

McCook prison construction delayed

By JESSICA FARGEN
Senior staff writer

During the first day of budget debate Tuesday, lawmakers voted to delay construction on a McCook prison work camp.

A study will be done during the delay to determine the best place for the prison camp.

The scales tipped against the small southwestern town's favor despite concerns that the state would be further alienating western Nebraska.

Before the first-round vote of 29-5 to delay construction on the work camp, lawmakers debated the possibility of using the work camp funds to improve dilapidated youth detention centers in Kearney and Geneva.

McCook was in contention for a \$74 million prison last year. The prison was awarded to the eastern city of Tecumseh, resulting in East vs. West tension within the state. McCook later received a prison work camp.

Trenton Sen. Tom Baker, who represents McCook, said the state should not back out on its promise to build the prison.

"I don't know what our credibility is going to be," Baker said. "I can imagine the turmoil that's going on out there as we discuss this."

Plattsmouth Sen. Roger Wehrbein, who heads the Appropriations Committee, agreed.

"I do think it's a terrible mistake to break faith with the word that we have started progress at McCook," Wehrbein said. "I think it's atrocious the way we are dealing with this community."

McCook prison supporters wanted the camp because of the jobs and economic development that come with the work camp. Under state law, the work camp is to be completed by 2005.

Omaha Sen. Ernie Chambers claimed the move to give the work camp to McCook was a case of political maneuvering on the part of former Gov. Ben Nelson, a McCook native. He said the Legislature is not bound to a governor's decision.

Senators debate public school testing

By SHANE ANTHONY
Staff writer

State senators sought an answer Tuesday to a multiple-choice question about testing public school students in the name of accountability.

After 2½ hours of debate, they still did not have the answer. The major ideas were split between multiple tests with no district-to-district comparison and one test for the whole state.

Sen. Ardyce Bohlke of Hastings introduced an amendment that became LB144. The amendment, advanced unanimously by the Education Committee, would require any school that was selected to participate in the National Assessment of Education Progress test. That test, she said, would cover 48 percent of academic standards approved by the state Board of Education. School districts would develop their own tests to cover the other 52 percent.

"We will be leading the country," she said. "We will be the only state going in this direction," Bohlke said.

"It was one of those hair-brained political moves by a governor leaving office," Chambers said.

Omaha Sen. Pam Brown proposed an amendment, which she later withdrew, that would have halted construction on the camp. She withdrew her amendment after Wehrbein said he would add \$4.7 million to the capital construction budget to renovate the Geneva center.

Brown said the state's need for a work camp has dwindled with the construction of the state prison. She also said the work camp would not be

Current law requires a single test be developed by 2000.

The Department of Education and the Education Committee oppose one statewide test that would allow comparisons among school districts.

But Lincoln Sen. Chris Beutler said the competition could be healthy. The public wants to know how schools are doing, he said.

"They want assessment," he said. "You can't make things better unless you know how to compare," he said.

Norfolk Sen. Gene Tyson agreed. Students need to know the benefits of competition, he said.

"It is important that they be able to compete with people," he said. "If they can't compete, they can't do business. They can't survive."

Beutler tried through two different amendments to call for one test based on state standards to be in place by the 2007-2008 school year. The first amendment he offered failed. The Legislature recessed before senators could vote on the second.

Another provision of the pending amendment would remove the NAEP test requirement — an idea first pitched by Sen. Jim Jones of Eddyville.

"This is a mandate, and I'd like to see that taken out of it," Jones said.

He and other senators questioned using the NAEP test. They said the test has been used to teach values to children. Sen. Pam Redfield gave an example of a story she said could give kids the impression the American way was wrong.

Bohlke said the NAEP tests are given every two years and cover two subjects each time. Nebraska schools have participated through the 1990s, except 1998. Costs became a sticking point then, she said. But LB144, as amended would make the state pay for the tests instead of local districts.

Bohlke said the tests have changed and no longer cover morals.

