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Group starts petition for freeze initiative

By Christopher Burbach

Representatives of the Nebraska Nuclear Weapons Freeze Campaign announced at a press conference Wednesday an initiative petition drive to place on the 1984 Nebraska ballot a proposition calling for a bilateral nuclear freeze and opposing MX missile deployment in Nebraska.

Proponents of the petition may face a legal battle, however, because Secretary of State Allen Beermann has refused to file the petition.

According to a report from Beermann's office, the refusal was based on an opinion from Nebraska Attorney General Paul Douglas. Douglas's opinion advised Beermann that "the initiative process could not be used for the creation of a resolution or for conducting advisory votes on questions of public policy," the report said.

Brian Coyne, freeze campaign coordinator, said his group will take whatever legal steps are necessary to place the petition on the ballot.

"Lawyers for the freeze believe it is a proper subject for an initiative petition under the Constitution of the state of Nebraska," Coyne said.

He said he hoped the initiative campaign would stimulate debate about the freeze and MX issues, adding that "it is the patriotic duty of every American citizen to inform him or herself on this crucial issue of our time."

"We are optimistic there will be a broad base of support for this initiative proposal," Coyne said. "There are at least 24 statewide organizations which have endorsed the bilateral, verifiable nuclear weapons freeze proposal."

State Sen. Don Wesley of Lincoln, Lincoln City Council member Marguerite Alschwede and representatives from the Nebraska Conferences of the United Church of Christ and the United Methodist Church also expressed support for the petition.

Wesley said the Legislature has addressed the issue, citing the 23-23 vote by that body on a freeze resolution he co-sponsored.

"I think that the reaction to the petition will be very positive," Wesley said, adding that he thought it is very important to pursue a bilateral and verifiable freeze.

"My feeling is that there really is no alternative," he said.

Larry Zink, co-chairman of the freeze campaign, said, "this petition drive will allow Nebraska citizens to join the citizens of other states who have had the opportunity to express their opinions through the ballot box on their preferred approach for future U.S. nuclear policy."

The proposition "will also allow Nebraskans the opportunity to express to Congress and to the nation our feelings about the proposed deployment of the MX missiles in our state," Zink said.

A positive vote on the initiative will provide support for Nebraska's elected officials who support its ideas and may persuade those officials who do not, he said.

ASUN discusses bicycle survey

By Jana Nyffeler

ASUN President Matt Wallace presented finalized goals to the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska at their regular meeting Wednesday evening.

Senators outlined the goals during an in-meeting workshop last month.

ASUN goals fall into four categories. Internal motivation encourages motivation within the senate and increased student involvement in ASUN. An advocacy-representation goal recommends that the organization act as a communication link between students and administrators at the university. Wallace also recommended that the senators strive to improve the quality of their student services branch, which includes the biannual book exchange, Student Legal services, the Paper Money booklet, the Government Liaison Committee and a proposed student typing room. The senate also plans to increase its credibility during its term.

Primary ways by which these goals will be achieved include increased public relations and consistent student accessibility to senators. Public relations

Appearance of news anchors important to their success



Staff photo by Dan Kuhns

Steve Murphy, WOWT news director (left), and E. Neale Copple, dean of the UNL School of Journalism (right), listen as Carol Schrader talks about the role of women in broadcasting.

By Christopher Galen

The personal appearance of television news personalities is a key factor in their success, according to Carol Schrader, KETV news co-anchor. A panel discussed the results of the Christine Craft lawsuit Wednesday night in the Nebraska Union.

The initial topic of discussion was the lawsuit which news anchor Craft brought against the Kansas City television station where she worked. The lawsuit alleged that Craft was fired because of her unattractive appearance, and because she wasn't deferential to her male co-anchors. Craft won the decision against the station last summer.

The panel discussion, entitled "Women Anchors... Sink or Swim?", was moderated by E. Neale Copple, dean of the School of Journalism. Its speakers included Carol Schrader, KETV news co-anchor; Steve Murphy, news director at WOWT; Eob Nielsen, representative of SRI, Inc., an audience survey organization; and Kandra Hahn, director of the State Energy Office, who was representing a woman viewer of television news.

Schrader said women in general need to be more concerned with their appearance than men do, because society expects them to look their best, adding that "youth and beauty are drilled into us."

Murphy said the audience's perception of a television news anchor is crucial to their ability to communicate. If a person is not likable and pleasing to the audience, the home viewer will switch him or her off, he said.

The Craft decision "will put the courts in the editor's chair," as it places the decision as to how

important appearance is to a station's success upon the judicial system rather than on the station's news director, Murphy said.

Nielsen, who has researched audience preference in several viewing markets, compared appearance in television to cleanliness in a restaurant. Although it may not be the most important reason people watch a particular station, if certain standards are not maintained, the station will lose its business to its competitors, he said.

Since television involves direct communication, the appearance of reporters and anchors plays an important role in their communications skills, according to Nielsen.

"It's a dynamism not everyone can understand," he said.

Hahn, who also pointed out the pressure for women to appear their best, said television is "A one-way relationship." It involves fantasy, but is not an exchange of power between viewer and reporter, she said.

Nielsen said that television viewers list personality as the primary reason they view a station, with perception of the quality of news coverage second.

"Packaging is part of the whole product, as is the news coverage," he said.

Television is so powerful that it will take more time to discover how to best use its influence, according to Nielsen.

Because television is only now beginning to experiment with older female personalities, it's too early to tell if women will be allowed to age on the air, as are their male counterparts, Murphy said.

"It's up to the viewers," he said.

The panel discussion was sponsored by Sigma Delta Chi, the Society of Professional Journalists, and was held in the Rostrum.

tools consist of greater senator visibility within colleges, visits to on-campus living units, public service announcements on KRNU and press conferences.

Arts and Sciences Senator Mike Geiger told the senate of the results of the bicycle survey recently conducted by ASUN. Of 310 individuals who completed the questionnaire, two-thirds indicated they felt there exists a bicycle-pedestrian safety problem on city campus.

The survey presented three solutions to the issue. The majority of the completed surveys indicated that steps should be taken to establish bicycle lanes on campus sidewalks. Nineteen percent of the respondents said that they felt a viable alternative lies in parking all bicycles in one or two common areas, thereby eliminating bikes on campus sidewalks. An option to maintain current policy of allowing both pedestrians and bicyclists on the same paths received favorable response from 24 percent of the individuals.

Geiger said that his committee is currently corresponding with other universities — Colorado, Iowa State and California Berkeley — to study solutions to bicycle traffic problems.

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