

# Daily Nebraskan

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## Court adjourns to deliberate in impeachment trial

By Patty Pryor

After three and a half days of testimony, both sides concluded their cases in the Paul Douglas Impeachment trial early Thursday afternoon.

The Nebraska Supreme Court considered six articles of impeachment drawn up by a special legislative committee investigating Douglas' questionable financial transactions with the now insolvent Commonwealth Savings Co.

Now it is up to the seven justices of the court to issue a written opinion on the attorney general's fate, but that process could be a lengthy one.

"The decision of the court will be by opinion, but I can't say when that opinion will be filed," Chief Justice Pro Tem Leslie Boslaugh said after closing arguments Thursday. "Obviously, it will take some time for the court to consider the record and the many exhibits that have been submitted."

Both sides were given the opportunity to submit additional briefs after the court adjourned. Prosecuting attorney Richard Kopf of Lexington said he planned to file an exhibit detailing real estate transactions involving Douglas, his business associate Paul Galter, former Commonwealth officer Marvin E. Copple and Copple's secretary, Judith A. Driscoll. Defense attorney William Morrow

of Omaha will have time to respond to the exhibit. More than 80 exhibits were filed during the trial.

### Impeachment articles

The six articles of impeachment, all concerning Douglas' knowledge of inside transactions at Commonwealth and his statements to officials investigating the case, are:

- Douglas' duty not to misrepresent;
- His duty not to lie;
- His duty to disqualify himself in any investigation involving a conflict of interest;
- His duty to avoid insider borrowing;
- His duty to investigate possible wrongdoing at Commonwealth; and
- His duty to avoid even the appearance of impropriety.

The court must uphold only one of the six charges for Douglas to be permanently removed from office; five of the seven judges, or two-thirds of the court, must uphold the opinion.

The six specifications against Douglas stem from a number of complex business deals made as far as back 1976.

Among these was a \$241,774 loan to Douglas and Galter, which the two men used to buy 26 lots in Lincoln's Fox Hollow subdivision. The lots were bought at a discount through Copple

and sold at a profit.

Douglas also received \$32,500 in fees from Copple for work done on other land development projects and a check for \$371,814 from Driscoll for the sale of lots purchased with Commonwealth funds.

The real estate transactions were part of three-way dealings between Copple, Driscoll and the Douglas/Galter partnership in which Commonwealth loans funded the purchases and the money was funneled back to Copple.

In questioning from prosecuting attorney Kopf Wednesday, Galter denied any knowledge of Driscoll's borrowing from Commonwealth to purchase the lots from him and Douglas.

### Loans rolled over

Douglas also received \$6,500 car loan from Commonwealth in 1976, which was renewed six times without interest or principal and paid off in August 1979; and a \$25,000 home improvement loan also in 1976, likewise renewed 15 times and paid off in September 1982.

Defense witness Robert Kirchner, an accountant now working for the Commonwealth receivership, testified Wednesday that issuing such loans was common business practice at Commonwealth.

With interest on loans often going unpaid, the company would simply capitalize the note and roll it over into a larger note, he said.

Common practice or not, however, the state contends that Douglas' failure to disclose such dealings led to a conflict of interest in the ensuing investigation at Commonwealth.

The investigation was conducted by interim Banking Director John Miller and special Assistant Attorney General David Domina, who both testified that Douglas' failure to disclose his business dealings with Copple impeded their progress.

Douglas' lack of disclosure "foreclosed a whole line of questioning," Domina testified Tuesday.

Miller supported Domina's statements in testimony as the state's final witness Wednesday and again in rebuttal testimony Thursday.

Despite statements that he intended to cooperate fully with investigators, Douglas did not provide all the requested information, Miller said.

### Neglected investigation

The state also contends that Douglas neglected to investigate possible wrongdoing at Commonwealth when

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## Contract extension to benefit Nebraska dry-land farming

By Mark Davis

The largest agriculture contract in UNL's history was signed Friday, extending the \$4.2 million Moroccan dry-land farming research project contract to five-years and \$19.2 million.

The project is coordinated by UNL in cooperation with the Mid America International Agricultural Consortium.

