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Sen. Exon chairman of conference on Nebraska business, economics

By Christopher Galen

U.S. Sen. J. James Exon was host to a conference focusing on problems and solutions to Nebraska's economic issues Tuesday at the Nebraska Center for Continuing Education.

The 1983 Nebraska Conference on Business and the Economy in the '80s was coordinated by the Columbia Institute for Political Research, a firm based in Washington, D.C. Exon served as chairman and moderator.

Among the featured speakers were Gov. Bob Kerrey; Elliot Janeway, author and political economist; Charles "Mike" Harper, chief executive officer of ConAgra; Donald Dworak, Nebraska's director of economic development and Pat Choate, senior policy analyst for economics at TRW, Inc.

Exon said he was pleased with the seminar's results.

"I was most impressed with the workable solutions we came up with for these problems that were discussed," he said. "I thought it went very, very well."

The conference was designed to get people's input into areas that are of concern to them, especially in the field of agribusiness, Exon said.

"We tried to bring the services of the government to one place at one time," he said.

The Nebraska Conference on Business was one of more than 20 such seminars coordinated by the Columbia Institute in the past two years, said John Oppenheimer, vice president of the institute.

"We contacted Sen. Exon back in January, and since have performed the logistics in getting this conference together," he said.

The general purpose was "to get a lot of decision-makers in one room," Oppenheimer said. "It was a blend of what Sen. Exon thought would be interesting for his constituents."

Those attending the conference included state and local government officials, business executives from both large and small companies, farmers and labor union representatives, Oppenheimer said.

The conference was co-sponsored by 14 Nebraska businesses.

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• When it rains, it pours. There were six concerts in the Lincoln area this weekend, including Men at Work, The Greg Kihn Band and Wayne Newton Page 14

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Culture Center awaits input

By Ward W. Triplett III

The complicated question of where to relocate the UNL Culture Center at 1012 N. 16th St., took yet another turn during the summer.

The latest development would move the center, which caters to the social and educational needs of black, Native American and Mexican-American students, to 1630 Q St.

When school ended last spring, the NU Board of Regents was expected to vote on a proposal to place the center at the university-owned Terrace Hall at 425 University Terrace, which had served as an annex for the Tau Kappa Epsilon fraternity until last spring.

"The Terrace Hall option ran into a lot of opposition," Richard Armstrong, vice chancellor for student affairs, said. Armstrong said fraternities and sororities around the vacated annex objected to locating the center there, saying they wanted the area to remain entirely residential.

Although a task force Armstrong appointed had developed tentative plans for the building, and the Nebraska Union Board had approved additional funding to run the building in its 1983-84 budget, the proposal was not presented to the regents for their approval.

"We quite honestly felt that it is wise not to advance the proposal this summer," Armstrong said. "We encouraged the students to examine some other options instead. Until that time, most of our energies had been directed toward the Terrace Hall building."

Regent Ed Schwartzkopf also decried the option and suggested moving the center to the vacated Whittier Junior High School building on 22nd and Vine streets.

Finally, Armstrong suggested a possible move into the Nebraska Union basement after a decision is made on where to relocate the University Bookstores.

"The Whittier plan is totally out now. It's just too far away," Ennio Quevedo, director of the Culture Center, said. "The main purpose in moving was to get the Culture Center closer to the hub of campus."

Still, the Terrace Hall plan was the leading option for the students when the semester ended in May. But in mid-summer, university officials were contacted by Bob Nowak, who owned a building at 1630 Q St. Nowak said he wanted to sell the building and asked if the university might want to buy it.

The idea went through several offices, and Armstrong contacted Quevedo and Daryl Swanson, director of the Nebraska Unions, about possibly buying the building as a site for the Culture Center.

"It's very tentative now, and that's all it is," Armstrong said. "There are a lot of ands, ifs and buts that need to be answered yet."

