

Daily Nebraskan

COVERING THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA SINCE 1901

VOL. 95 NO. 122

FRIDAY

WEATHER:

Today - Mostly sunny and not quite as cold.

Tonight - Clear and very cold, low around 0.



March 8, 1996



CELTIC CONFLICT



Paula Lavigne for the DN

A man and his daughter walk by one of many pro-peace murals in Belfast, Northern Ireland.

Keeping N. Ireland's peace

Residents hope cease-fire holds

By Paula Lavigne
Corresponding Reporter

BELFAST, Northern Ireland — In a crowded pub on the south end of town, the future of Northern Ireland buys itself a drink.

There sit four friends — a Catholic, two Protestants and an Englishman — with strong opinions about the debates that have divided their region for 25 years.

But while they sit and argue, they sit in peace.

For 17 months, peace in Northern Ireland meant an Irish Republican Army cease-fire.

That peace was shattered when the IRA dropped its cease-fire Feb. 9 and, hours later, bombed London's Canary Wharf office block. Two people died in that blast.

The bombing was followed a week later by an IRA bus bomb, which prematurely exploded, killing the bomber.

The nationalist paramilitary group said it returned to violence because the British government was stalling the peace process. The British government cut off all contacts with the nationalists.

Speculation then arose that the loyalist paramilitaries would drop their cease-fire and attack Dublin in retaliation. The peace process was at a stalemate.

That was until two weeks ago, when Irish Prime Minister John Bruton and British Prime Minister John Major set June 10 as a date for all-party talks.

They invited Sinn Fein, the political branch of the IRA, on the condition that

the IRA reinstates the cease-fire and agrees to elective representation for the talks. Gerry Adams, Sinn Fein president, said the IRA wouldn't budge.

The other 360 days

But the four men sitting in the pub aren't politicians or members of a paramilitary group. They are just trying to do what the other people of Northern Ireland are trying to do.

They're trying to lead normal lives. Thirty-five-year-old Tom Wilkinson, a software technical support assistant from Derry, the second-largest city in Northern Ireland, is one of the four friends at the pub.

"Let's say 360 days out of the year, things go on as normal," he said, "but five days out of the year, there's a major bombing or shooting."

"They are five days, but they're five days that have an impact on the other 360."

Almost 70 days of the new year have gone by without a bomb in Northern Ireland.

There have been punishment beatings and other more covert acts of violence, but nothing as full-scale as the Canary Wharf bombing.

Precautions have been taken, and security has been increased, but it's low-profile. People walk freely in and out of City Hall. Shoppers aren't searched as they enter the stores.

At a random checkpoint, one officer stood outside chatting to the local shop-



Paula Lavigne for the DN

Murals bearing political opinions dot city walls in Northern Ireland.

Paula Lavigne, a junior news-editorial major, is a long-time staff member of the Daily Nebraskan. She is living in Dublin, Ireland, this semester and plans to return to the University of Nebraska-Lincoln next semester.

See BELFAST on 6

Time expiring for senators, 1996 session

By Ted Taylor
Senior Reporter

With only 20 days left in the 1996 Nebraska legislative session, some senators agree that they may need to speed things up to get to all the bills on the agenda.

On Thursday, Speaker Ron Withem of Papillion addressed that issue.

"The pace certainly could be better," Withem said. "But there are a lot of complex issues before us, and they do take some time."

So far this session, Gov. Ben Nelson has approved 15 bills while 50 more wait for final reading. More than 30 bills have reached select file — the second stage of legislation.

Lincoln Sen. Chris Beutler said the 60-day session lent itself to a rush to debate many bills.

"It's everyone's concern during a short session," he said. "Especially when we have a huge property tax issue to deal with."

Withem said senators could possibly begin full floor debate on property tax bills late next week.

The speaker said senators still had to debate bills dealing with the budget, telecommunications and water legislation.

Other major bills still awaiting first-round floor debate before the Legislature adjourns April 18 include LB1380, which would make abortions illegal in Nebraska when there is a sign of life; LB927, the Athlete Agent Registration bill; and LB1171, which would establish incarceration work camps in the state.

See AGENDA on 3

Marintzer looks forward to next year

By Julie Sobczyk
Senior Reporter

Eric Marintzer is no stranger to student government.

Ever since he was a sophomore at Adams Central High School in Hastings, the junior economics major has played a role in handling student issues.

He was even student council president his senior year of high school.

But as ASUN's next president, Marintzer said he would face even bigger challenges — such as getting more students to care about the government.

"Being president of student council is a far cry from becoming student body president here," he said. "It's a real honor and an awful lot of responsibility and a lot of work."

"I'm ready for it. I'm thankful to everyone who voted and for the opportunity to work."

He's also thankful to his parents, he said, who have been a big part of his success.

"I called my parents last night, and they were both very happy," Marintzer said. "They were pretty stressed and worried about the election. They wanted it to turn out for the best."

When he first planned his campaign, Marintzer said, his parents were apprehensive about him "undertaking all that responsibility."

But he convinced them, he said, that he was the right man for the job.

"It took a little pushing and prodding, but they came around," Marintzer said. "They were very supportive, and they were behind me all the way."

He began looking for student support for his

See MARINTZER on 3