

# Letterip

Dear Editor:

As a delegate to the Constitutional Assembly I have noticed a tendency—I don't know how strong—toward making this convention merely a super amending process. I think that the conditions under which the convention is meeting demand that it be more than that. It should be what its title suggests, an assembly called to draw up a completely new constitution for student government, using the old constitution not as a foundation but merely as a jumping-off place.

The old constitution has, in effect, been abrogated by the actions of the Faculty Senate. The center of the whole constitution, a Student Council elected by the students, has been set aside like the bewildered and aimless figure-head that it was. The heart has been torn out of the old constitution. To try to rebuild it from its present state into a hale, hearty, and vital figure of power would be practically impossible in the short time we have. Why waste our time on it then? Let's build or a new foundation. Let's have a completely new constitution.

As I see it, there are two main problems which the Assembly must solve if we are to create a workable constitution. The failure of the old constitution to satisfactorily meet these problems caused its collapse.

The first of the problems concerns student representation. The present system of elections might at first seem to be the ideal, the most democratic method of selection. But a wide-open, University-wide election pre-supposes either a thoro knowledge of all candidates and voting solely on merit, or a healthy two-party system. On a campus of 9,000 students it is obvious that we can't all know each other well enough to vote according to merit. We have also seen that there is no healthy two-party system. The fraternity bloc has such effective political domination of the campus that we have, in effect, a one-party system.

The answer to the representation problem might be found in the mode of selection which has been used to determine the composition of the Constitutional Assembly. There would be a good deal of work in outlining a workable, flexible method of representation by the basic campus organizations, but if the formula could be worked out, this method would eliminate the one-party domination of the Student Council which has proved to be its downfall. It would also contribute to a wider and more active interest in campus politics—a condition which is absolutely necessary for the successful functioning of a powerful student government.

The question of power leads to the second cause for the ineffective fight which the Student Council put up against faculty domination. As long as the actions of the student government are completely subject to review by the Faculty Senate, student government will be a mere mockery. So far this year it would appear that the attitude of the Faculty Senate has been to let the Student Council do what it wishes until or unless it steps on the toes of the Faculty Senate. From then on the Council has no powers. This relegates the Student Council to the position of an unwilling tool of the Faculty Senate, suffered to exist only to make Senate rulings more palatable to the student body.

Would it not be possible to set up a two-house system of government, with a representative Student Council as the lower house, and the Faculty Senate, on occasion, meeting as the upper house—the lower house being able to override a veto by the upper house by a 2/3 or 3/4 vote. This would enable the Faculty Senate to give their advice, which would no doubt generally be accepted, but it would give the students the final voice in their own government.

In line with these suggestions, I think the new constitution ought to be ratified not solely by the Faculty Senate, but chiefly by a University-wide election at the time of registration for the spring term—voting on the constitution being made one of the requisites for an appointment number. This would not only assure a democratic election on a 100% basis, but it would also set the constitution up outside the power of the Faculty Senate to destroy it at will.

Chuck Swan

## The Daily Nebraskan

MEMBER  
Intercollegiate Press

FORTY-SEVENTH YEAR

The Daily Nebraskan is published by the students of the University as an expression of student news and opinions only. According to article 11 of the By Laws governing student publications and administered by the Board of Publications: "It is the declared policy of the Board that publications under its jurisdiction shall be free from editorial censorship on the part of the Board, or on the part of any member of the faculty of the university; but members of the staff of The Daily Nebraskan are personally responsible for what they say or do or cause to be printed."

Subscription rates are \$2 per semester, \$2.50 per semester mailed, or \$3 for the college year; \$4 mailed. Single copy five cents. Published daily during the school year, except Mondays and Saturdays, vacations and examination periods, by the University of Nebraska under the supervision of the Publication Board. Entered as Second Class Matter at the Post Office in Lincoln, Nebraska, under Act of Congress, March 3, 1879, and at special rate of postage provided for in section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized September 10, 1923.

Night News Editor: Louise McDill

## Campus Debate Contest Will Begin Tuesday

Delta Sigma Rho, national honorary forensic society at the University, will sponsor an intramural extemporaneous speaking contest next week.

Letters of information have already gone out to the organized houses, and the society is now trying to solicit entries from the independent students.

The deadline for these entries is 5 p. m., Friday, May 6. Drawing for topics by the students will be held Monday from 4 to 5:30 p. m., and the debates will begin at 7 p. m. Tuesday.

Winners of this round will continue Thursday evening at 7 p. m., with the final round scheduled for Saturday morning, May 14.

Last year, Sigma Alpha Mu won the team title, while Don Farber, Sigma Alpha Mu, and Dale Ball, Phi Kappa Psi, were named outstanding speakers.

Don Kline, director of university debating, will serve as contest director.

