

# More defense research boosts UNL

By James Rupprecht  
Staff Reporter

As electromagnetic waves pass through airborne particulates, they are scattered and depolarized — this is just one of several UNL research projects that the Pentagon pays for.

According to a recent report by the American Friends Service Committee, a group that advocates total disarmament, UNL researchers received \$366,000 in new or active grants from the Department of Defense during the 1984 fiscal year. UNO got \$49,000.

UNL's figure, which appears large, is rather insignificant when compared to the \$1.069 billion in DoD research and development contracts that were active at more than 230 institutions during the same period. Recent DoD figures estimate that this number may reach a peak-time high of \$39.3 billion by the 1986 fiscal year, the AFSC report said.

In 1984, Johns Hopkins University was the DoD's leading researcher, with \$272 million in contracts. MIT was second, with \$260 million.

In the Big Eight, Colorado led with \$1.837 million in contracts, while Missouri was second at \$1.269 million. Nebraska was sixth, followed only by Oklahoma and Iowa State, the report said.

The trend toward increased military research spending on college campuses has held true at UNL.

Earl Freise, assistant vice chancellor for research, said six UNL faculty members have DoD-sponsored research grants and 18 to 20 proposals are pending.

Records show that DoD grants now total more than \$600,000, almost double last year's amount. Freise noted that none of these existing grants were for the Strategic Defense Initiative, or Star Wars research.

But several of the researchers disagreed with Freise.

Ezekial Bahar, a professor in the

electrical engineering department, said there is no question that the research he does for his Army grant can be used for Star Wars.

Bahar recently finished work on a 2½-year project for the Air Force in which he studied ways to classify radar signatures, the unique patterns that are reflected when an object is scanned by radar.

His current project, which is being funded by the Army, involves electromagnetic waves.

"I can't say what the specific military use of this research is because the Army has asked me not to," he said.

"But on the other hand, I don't want people to think that we're here building weapons to destroy the earth with. They (DoD) ask us not to say anything so the enemy... the Russians don't know what we're doing."

According to DoD records, all the research at UNL falls into the non-classified 6.1 category — basic research on topical issues, Freise said.

"We won't accept any research which is classified in any way," Freise said.

But the AFSC report noted some projects, which as a whole would be classified, are divided into several "basic" sub-projects and given to individual researchers at different institutions. The report noted that the true military applications of some projects also could be hidden similarly.

Although some basic UNL research may appear to have no direct military applications, Pentagon-funded research is required by the Mansfield Amendment of 1971 to "relate to a specific military function."

Some research, however, has more of a military application than others.

Currently, military research at UNL ranges from Dennis Alexander's study of high-power lasers and how they interact with aerosol particles to Don Nelson's study of communication system switching networks.

Alexander, an associate professor in the mechanical engineering department, said his work deals with high-power lasers interacting with military gear like tanks or planes.

Nelson said that on the opposite end of the scale, his communications work has many civilian applications.

"The idea is to use telephone lines to transmit data," he said. "We're studying the ways to tune them for maximum efficiency."

With university funding dropping, many faculty members are looking to the military as a way to fund new projects.

Frazier Williams, a professor in electrical engineering, is one such person. Williams has submitted a proposal to study switches for very high voltages such as those found in particle accelerators necessary for the "Star Wars" project.

## Bill could hinder bargaining

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But the provision also bars state employees from appealing to the Commission of Industrial Relations until the Legislature can act in 1987.

Omaha Sen. Dan Lynch said the temporary appeal ban would take away state employees' rights to bargain on

their own behalf.

Lynch also objected to the bill because it was advanced directly to the first round of debate without a public hearing. But Warner said the Appropriations Committee had state employees' plea for a raise during its budget hearings.

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