that a headquarters would be set up shortly after the coordinator arrives."

According to Schimek, Burnett said he would like to see a temporary phone number established for Nebraskans to call if they have questions about Carter's campaign.

Schimek said she expects Burnett to return to Nebraska before the first of the year to permanently establish the state's steering committee.

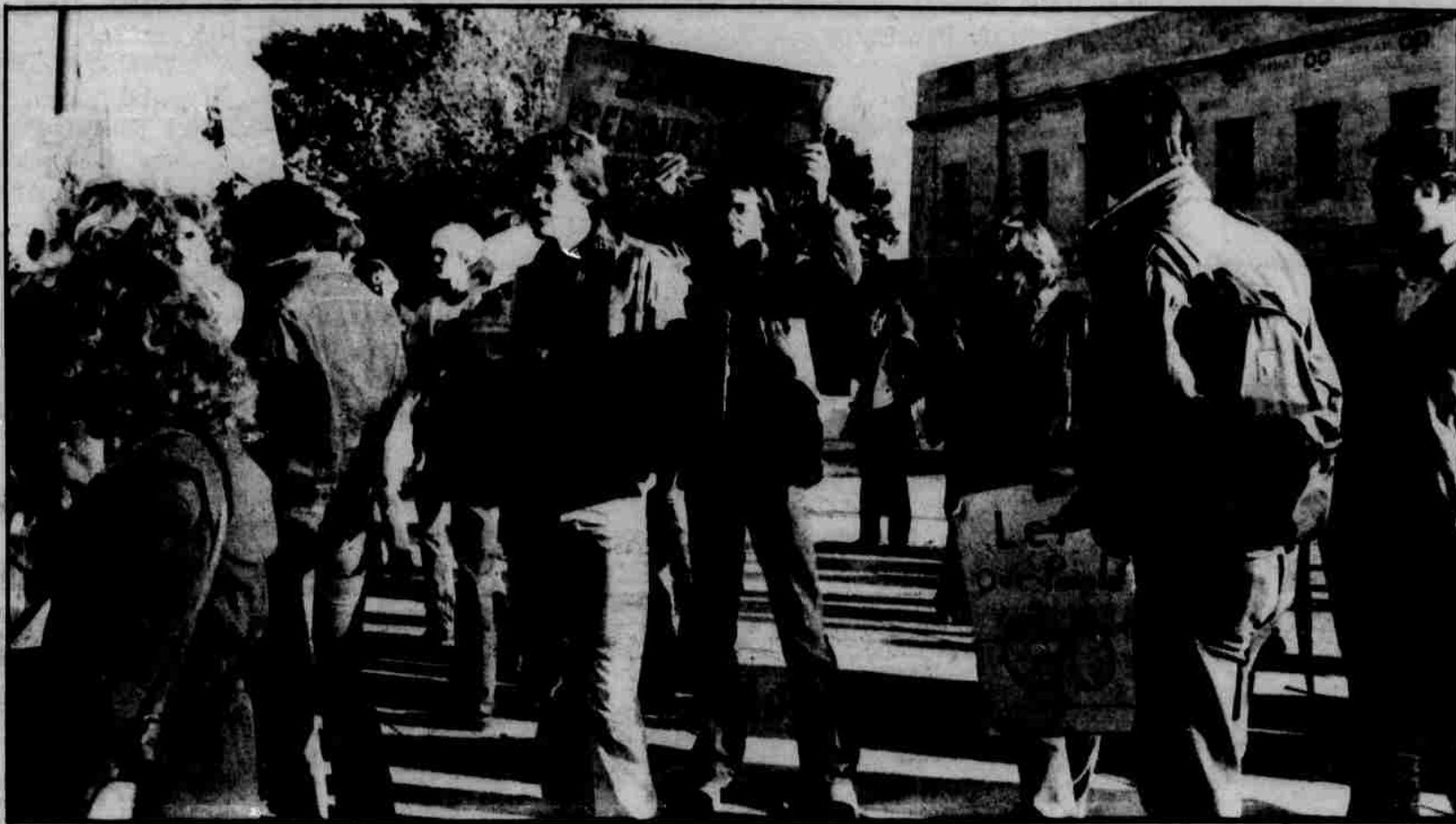


Photo by Mitch Hrdlicka

About 50 people gathered at the Nebraska State Capitol Tuesday to protest the holding of 60 American hostages in Iran.