The Q Street building, which now houses the offices of the Picture Man and Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Co., among others, is a two-level building. It contains 9,000 square feet of space — more space than in the current Culture Center, but less than that available at Terrace Hall.

However, present plans would call for the basement of the building to be renovated for the Culture Center, while the upstairs offices would remain intact and given to Multi-Cultural Affairs, and other student services, most of which are located in or around Seaton Hall.

Quevedo said that no one has indicated yet if the Culture Center plans would wait until leases in the building had run out.

But first, the university will have to buy the build-

ing. That proposal may be ready by the October regents meeting.

"My hope is that we can get a consensus from the students," Armstrong said. "If the students indicate that this is what they want, then we could ask the regents to purchase the building in October."

Elizabeth Burden, president of the Afrikan Peoples Union, indicated that that may not be so easy.

Burden and other APU leaders have been through the building, and like Armstrong and Quevedo, they said they believe it is a sound structure that could fit the center's needs. But, she said, she is still interested in the Terrace Hall option.

"The students still need to be able to sit down and study the options we have," Burden said.

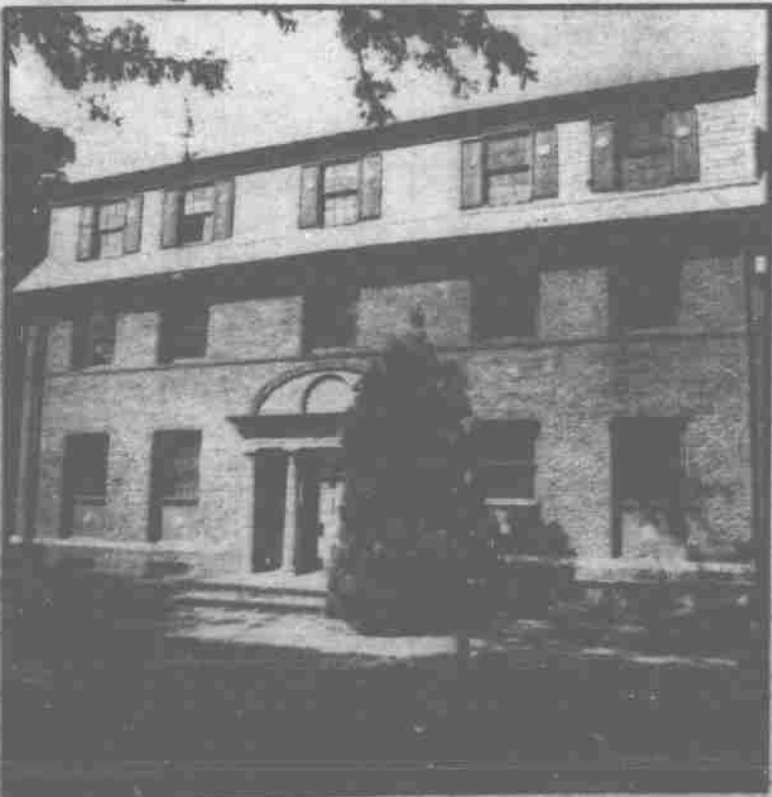
"We went through the proper channels to get the TKE annex, and we believe there is still the option of getting the annex," she said.

The Culture Center opened in 1970 at the request of black football players. A building at 1012 N. 16th St., the current site of the center, was donated by the university and initial funding came from the UNL athletic department. Multi-Cultural Affairs managed the center until 1977 when the Nebraska Unions took over.

Complaints about the building started soon after, and in 1981, a study by the UNL Physical Plant determined the structure was not worth renovation. The task force was created soon afterward; its goal was to find a new building on campus for the center and to move the service closer to the mainstream of campus.

The task force turned in its proposal to the Nebraska Unions and Armstrong in 1982. Because the TKE residents were vacating the Terrace Hall, the task force favored that option as opposed to construction of a new building.

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Terrace Hall, 425 University Terrace



Culture Center, 1012 N. 16th St.



1630 Q St. building

Staff photos by Dave Bantz