"None of these tests values," she said. "This bill has enough problems without talking about testing any values."

as cost-effective as anticipated.

The money would better be used to improve the overcrowded, outdated youth detention centers in Kearney and Geneva, Brown said.

Papillion Sen. Nancy Thompson, who is sponsoring juvenile justice reform measures this session, said the youth detention facilities in Kearney and Geneva were deplorable and overcrowded.

The center in Geneva is designed to hold 83 juveniles, but averages about 100 a day. Kearney has room for 147, but averages about 320.

Lincoln Sen. LaVonn Crosby said she can

attest to the desperate situation of the Kearney youth detention center dormitories.

"That's no dorm," she said. "I'm not sure what it is, it's not even a Boy Scout camp. It looked like that orphanage scene out of (the movie) 'Annie.'"

Discussion over the work camp came about as the Legislature opened up debate on the Appropriations Committee's proposed budget, which was released last week.

The Associated Press contributed to this report.

Crisis in Kosovo

Red Cross team allowed to visit American soldiers

BELGRADE, Yugoslavia (AP) — A Red Cross team, including a doctor, was allowed to visit three captive American soldiers Tuesday, leaving with letters for their families. NATO jets pounded Serb forces in round-the-clock attacks, and one struck a civilian community in southern Serbia.

Local authorities in Surdulica, 200 miles south of Belgrade, said at least 17 people were killed and 11 wounded when NATO missiles struck the agricultural community Tuesday afternoon. The dead and injured included women and children. Officials said about 50 houses were destroyed and 600 others were damaged.

An Associated Press reporter, taken to the scene by Serb police, saw dazed rescuers trying to retrieve body parts from the wreckage as bulldozers cleared huge mounds of concrete rubble searching for more victims.

"I did not hear approaching planes," said Andrija Cvetanovic, 42. "Only an explosion. Splinters were flying all over the place. The sky was completely dark."

Most of the dead had been blown apart, and rescuers were trying to assemble body parts for identification.

At one shattered house, police said they believed up to 11 people, including five children, had been in the basement during the attack. So little remained of the bodies, however, that police were unsure of the number of victims.

NATO issued a statement saying its aircraft carried out a "successful attack against an army barracks in Surdulica." U.S. Defense Department officials could not be reached for comment, and the NATO statement did not mention casualties in Surdulica.

However, the statement did say,

"NATO does not target civilians, but we cannot exclude harm to civilians or civilian property during our air operations over Yugoslavia."

Residents said a military garrison about 500 yards away has been abandoned since a NATO attack early this month.

Serbian state television, itself the target of an attack last week that killed at least nine station employees, accused NATO of a "barbaric and destructive bombing" on the town of 15,000.

The private Beta news agency said NATO jets attacked a military barracks in Belgrade's Topcider residential district, on the capital's southern edge. Residents of the nearby Dedinje district, where Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic and other senior officials live, said the explosions shattered windows in their homes.

Chernomyrdin said Belgrade

would accept an "international presence" in Kosovo with Russia's participation, but acknowledged that such a group, which would be unarmed or only lightly armed, fell far short of what NATO is demanding.

Allied terms include the key demand of international peacekeeping troops in Kosovo, an end to atrocities against ethnic Albanian civilians, autonomy for the majority Albanian province and the return of all refugees.

The American soldiers, when seen on Serbian television after their March 31 capture in Macedonia's border area, had cuts and bruises on their faces. After Tuesday's private meeting in Belgrade, officials of the International Committee of the Red Cross refused to discuss their conditions.

ICRC chief Cornelio Sommaruga said only that the men were examined by a physician and allowed to hand over

letters to their families.

Sommaruga also saw the three briefly on Monday. The visit Tuesday was the first "official" contact as provided for under the Geneva Conventions for prisoners of war.

The ICRC also conducted a second visit with a Yugoslav officer captured by Kosovo Albanian rebels and held at a U.S. military base in Mannheim, Germany.