## Mattingly Speaks At Vespers Today

University Vespers will feature Dr. L. E. Mattingly, director of religious life at Nebraska Wesleyan University, as guest speaker at the 5 o'clock service this afternoon.

His topic, "On Achieving a Christ-Like God," is in connection with the main topic of discussion this semester.

Besides being director of religious life, Dr. Mattingly is also personnel counselor at the university. He received his AB degree at Kentucky Wesleyan, his BD degree at Emory University at Atlanta and his STM at Yale.

## Classified

WANTED—Man over 22 with about four free hours per day to sell home improvement product to home owners. Average commission runs \$10.00 to \$15.00 per sale. Average man can easily make 3 or 4 sales per week. Selling experience helpful but not necessary. Must have car and be able to handle occasional evening calls up to about 8:00 p. m. Apply 2413 "O."

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## Flowers For Mother's Day SUNDAY, MAY 8th

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## MB's, Innocents-Nuts! . . .

With the approach of Ivy Day, the occasion on which the senior activity honoraries gawdily reveal their new members, old questions of "are senior honoraries necessary?" and "do they fulfill a need on campus?"

While we realize that the greater share of the student body has little interest in the matters of Mortar Board and Innocents, we would like to discuss the organizations from a viewpoint of the present spirit and attitude which prevails in and towards campus activities.

We find that after three years our thinking is right back where it was when we were a sophomore; we are convinced that honoraries are characterized by more evil than good and, furthermore, that the campus situation would be greatly improved if these honoraries were abolished.

The existence of Mortar Board and Innocents, despite their aims of leadership, scholarship and service, results in the promotion of a bad kind of campus politics. Activity people, eager to get into these organizations of prestige, find that getting an office or position is of more important consequence than in seeing that elections are honest and that the deserving people win. The individual alone is not to be blamed. Fraternities, sororities and other social groups feel that they must have representation in these societies for the sake of their prestige. So these groups, too, become more interested in good deals rather than in fair ones.

The senior honoraries purport to encourage leadership, but we are not at all sure that they have succeeded in doing this. The existence of activity honoraries seems to encourage submission of junior activity men and women to the ways and workings of seniors who are members of these organizations. The Nebraska junior "type" is well known and well ridiculed. If one observes any of the bowling and scraping many underclassmen are given to to members of the groups, one is convinced that the existence of honoraries discourages, rather than encourages, underclassmen to be assertive and work from conviction rather than from political motivation.

Creating an unwholesome attitude on campus by bringing organized houses into unnecessary competition and promoting students to go into campus activities for questionable motives are not the only things that result from the senior activity honoraries. Because the membership of these groups is limited, the individual who belongs may become as concerned with "getting his man (or woman) in"—a human tendency certainly—as he is with seeing that the most deserving are recognized. Usually the basis for this concern is one of fraternity or sorority affiliation, or one of non-affiliation. Naturally this attitude is one that will lead the student to operate in a political manner instead of one of ethics and objectivity. This, we are sorry to say, is no mere speculation. The examples are almost as numerous as the number of elections held on campus each year.

In defense of the honoraries, no one can deny that Mortar Board and Innocents have done worthwhile things. Usually their members are students who are heartily interested in the welfare of the university and will gladly render time and effort in service to the university. There is one argument, which we have heard applied more to Mortar Board than to Innocents, that the honoraries serve to make activity people act in an ethical and honest way as candidates for these organizations who might be eliminated if they did not act in such a way.

It is difficult to know which aspects, the good and the bad, outweigh the other. Senior honoraries at Nebraska are steeped in tradition, and many a howl throughout the state would undoubtedly arise if the organizations disbanded. The action, as one Mortar Board has pointed out, must come from the organizations themselves.

An Innocent has stated that the bad aspects of senior honoraries may be the fault of the organization and not the fault of the existence of the organization, if one will realize the difference. His conclusion was that abolition of the honoraries may be just an easy way out.

What should or should not be done is hard to say, and in all probability we vastly over-rate the importance of the matter. However, we do feel that it is a matter which can be discussed openly and merits thinking on the part of all activity people, especially the present members of Mortar Board and Innocents and the new members who will be announced Saturday.

Our own feeling is simply that in view of the hard feelings often created by the honoraries and the bad politics that too frequently revolve around elections which may determine future membership in these groups, we are convinced that the entire student scene of the University of Nebraska would be improved if there were no senior activity honoraries.

## Picnic Climaxes 4-H Club Year

The annual 4-H Club picnic, heaped with fun and frolic for all, will be a must on your social calendar for Wednesday, May 11. The lower Ag. Campus, just west of Love Hall, is the spot, with games commencing at 5 p. m. and the feeding getting underway at 8 p. m.

Publicity chairman, Ralph Hild, announced that all active, as well as inactive, 4-H members are invited. You are urged to "sign in" for the affair at Ag. Hall