

# Professor links media to distrust

BY CHARLIE KAUFFMAN

A Harvard-educated political science professor defended the integrity of state legislatures Wednesday, saying the media's coverage of negative news and the public's generalization of government officials are to blame for the negative stigma surrounding government.

"People think that a government is run for the benefit of a few big interests, and not for the benefit of the people," said Alan Rosenthal, political science professor at Rutgers University.

Rosenthal said the public heard of a few instances of corruption in public office, and generalized the entire system as corrupt, and then criticized the performance of the Legislature.

Alan Rosenthal professor

"Legislators, whatever their performance, are going to be the targets of criticism," Rosenthal said.

He said the competition, disorganization, and negative advertising that characterized representative democracy all added to public distrust, which has increased dramatically in the last 30 years.

"The political system can't win when the demands are so great and the demands are competing with one another," Rosenthal said.

"The legislature is a messy, disorderly, and almost incomprehensible place, and that's the way it should be in a democracy," he said.

Lincoln DeMaris, a freshman political science student who attended the lecture, said Rosenthal's comments pointed out an injustice committed by the public.

"I thought his comments are very optimistic," DeMaris said. "It's kind of disappointing that the American public views our government the way we do."

Mitch McCartney, Nebraska Legislature spokesman, said it was appropriate to hear analysis from and expert of Rosenthal's caliber.

"Dr. Rosenthal obviously speaks about issues that are important to those of us who believe that representative democracy has something to offer," McCartney said.

Rosenthal said representative democracy was in danger of being replaced by a more direct form of democracy, and urged student groups to get involved in civic education on representative democracy.

"Before we chuck it, we should know what we're chucking," Rosenthal said.

## Jury to continue deliberations

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Bao got into another fight with La and the two men down the street from Bao's trailer, and the men struggled over the gun.

After that struggle, Bao grabbed the gun from his wife, who had come outside, and he went back into his trailer to load the gun.

When Bao returned with the gun, La and the other men had returned to La's car, but it is unclear if they were leaving.

Witnesses described Bao walking toward the car and firing at least five times. Police found five shell casings around the car.

After the shooting, Bao and his family fled Lincoln driving west on Interstate 80, but they stopped in York and turned back. Bao called police from a gas station and told them he had shot a man at his home. He was stopped on the road back to Lincoln.

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# Ford announces Focus recall

Carmaker calls in 2000 models for three possible problems

BY MARGARET BEHM

The Ford Motor Company announced three safety recalls on 2000 Ford Focus vehicles Tuesday.

About 351,000 out of the total 382,991 Ford Focus cars produced this year are being recalled, said Mike Vaughn, a spokesman for Ford Motor Co., in Dearborn, Mich. There are three separate recalls of the 2000-Ford Focus for safety reasons.

Some are being recalled because the rear hub retaining nut that secures the rear-wheel bearings may loosen. This may cause the rear wheel and brake drum assemblies to separate from the vehicle.

Ford Focus vehicles are also being recalled to have the cruise control cable inspected and possibly replaced.

The defect causes the car to accelerate without pushing on the gas.

All of the recalled Ford Focus cars need the A-pillar trim panels replaced to meet the U.S. Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard for head impact protection. The A-pillar trim panels are located

between the front windshield and the doors. The current panels could cause head injury to unbuckled passengers in a accident, Vaughn said.

Ford Motor Co. voluntarily announced the recall, Vaughn said.

"Our goal is to identify those problems and take action quickly," he said. "And we are taking action quickly."

Brad Rustermer, an employee of Meginnis Ford, 6400 Q. St., said even if he would have known the Ford Focus had defects, he would have sold them anyway.

"That's our job," said Meginnis, a service adviser. "It's not a Meginnis problem, it's a Ford problem."

In the aftermath of the major Ford Explorer recall related to Firestone tires, Fords have garnered somewhat of a recall reputation, but most manufacturers have to recall a product at one time or another, Vaughn said.

"Recalls are not unique to Ford," he said.

Rustermer agreed that all cars are subject to recalls.

"Ninety-nine percent of every kind of car made has

"Our goal is to identify those problems and take action quickly."

Mike Vaughn  
Ford spokesman

some sort of recall," he said.

Ford Focus owners will be notified by mail if their cars are being recalled for one or all of the safety concerns.

Those notified should take their car to a Ford or Lincoln-Mercury dealer. There is no cost to have the repairs made.

Those who do not receive a mailing on the recall can call the customer service at 1-800-392-3673.

Karen Hampton, spokeswoman for Ford Motor Co., said the recall won't be detrimental to the financial status of the company.

"We have a warranty reserve," she said. "This is a pot of money we put off to the side for things that can make our product better. We are prepared for instances like this."

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