The Americans — Christopher J. Stone, 25, of Smiths Creek, Mich.; Andrew A. Ramirez, 24, of Los Angeles; and Steven M. Gonzales, 21, of Huntsville, Texas — were seized in disputed circumstances along the Yugoslav-Macedonian border on March 31, seven days after NATO launched its bombing campaign.

Chris Bowers of the ICRC said the Red Cross was promised regular access to the prisoners.

Reinhard files claim against COJMC

By LINDSAY YOUNG
Senior editor

An associate anthropology professor has filed a claim with the State Claims Board, stating the UNL College of Journalism and Mass Communications laboratory newspaper, The Journalist, defamed him.

If the board denies Karl Reinhard's claim for \$200,000 in general damages, his lawyer, Thom Cope, said he would file a suit in district court against the university.

Cope said he doubted the university would agree to the claim, and so a suit is possible.

According to the claim, a story published April 21, 1998, in the Journalist, about the university's handling of American Indian remains, destroyed Reinhard's reputation as a

forensic scientist and "distorted his work" in repatriating remains.

The claim was filed April 21, exactly a year after the story was published.

Reinhard did not ask the college to print a retraction or correction for the story, Cope said. He said that if the college did print a retraction or correction, and apologize, it would help to rectify the situation.

Linda Shipley, associate dean of the college, said the college had been working with NU attorney John Wiltse to gather information related to the claim.

Shipley said she had not seen a copy of the claim.

The story appeared in the print and Internet versions of the paper.

According to the claim, the story stated Reinhard committed criminal acts, and the paper used his picture

without his knowledge or permission.

The claim also said the story unfairly stated Reinhard retained Omaha skeletal remains after repatriation, stored trash with American Indian bones and threatened the life of an unspecified staff member.

A report released last week as the result of an independent investigation exonerated Reinhard from many of these allegations, but did state that Reinhard may have done illegal or unauthorized testing on remains before 1993.

Some American Indian activists have said they don't trust that report, which was done by a university-hired attorney.

Reinhard also filed a suit against a research assistant in the anthropology department last semester, claiming he made defamatory statements to the media.

Daily Nebraskan

Editor: Erin Gibson
Managing Editor: Brad Davis
Associate News Editor: Sarah Baker
Associate News Editor: Bryce Glenn
Assignment Editor: Lindsay Young
Opinion Editor: Cliff Hicks
Sports Editor: Sam McKewon
A&E Editor: Bret Schulte
Copy Desk Chief: Tasha Kelter
Asst. Copy Desk Chief: Heidi White
Photo Co-Chief: Matt Miller
Photo Co-Chief: Lane Hickenbottom
Design Chief: Nancy Christensen
Art Director: Matt Haney
Web Editor: Gregg Stearns
Asst. Web Editor: Amy Burke

Questions? Comments?
Ask for the appropriate section editor at
(402) 472-2588
or e-mail dn@unl.edu.

General Manager: Dan Shattil
Publications Board: Jessica Hofmann, (402) 466-8404
Chairwoman: Don Walton, (402) 473-7248
Professional Adviser: Nick Partsch, (402) 472-2589
Advertising Manager: Andrea Oeltjen
Asst. Ad Manager: Mary Johnson
Classified Ad Manager:

Fax number: (402) 472-1761
World Wide Web: www.dailyneb.com
The Daily Nebraskan (USPS 144-080) is published by the UNL Publications Board, Nebraska Union 34, 1400 R St., Lincoln, NE 68588-0448, Monday through Friday during the academic year; weekly during the summer sessions. The public has access to the Publications Board. Readers are encouraged to submit story ideas and comments to the Daily Nebraskan by calling (402) 472-2588.
Subscriptions are \$55 for one year.
Postmaster: Send address changes to the Daily Nebraskan, Nebraska Union 34, 1400 R St., Lincoln NE 68588-0448. Periodical postage paid at Lincoln, NE.
ALL MATERIAL COPYRIGHT 1999
THE DAILY NEBRASKAN