

Kerrey urges senators to support farm land bills at special session

By Judi Nygren

With the rap of a gavel and the presentation of the flags, the special legislative session opened Thursday morning.

It proved to be a short session, about one hour, with most of the morning devoted to Gov. Bob Kerrey's opening speech and catch-up conversation among senators.

In his speech, Kerrey urged senators not to allow urban and rural interests to divide them on the farm land issue. Urban residents who are frustrated with high property taxes should not "last out" at farmers and ranchers, he said.

Kerrey also asked legislators to look at a bill which would allow out-of-state banks to buy Nebraska banks. The bill is "a good policy of the state," he said.

After Kerrey spoke, the Legislature passed a motion to suspend the rules and go straight to the farm land hearing.

At the afternoon hearing, session action began. Kerrey, Robert Raun, state secretary of agriculture, Donna Karnes, state tax commissioner and director of the Department of Revenue, addressed the Constitutional Revision and Recreation Committee, and explained why they thought Kerrey's two farm land bills may help farmers avoid further financial problems.

Kerrey said according to the state constitution, Nebraska must tax agriculture land at 100 percent. This is not fair to farmers and ranchers, he said.

"Because you cannot forecast a steady stream

Marching Red has tryouts

By Ward W. Triplett III

Its participants describe it as a week of pure intensity. Even its organizer will be glad when it's over. When that date comes next Saturday, the 265 members of the 1984 Cornhusker Marching Band will be chosen and uniformed. But first, each of them has to survive band camp.

Over 300 band hopefuls come to Lincoln a week early each year to try and play their way into the Big Eight's largest ensemble unit. They are the survivors of one-on-one spring playing auditions, but they will have to show band director Bill Ballenger they can march at the same time they play. If they can't, Sunday afternoon's cut will end their chances for another year.

"No one is ever guaranteed a spot in the band," said Rose Johnson, a former band secretary who is now an administrative assistant.

"The veterans with the experience stand a better chance to make it, but if we have a rookie who plays better than a third-year player, we'll take the rookie. It's rough sometimes, but we have to look at it from what's better for the whole ensemble, and most of the students realize that."

The schedule calls for the flag corps and musicians to have an orientation meeting, dinner and discussion Saturday, with a 2-hour rehearsal in the stadium. Sunday morning, woodwinds, percussion and flags will have separate marching auditions, and at 6 p.m., the final roster will be posted at Westbrook



Mark Davis/Daily Nebraskan

Bob Devaney and Tom Osborne watch as the Double Hundred Club dedicates a memorial in honor of their achievements and contributions to the community.

income," he said, "it is reasonable to assess farm land separately."

To allow a separate classification, Kerrey said legislators must approve one of the bills.

One bill calls for an amendment that would allow legislators to classify farm land separate from other land. The other bill calls for an amendment that would allow legislators to exempt a portion of the land value from taxation.

Raun, echoing Kerrey's support for either bill, said action must be taken because "if taxes go up, it could be the straw that breaks the camel's back." He urged legislators to leave inflationary factors out of farm land assessments and to only consider land's ability to produce an income.

Karnes said she hopes the Legislature approves one of the bills "so you have more options once everything is uniformly assessed."

Karnes also presented her staff's research on other states' farm land taxation policies. Most states do classify farm land lower than other land, she said.

"The states that have moved ahead before us realize the problem of evaluating ag land at actual value," she said. While Kerrey's staff favored either bills several senators expressed reservations.

State Senator Donald Wesely of Lincoln said he was not sure either bill was progressive enough. He said he feared that the larger farm operations would get the largest tax break and the smaller operations would carry the bulk of the tax burden.

Sen. Clarence Jacobson said he had reservations about the bills because they may lead to several separate land classifications.

Music Hall.

The survivors will then split time with the football team on Memorial Stadium's new All-Pro Turf, with three rehearsals a day at 7:15 a.m., 1:30 p.m. and 7 p.m.

"I know the schedule looks a little bit like boot camp," Johnson said. "But the people out there want to be there. They have a lot of experience at music camps, and they will feel it's worth the work."

The selection process began in March, when Johnson sent letters to all those returning from the 1983 band asking them if they planned to try out again. Local high schools were then contacted about possible candidates to fill the 70 spots left open mainly because of graduation. From March to July 1, prospective members came in to audition for Ballenger and his staff, some as far away as New York.

"I look mainly for a strong, mature tone quality, advanced technical facility, and sight-reading ability," Ballenger said. "If someone has a terrible time in audition, I will let them try out again."

