

# Daily Nebraskan

COVERING THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA SINCE 1901

VOL. 94 NO. 46

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OCTOBER 26, 1994

## Spanier to review report

By Matthew Waite  
Senior Reporter

Chancellor Graham Spanier will meet today with the committee he created to review the University Police Department's role in the Oct. 1 death of Francisco Renteria.

Spanier said the committee submitted a draft report to the chancellor Tuesday.

The committee, consisting of University of Nebraska-Lincoln faculty and staff, will revise the document after the meeting, Spanier said. He said he then would review the document again and make a final recommendation late this week or early next week.

He declined to comment on the content of the report.

Spanier formed the committee after University Police Officer Charlotte Veskrna mistook Renteria for a man violating a protection order Sept. 30. Renteria died after a struggle with university and Lincoln police.

The committee, charged with reviewing University Police procedures, was led by William Lewis, chairman of the Department of Math, and included: Teresita Aguilar, vice chairman of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction; Christina Brantner, associate professor of modern languages and literature; and Ronald Ross, associate director of the Office of Affirmative Action and Diversity.

Lewis said the document was only 90 percent to 95 percent complete. He said he had a loose end to discuss with the chancellor.

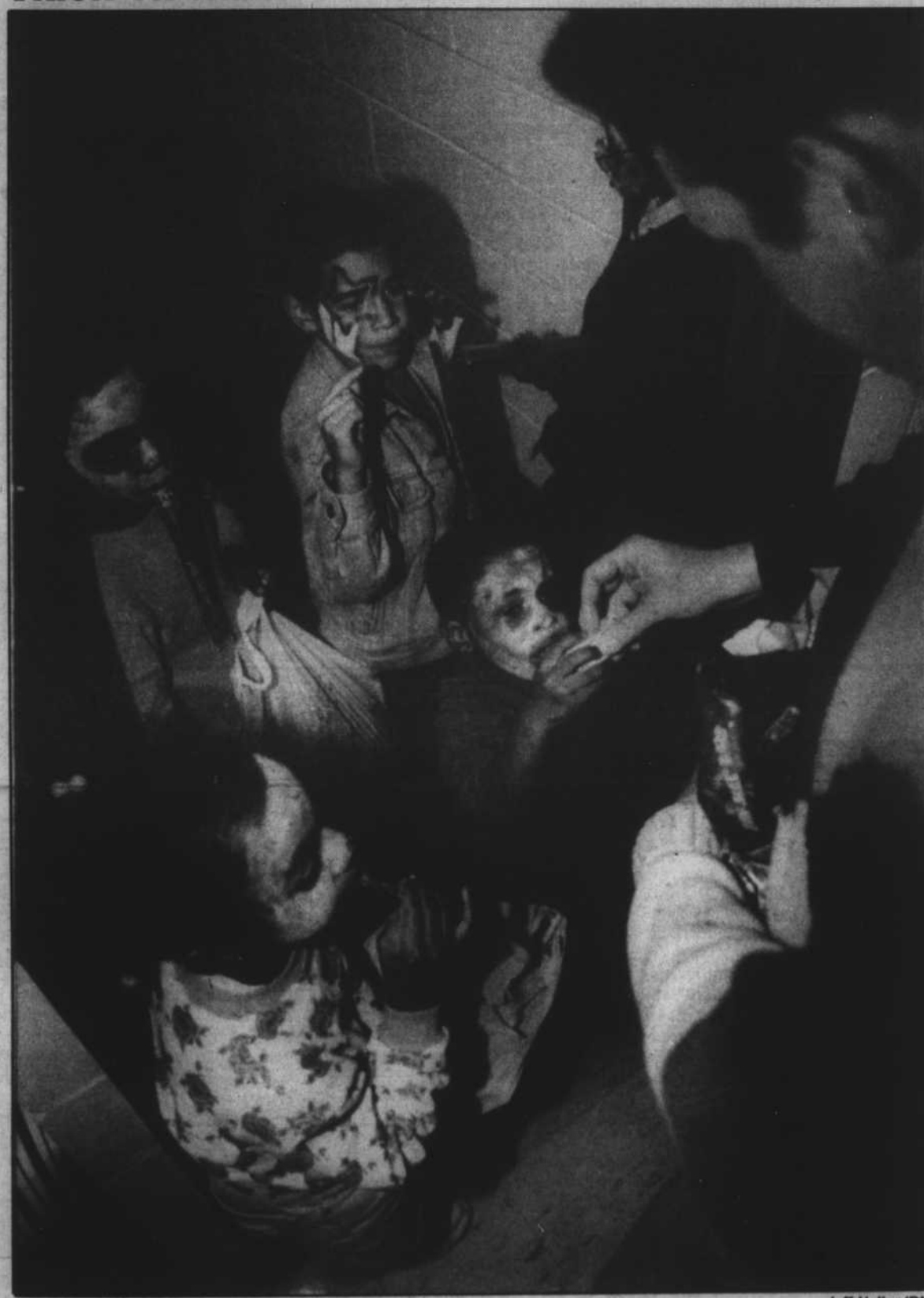
The process was tiring and intellectual, Lewis said, adding that he admired the members of the committee for their dedication and willingness.

