

Professor: Friendly relations with China needed

By Roger Aden

It is necessary for the United States and the Peoples Republic of China to continue their present course of relations, a Chinese professor at UNL said Monday.

Professor Sing-nan Fen spoke to a meeting of the Lincoln chapter of the United Nations Association. Fen, a native of China who teaches education at UNL, said, "Whoever the president is, the United States and China have to be friends, simply because of Russia."

Fen said that when the United States and China are friends, the Soviet Union's influence will be checked because of the pressure applied by the two countries and Europe.

As an example, Fen cited arms limitations. He said if the United States and China discussed the matter with the Soviets, the chances for success would be greatly improved because of the increased bargaining power available to the two new friends.

Benefits to two nations

According to Fen, other benefits for the two nations include availability of technology to China and the potential for U.S. investment in the world's most populous country.

Because of these benefits, Fen said, the Communist Chinese regard former president Richard Nixon as a hero because he was "instrumental in opening relations" between the two countries.

Although the availability of U.S. technology will help the Chinese in their quest for modernization, Fen said "there's still a lot of problems. Not because the Chinese are dumb, but because they are not used to the modern world."

He said the Chinese are concentrating on three areas in order of their importance—agriculture, light industry and heavy industry.

"On paper it looks easy," he said. "But it really isn't

because China is very backward in many ways. However, they have got to do it. Otherwise, there is little chance for survival."

Modern legal system

One aspect of China's modernization, its new legal system, recently received world-wide attention during the Gang of Four trials. Four leaders of China's Cultural Revolution, an effort to enforce strict communist values, including Mao Tse-tung's wife, Jiang Qing, were brought to court.

Fen said although there is an almost unanimous opinion in China of the group's guilt, he doubts that the leader of the four, Jiang, would be executed as some have suggested.

"That would be too much," he said, "because she is Mao's wife."

Fen said Mao supported the Cultural Revolution in principle, but not to the extent that the Gang of Four did. The four, Jiang, Yao Wenyuan, Wang Hongwen and Zhang Chunqiao, are reported to be responsible for the persecution of writers, artists and scientists between 1966 and 1976. Many were killed or committed suicide because of the persecution, Fen said.

Shortage of intellectuals

As a result, Fen said there is now a shortage of intellectuals in China and older people still are teaching, compared with the plan encouraging retirement in the United States.

During his presentation to the Lincoln UNA chapter, Fen gave a slide show describing life in China and told about differences between the lifestyles of the United States and China.

Fen said Chinese families quite often are separated and members are sent to different areas of the country to work because the government generally assigns jobs.

The only time they see each other is during vacation, he said.



Photo by Jon Natvig
Professor Sing-nan Fen

Landis proposes counseling bill

By Patti Gallagher

A bill to allow minors psychological counseling without parent approval was introduced in the Nebraska Legislature last week.

In addition, the bill would make all counseling records confidential.

Lincoln Sen. Dave Landis, who introduced the bill, said that although no Nebraska court action has ever addressed the question of the relationship between parents or guardians and the counseling of minors, counseling rights of minors are usually treated as medical rights.

Under Nebraska law, any minor must have the consent of a parent or guardian to undergo medical treatment.

The bill specifies that initial counseling of a minor be allowed without notification of parent or guardian. However, it further states that the counseling professional shall notify the minor's parent or guardian within 30 days of the counseling session.

The bill also provides that all records of counseling be confidential and that they may only be released to an interested party by authority of a court order.

Release of records would have to be ordered by a juvenile court if that court found the release was in the best interest of the minor, Landis said.

Any person releasing counseling records of minors, or any counselor failing to notify parents within 30 days would be guilty of a misdemeanor under the bill.

Failure to keep the records confidential or to allow a minor to consent to his or her own counseling would "flaw the possibility of successful counseling," according to Landis.

The age at which a minor would be permitted to consent to his or her own counseling is not included in the bill. Landis said he wouldn't expect a minor to consent to psychological counseling at age 8, but would by age 15.

The age at which a minor is able to consent to counseling would be the decision of the professional counselor, Landis said.

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