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Gov. Thone, Kerrey square off on farm issues during debate

By Deb Kollars

Amid alternating cheers from the Democratic and Republican camps, Nebraska's two gubernatorial candidates faced off on agricultural issues at the State Fair Thursday afternoon.

Although Republican Gov. Charles Thone and his Democratic challenger, Bob Kerrey, differed occasionally on technical points, both adamantly voiced their concern that agriculture, as the state's biggest industry, be supported and helped as much as possible.



Staff Photo by Dave Bentz

Bob Kerrey

The Nebraska League of Women Voters sponsored the debate. The League invited four representatives from the news media to ask questions on agricultural issues. Panelists included Don McCabe, associate editor of the Nebraska Farmer magazine; Ann Toner, farm editor for the Lincoln Journal and Star; Gary Kerr, WWT chief newscaster; and Rich Hawkins, farm service editor for radio station KRVN in Lexington.

The panelists asked the candidates questions on such issues as ground water conservation, personal property tax relief, the proposed veterinary college, boosting grain sales and protecting farm families from corporate takeovers.

Last resort

Both candidates agreed that water conservation policies should be left to the Natural Resource Districts. Only as a last resort should the state government step into the matter, they said.

Both also expressed support of the constitutional amendment, designed to protect farm families from large corporate interests that will be placed on the November general election ballot. In supporting the amendment, Kerrey was critical that past legislative attempts to protect family farms have been unsuccessful because "no leadership has been exhibited in the Unicameral."

When asked what Nebraska can do to help the lagging economic state of farmers, Thone replied that it should work hard to develop new export markets. He cited his recent trips to Europe and Asia in negotiating agricultural sales for Nebraska.

Thone also said the state needs to look for new ways to utilize grain products in Nebraska. Gasohol and fructose, two products made from corn, are examples he gave.

Kerrey agreed that the state should take a decisive role in helping farmers. He said that rather than spent time in foreign countries, however, he would spend more



Staff Photo by Dave Bentz

Gov. Charles Thone

time in Washington, D.C., working for responsible federal policies for farmers.

Reagan policies

One key area in which the candidates disagree was in their assessments of President Reagan's policies as they relate to Nebraska farmers.

Thone said by "straightening out our domestic economy" and bringing interest and inflation rates down, the Reagan administration has ultimately helped farmers in this state.

Kerrey disagreed.

"Agriculture has been abandoned by the Reagan administration," he said.

The congressional farm bill is nothing more than a budget bill, Kerrey said, and does not help farmers.

Regarding the sale of Missouri River water by South Dakota for a commercial coal slurry pipeline, both candidates said they supported Nebraska's filing suit against the sale along with Iowa and Missouri.

Thone used this opportunity to point out Kerrey's flip-flop of opinion on the sale by quoting Kerrey as saying several weeks ago that South Dakota deserves cooperation, rather than criticism, from Nebraska officials.

Registration bill poses questions

By Vicki Ruhga

Major questions have been raised about a bill that would deny federal aid to young men who fail to register for the draft, said Don Aripoli, UNL director of financial aids.

The bill, S2248, has been approved by both the House and Senate, and is expected to be approved by President Reagan.

If passed, the bill will allow a student at least 30 days to prove he registered before he is denied any aid.

"One of the major questions is what kind of administrative burden this bill would have," Aripoli said. "It could result in the collection of a form for verification. However, we may also have to collect the forms and verify them with each draft board. This would be disastrous."

Richard Armstrong, vice chancellor for student affairs, also assumed that the added paperwork will be given to financial aid directors.

"However, we would tend to resist any additional requirements for the financial aid offices because their load is already all-encompassing," Armstrong said.

Aripoli stressed that no one knows for certain how students will submit draft verification. It will be up

to the secretary of education and the director of the Selective Service System to determine verification procedures, he said.

"If the president signs the bill, it will go into effect July 1, 1983, Aripoli said. "We have not received any word from the federal government yet on the bill."

The financial aid departments are opposed to the fact that they would have to monitor the draft board, he said.

