

Public school problems not in private schools

BY JOAN MORRISON

Conflicts between public and private schools increased when officials of the Nebraska Catholic Conference said that Gov. Robert Kerrey's task force on excellence in education should not be permitted to evaluate their schools.

"Private school education far surpasses the quality of public education," said the Rev. James Dawson, superintendent of schools for the Diocese of Lincoln, Wednesday, "and we don't want public educators, who are having serious problems, dictate to private schools how to educate."

Dawson said parochial schools were not represented on Kerrey's 30-member task force, but that the governor had requested that representatives meet with him on Thursday. "We're pleased that Governor Kerrey did not include us on the task force," he said, "because it is set up to examine public schools. We do not want any laws passed

as a result of this, or any regulations from the state department of education to impact private schools in Nebraska."

State officials said that the task force is just an advisory group, but any legislation which might result from its recommendations would be binding on all accredited schools in the state.

Dawson said that the Catholic Conference sent a letter to Kerrey requesting the governor's assurance, in writing, that new regulations for parochial schools would not come out of the study.

"We don't believe in being forced into a corner where we're not represented," he said, "and we do not feel that the State Department of Education stands for good education at times."

"They're actually a hindrance to education," he said, citing examples of "fluff courses, like fly-tackle tying" and a lack of discipline, which, he said, contributes to problems in the public schools.

"The State Department of Education vacillates. Every time there's a new idea, they follow it. We've been in the classroom for centuries," he said, "We don't oscillate with every wind that blows."

Public schools reflect the needs of society, said Commissioner of Education Joe Lutjeharms.

"It is the responsibility of the public schools to meet the demands and desires of the whole society," he said, "and if these needs change, so do the schools."

Discipline is something the parochial schools don't really have to deal with, he said.

"Of course they don't have discipline problems," he said, "where do all the students go who leave parochial schools? The discipline problems go to the public schools."

Lutjeharms disputed Dawson's statement that private schools are better.

"There is excellence in certain schools,

regardless," he said, "and there are problems in each type, too."

He said he did not think that federal income tax credit should be given to parents of private school children.

"In my humble opinion, if I can disagree with both the Supreme Court and the President of the United States, I do," he said.

"There is a place in our society for both types of schools. That's why our education system is so great. People can elect a choice of schooling through their own resources, while supporting the public school concept of taxation at the same time," he said.

Father Dawson said that private schools might offer alternatives to excellence in education, and as such, should be considered for tax credits.

"Many people are threatened by us," he said. "Why? Our elementary education system costs us one-third of what it costs public schools and yet we're producing more. That's what gets them upset."

University of Nebraska
School of Journalism

Number 4
July 7, 1983

Summer Nebraskan

Regents vote to implement UN-O pay hike

BY LARRY SPARKS

The University of Nebraska Board of Regents Tuesday voted to implement without appeal the 6.6 percent pay increase granted University of Nebraska-Omaha faculty members.

The raise, ordered last month by the Commission of Industrial Relations, is retroactive to the 1982-83 school year. The commission last week turned down NU's motion for a rehearing, but the regents had considered an appeal to the Nebraska Supreme Court.

"Naturally, I'm very pleased that they are willing to accept the CIR ruling," said Janet West, president of the UN-O chapter of the American Association of University Professors.

The regents met in closed session for three-and-one-half hours before reaching the decision. Meanwhile, West and 10 of her UN-O colleagues, along with five University of Nebraska-Lincoln faculty members, waited in the lobby of the Nebraska Center for Continuing Education with signs urging the board not to seek an appeal.

After resuming open session, the board voted 7-0 to approve a resolution read by Regent Nancy Hoch, Nebraska City, supporting implementation of the CIR order. As stated in the resolution, all money for the pay hike will come from the 1983-84 UN-O operating budget.

Ms. West said she was not surprised with the decision to charge the cost to the UN-O budget, but she said it contradicts statements made earlier by the board and administration.

This spring, she said, the administration argued for a lump-sum appropriation from the Legislature to allow for a flexible budget. Now, the regents are stressing the importance of keeping the campus budgets separate, she said.

In a statement read by Regent Kermit Hansen, Omaha, based on current projections, paying the pay raises "will directly impact academic programs at UN-O and could result in the elimination of as many as 25 professional staff positions."

Ms. West, however, accused the regents of writing a strong statement to pacify any feelings UN-L faculty members might have about forming a bargaining unit. Substantial academic cuts can be avoided, she said.

"We would certainly hope that most of the cuts will come out of administration instead of academics," she said.

The regents ordered UN-O Chancellor Delbert Weber to study programs which can be reduced or eliminated. Weber is to make a progress report at the July 23 meeting and submit a list of recommendations by Sept. 9.

Ms. West said she hopes the administration will allow the faculty to have a say in what cuts are made. She said the AAUP



Photo by F.C. Palm

Janet West, president of UN-O American Association of University Professors talks to Channel 10 news crews Tuesday, before Board of Regents

meeting. Demonstration in support was given by UN-O instructors. The regents approved the pay raise.

might propose its own list of recommended cuts to the board.

According to the regents' statement, future salary increases at the three NU campuses will be determined by comparison to peer groups. Hansen said that probably means identical raises will no longer be granted to all faculty members of the NU system. Instead, professors will get an increase based on how their campus compares to similar institutions across the nation, he said.

"If they use the list of comparables they've been using, they could end up with something like a 12 percent to 15 percent increase for the Lincoln faculty," Ms. West said.

With the long battle of 1982-83 salaries finally over, Ms. West said, she hopes the UN-O, AAUP can build a better working relationship with the regents and administration.

"We have gone through the correct procedures as defined by law," she said. "Now, we hope they (the regents) will follow the law that says they have to bargain with us in good faith."

Women must get same insurance benefits as men

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Supreme Court, in a ruling that could force sweeping changes in the insurance industry, ruled Wednesday that it is illegal for pension plans to pay smaller monthly benefits to women than to men.

But the court said that benefits derived from contributions made prior to this decision may still be calculated under the old system, which allowed larger monthly benefits to men.

The insurance industry maintained that the differences in monthly payments were legitimate because women, on the average, live longer than men.

Today's ruling came as the court concluded its 1982-83 term. It is due to return for the next term on the first Monday in October.

INSIDE

"Party-hardy" attitude in U.S. college students on decline..... page 6

Backyard Farmer gains new bug expert..... page 3

Intern experience helps in the job search..... page 3

UN-L dorm residents pay for living quarters spruce-up..... page 8

Smooch radio hits the Lincoln airwaves..... page 5