"But now we're in the marching part, and at this point we have to make cuts. We can only take those people that we know are going to produce."

For the first-timer, it can be a "overwhelming" experience, or so said Tony Ballard, a Lincoln High graduate who will be looking for a spot among the alto saxophones.

"It's been my dream for as long as I can remember to be in the marching band here," Ballard said. "In my opinion, it's one of the top 10 bands in the country."

Another freshman, Tom Oba of Scottsbluff, picked up the same dream last year, when the Scottsbluff High band played at halftime of the Nebraska-UCLA game.

Continued on Page 6

Summer grads to get full-scale ceremony

By Jay Mulligan

For the first time since 1971, UNL will receive a full-scale ceremony for 900 summer graduates, complete with caps and gowns, according to Connie Price of the UNL Information Office.

Commencement exercises will begin at 9:30 a.m. Aug. 18.

John Yost, assistant to the Chancellor, said the decision to have summer graduates go out in style was made in response to several requests from students and parents to have a more formal program.

"In previous years, students attended an informal ceremony where their names were called and they stood up. I think this year's ceremony will be more personable," Yost said.

If students cannot attend the Aug. 18 ceremony, they can pick up their diplomas at their convenience in the Administration Building, Yost said.

Price said the ceremony will be like other commencement exercises with the exception that no honorary degrees will be awarded.

"Of course it will be on a smaller scale," Price said.

This year's program will be reviewed and if it is found to be a success, it will be continued, she said.

Off The Wire

National and international news from the Reuter News Report

Delorean case ends in acquittal

LOS ANGELES — John De Lorean, fallen auto magnate, was found not guilty of cocaine charges Thursday.

The verdict by the six men and six women was read in a crowded courtroom after four months of one of the decade's most sensational trials. The jury had deliberated seven days.

The government had accused De Lorean of conspiracy to possession and distribution of 220 pounds of cocaine worth \$24 million. If convicted, the 59-year-old De Lorean could have been sentenced to 67 years in prison on eight counts.

The defense maintained that federal undercover agents and a convicted drug smuggler and government informant, James Hoffman, had tried unsuccessfully to trap De Lorean into a giant drug deal. The prosecution alleged De Lorean had tried to save his failing sports car factory in Belfast, Northern Ireland, which was closed by the British government seven hours before De Lorean was arrested in a Los Angeles hotel. The British government had provided \$140 million for the factory, which was hit partly by a slump in U. S. Car sales.

After hearing 18,000 pages of evidence from 17 witnesses, inspecting 200 exhibits and listening to six hours of video and audio tapes, recorded secretly by federal agents as De Lorean met with undercover operatives, the jury found De Lorean not guilty of all eight counts.

Honduran cabinet emptied

TEGUCIGALPA, Honduras — President Roberto Suazo Cordova, in a surprise move Thursday asked for the resignation of his entire cabinet. The move came against the background of mounting criticism over the government's handling of the economy, caught in one of the worst crises in Honduran history.

Honduras, the second poorest country in the Western Hemisphere after Haiti, has emerged as the closest ally of the United States in Central America and the center of U.S. military operations in the turbulent region. As in many Third-World countries, the problems of the Honduran economy have been compounded by influences beyond government control such as falling commodity prices and rising interest rates on foreign loans. The country's total debt has been estimated at roughly \$1.8 billion.

Agent Orange exonerated

CHICAGO — A study of children born to U.S. Soldiers who served in Vietnam has found no evidence of birth defects that might have been caused by Agent Orange, medical researchers said Thursday. It is the second such recent study to reach that conclusion. An earlier investigation which concentrated on Australian men who served in Vietnam also found no provable birth defect link. The latest findings were announced by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control.

Veterans who served in Vietnam and were exposed to the chemical defoliant during the 10 years in which 100 million pounds of the substance were sprayed have claimed to have suffered a number of health problems, including birth defects among their offspring. The chemical dioxin, one of the most toxic substances known to man, has been blamed for the problems. Seven chemical companies which made the herbicide agreed in May to settle a suit brought by some of the veterans for \$180 million.

Brazilian oil rig ablaze

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil — Forty people survived a blazing fire on an offshore oil platform Thursday only to drown when a rescue boat carrying them to safety capsized in heavy seas. A spokesman for the state oil company Petrobras said that at least another 165 were injured, six seriously, in the fire aboard the Enchova platform 60 miles off the coast of Rio de Janeiro state. The spokesman said the rig in Brazil's most important oil-producing area was still ablaze. He said the fire was caused by a blow-out when gases released during drilling caught fire.