Chambers calls death penalty unfair

By Liz Austin

The death penalty is impractical and unjust, according to State Sen. Ernest Chambers of Omaha.

Chambers, who spoke Tuesday at the Law College on his proposed bill that would repeal the Nebraska death penalty, said the death penalty is unjust because it isn't imposed on most people who are candidates for it, as penalties for other crimes.

The majority of those who commit homicides don't even go to court with the death penalty option, he explained. Those who impose the death penalty pick and chose not on the nature of the crime, but according to the way they feel that day, he said.

"People in the state pen have committed worse crimes than those on death row," Chambers said.

WHETHER to impose the death penalty is decided on an irrational basis with no system of specificity, he said. Many homicides are classified as justifiable or excusable, but who in society is in the position to make this determination, he asked.

According to Chambers, society is not in a position to make that determination. They can't make one statement or principle that applies in all circumstances, he said.

The majority of homicides occur among family members or friends, Chambers said, and the uncertainty of these domestic situations cause people to excuse these homicides.

If the state gives the right to kill its own citizens, it should have a careful system of specificity, Chambers said, adding that it should explain what is done and why, with careful steps to carry it out.

But even if Nebraska had a system of specificity, Chambers said that he doesn't feel that the state would have the right to take a citizen's life.

"The laws of a society should not reflect the most barbaric or meanest things in a society," Chambers said. "Rather the best thing for a society to do is to be civilized and set goals for people to reach for and offer guidelines to reach them."

WHEN ONE allows something as evil as the death penalty into society, society is bound to lose control and the evil gets out of hand, he said.

"Frankenstein tried when he created something evil and he could not build in a mechanism of control," Chambers said.

Cruel and unusual punishment is supposedly unconstitutional, he said. It used to be that if one maimed another then he would be punished by being maimed, he said. But this was determined to be cruel and unusual punishment and if maiming is cruel and unusual punishment, then the death penalty certainly is also, he added.

Chambers said that he could understand the use of the death penalty if there were rationale for its use, but the number of crimes committed for which the death penalty is used hasn't diminished.

For something the society wants, it seems to be unpopular, Chambers asserted.

According to Chambers, past governor, J. James Exon said he was happy that there was no execution during his term. And, Chambers said, Gov. Charles Thone feels that the similar sentences for similar offenses bill will keep executions from occurring during his term, so he is not supporting a repeal of the death penalty. But Thone is thinking in political terms, Chambers added.

If executions are so good, then why hide them and why not give the executioner medals as they do the soldiers? Chambers asked. Instead, he said they keep it secret, clean and separate from the people who supposedly want it—society.

Protesters decry embassy takeover

By Wayde Wrich

Between 40 and 50 people gathered in front of the state capitol Tuesday to protest the holding of 60 American hostages in Iran.

With photographers, reporters and law enforcement officers looking on, the protestors expressed concern for the hostages' safety.

"I think the United States has been pushed around too long, and I don't think we should meet their demands," UNL student Ronda Dohse said.

English major Jody Weldon said, "I think the fact that there are more journalists and officers here than protesters just shows the apathy of most people."

Dohse said she wasn't asking for deportation of Iranian students, "I think Carter made a good move when he decided to stop buying oil from Iran," she said.

Weldon said the United States should cut all relations and economic ties with Iran.

"Whether we should do it now or after the release of the hostages, I don't know," she said.

NU President Ronald Roskens and the chancellors of the three NU campuses, commended students Tuesday for maintaining their composure during the crisis in Iran. In a prepared statement, they said "It is especially important to avoid any incidents that might endanger the welfare of the hostages."

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Photo by Mitch Hrdlicka

State Sen. Ernest Chambers

inside wednesday

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