Brantner said the committee members had sacrificed their time to write the document. She said the committee met on weekends, nights and mornings—sometimes for more than four or five hours at a time.

"We thought that it was important enough to put our lives on hold for a bit," Brantner said.

She said the final document would be released to the public. But Brantner said she was unsure when that would happen because the Nebraska State Patrol, the FBI and a grand jury still were investigating the incident.

## TRICK-OR-TREAT



Jeff Haller/DN

Eric Martin, right, hands candy to five-year-old Makani Chilombo. Surrounding him from bottom left is Dominique Kelley, Koyan Parks and Jared Payne. Children from the Malone Community Center did some trick-or-treating training Tuesday night at the Cather-Pound Residence Halls. Dionne Parks, child care coordinator at Malone Community Center, said that for the past three years, children from the Malone Community Center had come to the residence halls to trick-or-treat. Parks said that between 15 to 30 kids went door-to-door Tuesday.

## Candidates spar over ads, taxes

By Brian Sharp  
Senior Reporter

OMAHA — In the mildest of terms, it was a "spirited" debate.

That was the word Republican candidate Jan Stoney used Tuesday night following the second and final senatorial debate with incumbent Sen. Bob Kerrey at the University of Nebraska at Omaha.

Ed Howard of The Associated Press and Gary Kerr of WOWT-TV moderated the debate. But both candidates took turns at verbal attacks throughout the debate.

At one point, the topic turned to agriculture and Kerrey's record.

Kerrey said that on controversial issues, he frequently voted with former Republican Rep. Virginia Smith, who recently endorsed Stoney. Smith completed her term in office in 1992.

Stoney said she had heard Smith's name enough for one evening, but Kerrey shot back that Smith set an example to be followed.

"And I've got to tell you Mrs. Stoney, you're no Virginia Smith," he said.

"Let me tell you Mr. Kerrey, you're no farmer," Stoney responded.

"And let me tell you," Kerrey said, as the moderators attempted to regain control of the debate, "you're going to have to learn a lot more ... than how to drive a tractor to learn how to fight for agriculture."

The first issue the moderators put before the candidates was the controversy surrounding a recent Stoney campaign advertisement that attacked Kerrey's stance on the death penalty.

Kerrey said the ad was "monstrous," because it showed the bodies of two young boys being hauled from a field. The ad misrepresented his past votes on the issue, he said.

"It tapped into an anger and fear, and a sentiment that goes much beyond the ad itself," Kerrey said.

Stoney defended the ad, saying Kerrey could have voted three times in the past four years to limit appeals in capital cases, but didn't. That showed Kerrey was uncommitted to getting tough on crime, she said.

Kerrey said he later supported a bill in 1991 that included limiting the number of appeals in death penalty cases and the time period in which the appeals could be made.

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## Investigation generates intercultural coalition

### Group's members say Renteria case provided impetus

By Matthew Waite  
Senior Reporter

An intercultural coalition plans to watch federal, state and city authorities as they investigate the death of Francisco Renteria, one of its members said Tuesday.

Jose Soto said the Inter-Cultural Coalition of Lincoln, formed when Renteria died Oct. 1 after a police scuffle, is a culturally diverse group of citizens concerned with issues in the Lincoln community.

Renteria was mistakenly identified by University Police Officer Charlotte Veskrna as a

man violating a protection order Sept. 30.

A struggle with Lincoln and university police ensued as they tried to arrest Renteria, who did not speak English. Renteria had a seizure and died the next day.

The Nebraska State Patrol, the FBI and an independent counsel for Lancaster County all are investigating the incident.

Soto, the director of affirmative action at Southeast Community College, said the main impetus for forming the group was the Renteria death.

The group sent a letter Oct. 21 to Charles Lontor, the chief FBI agent investigating the Renteria death.

The letter expressed coalition concerns about the handling of the investigation, saying there was documented history of racial insensitivity in the Omaha FBI bureau.

The letter also asked the FBI to carefully document and tape all interviews during the

investigation. Taping interviews, the letter said, would preserve evidence used in the investigation and allow it to be used for further review.

The coalition asked Lontor to include a native Spanish-speaking agent in the investigation. The letter said the agent would enhance the investigative team and provide evidence of fairness and objectivity.

Besides watching the investigation, Soto said, the coalition will evaluate and give input to the Lincoln community in other issues. The group will watch city hall, the police department, the public school systems and other areas of public service, he said.

Joel Gajardo, director of the Hispanic community center, said the coalition was still in its formative stages. He said a steering committee was formed Monday night to create a mission statement and set goals.

The coalition's reach goes beyond the Hispanic community, Gajardo said.

"We are all involved," he said. "I hope with the collective wisdom of the coalition ... together we can come out with a clear course of action."

Gajardo said the first concern of the coalition was justice in the Renteria case. But the group also wants to improve the climate between the Lincoln law enforcement and minority communities.

Gajardo said memories of similar incidents brought members of the city's Native American, Chicano-Latino, Asian and white communities into the coalition.

Incidents in Nebraska involving the deaths of an African-American and a Native American, and the crippling of another Native American called people to action, Gajardo said.

"People are concerned that what happened with the Renteria case was not an isolated

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