Armstrong said he was aware that national financial aid offices are lobbying against the bill because it is an extraordinary requirement and is not in the normal functioning of a financial aid office.

"The possibility of holding back grants until draft registration is verified seems foreign to the essence of a financial aid administration," Armstrong said.

In addition to being an inappropriate function for a financial aid institution, the bill discriminates against the needy, Aripoli said.

"However, we also signed an agreement to comply with current federal regulations and any regulations passed in the future," he said.

"All we can do is express our disapproval, which we have already done," Aripoli said. "But we still have to do whatever the law requires."

Swiss incident shows tougher stance

By Mark Hansen

After blowing in the door of the Polish embassy in Bern, Switzerland, Thursday with a bomb hidden in a food container, 35 anti-terrorist police stormed the embassy and freed the five unharmed hostages held there since Monday.

The gunmen holding the hostages had threatened to blow up the embassy and the hostages today if their demands were not met.

Such performances by police are becoming more common, two UNL political science professors said Thursday.

UNL Professor David Forsythe, who teaches courses in international relations and foreign police, and Professor Bill Avery, who recently completed a teaching job at Warsaw University, agreed that governments seem to be

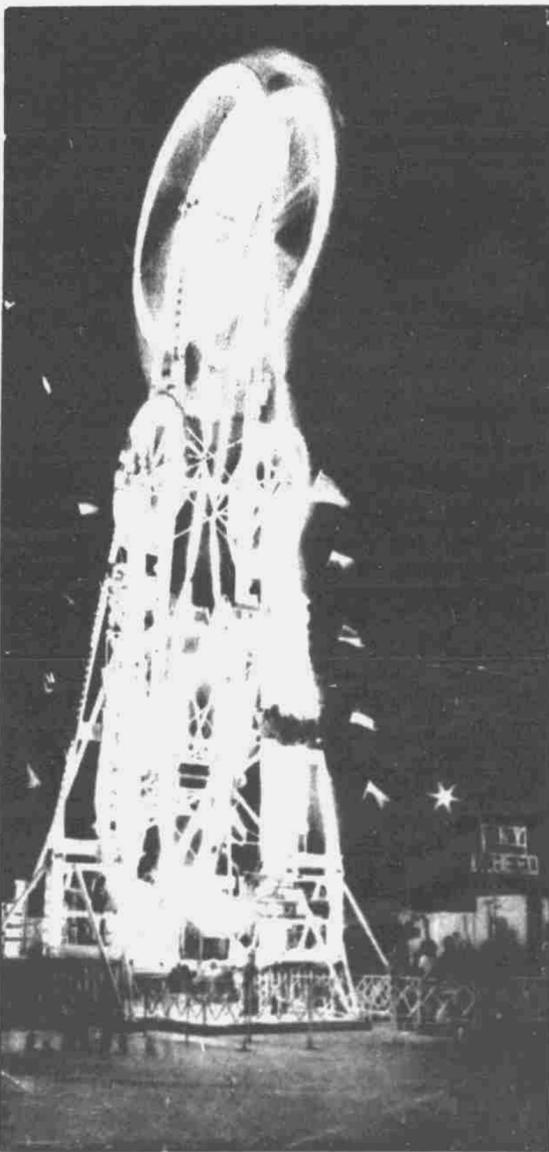
getting better at dealing with terrorist tactics.

"Governments have developed a hard-nosed attitude toward terrorism," Forsythe said. "Quite a number of governments have gotten tough and been successful."

Forsythe said the situation in Switzerland differed from the Iranian takeover of the U.S. Embassy in that the Swiss government was not sympathetic to the terrorists as was the Iranian government.

Forsythe and Avery further agreed that there was never much chance of the gunmen's demands being met by the Polish government. Terrorist groups usually are looking for publicity for their cause, Forsythe said.

"The Poles are a very impatient people," Avery said. "The government there has been promising for 36 years that if you work harder, for more hours, six days a week, things will get better. But the people don't see that happening."



Staff Photo by Craig Andressen

Lighted sky wheel ride at the State Fair stands tall against the evening sky.