The contract allows research between Morocco and the MIAC which has been done for the past four years, to continue.

Robert Kleis, dean and director of international programs at the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources, said the project should increase the productivity of the Central Plains in Morocco.

The 30,000-square mile area is similar to parts of Nebraska's farmland and should provide an excellent research base for dry-land farming improvements, he said.

The project brings 35 Moroccan students to UNL for training in agricultural sciences. Also, 12 agricultural specialists will go to Morocco to help develop self-sufficient food supplies. The research focuses

on cereal grains, which Morocco currently imports. The project also will improve equipment in Moroccan research facilities and provide short-term consultation with the MIAC.

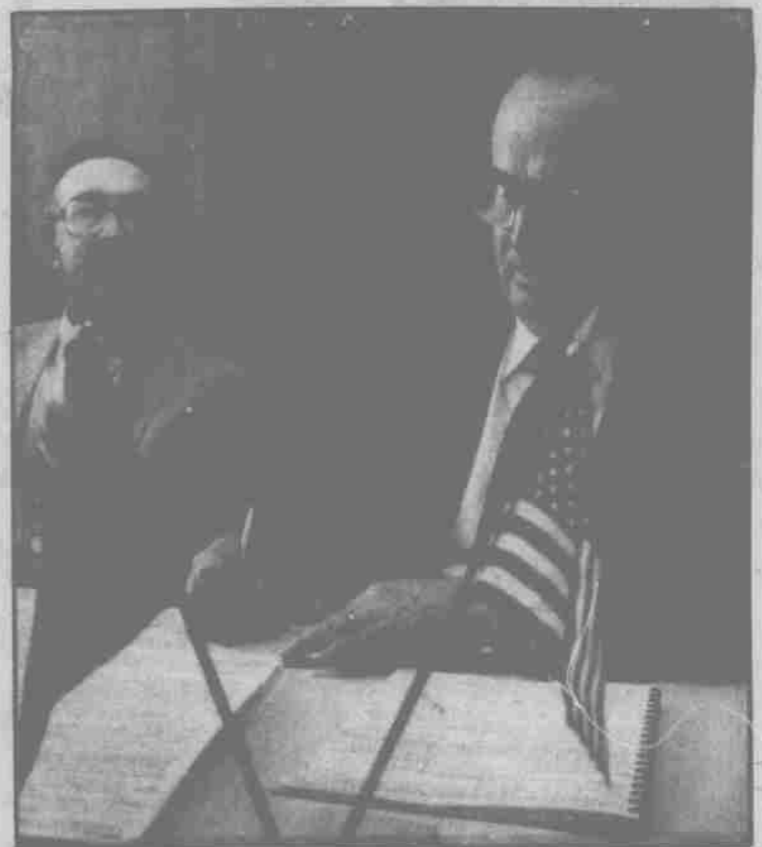
Nebraska, Iowa State, Kansas State, Missouri and Oklahoma State make up the MIAC. Kleis said Nebraska is the leading institution for the Moroccan project.

Chuck Francis, project coordinator, said some of the major Moroccan problems MIAC will research are erosion, tillage and weed control. The project will serve as a longterm link for dry-land farming research with Morocco, he said.

Dan Bigby, assistant project coordinator, said the project would benefit UNL by developing a close working relationship between the countries' scientists. This will allow UNL's staff to broaden its background in international agriculture, he said.

In a speech before the contract was signed, Kleis said he hoped the contract would be renewed again in another five years.

"This is a longterm project," Kleis said. "You don't build institutions and train people overnight," he said.



Mark Davis/Daily Nebraskan

Wendel McKinsey, executive director of Mid America International Agricultural Consortium, signs the \$19.2 million contract with Morocco. NU Regent Edward Schwartzkopf witnesses the signing.



Monte Schmidt/Daily Nebraskan

UNL students frolic in the sun of Padre Island, Texas, Thursday during spring break. From left, Lance Kingery, Lon Swanson, Peter Gotzman, Dana Wintroub, unidentified woman, Cynthia Miller, Dee Maxon and Jeff Graves.

Monday

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