

Curtains Or Courage?

The drama began last spring when a young man, a University student, was denied a haircut in a Lincoln barber shop. The curtain has fallen on the passage of a resolution by Student Council urging the removal of white clauses from fraternities and sororities.

The question now is: "Was that the final curtain or just the end of act one?"

The young man was a Negro. The Student Council, eager to prove that it had a reason for existing, immediately pounced on the situation and sent it to a committee especially created to study that naughty and knotty malady called discrimination.

Immediately the situation was forgotten by most Council members, their consciences soothed now that they had made some move. That was last spring. For a while there was fear that the committee, too, had forgotten the situation; but not so. The study was handed over to the Public Issues Committee, under the able leadership of Larry Frolik, and yesterday the climax of at least this part of the drama was reached.

It was a small bomb and was predicted to be a dud. It actually packed little power, only urging, not demanding, action on the part of sororities and fraternities with white clauses. The chance of getting it past the reluctant Greeks was small. While the Innocents Society as a group took no stand, many of the members were conspicuous in their presence; three spoke against it. The Juniors on Council with a chance to become Innocents were sure to oppose it.

But somewhere along the line, the potential of the little bomb was underestimated by moral megatons. Somewhere along the line minds were changed.

The Daily Nebraskan applauds the Student Council for its far-sighted action, and Larry Frolik for his ability to bring the situation into the proper scope. The resolution insures action on white clauses by students, postponing possible administrative interference into the matter. For students to rid their groups of these offending clauses is far better than to have administrative hands reach in to grab them out or to send the fraternities off campus, as has happened at many other universities.

It emphasized the students' concern in having the University condone discrimination. By approving constitutions of organizations with white clauses, the Board of Regents is forced to give a reluctant nod to segregation.

It showed student support of the actions already taken by Sigma Nu, the one offending fraternity, in attempting to rid its group of the white clause. It is indeed unfortunate that a national Panhellenic ruling bars the Student Council from knowing how sororities stand. Hopefully, sororities themselves will, in the near future, release us information.

A Daily Nebraskan survey taken last year despite the national Panhellenic ruling showed that 11 sororities have no ruling. The same survey showed that four sororities declined comment.

Most important, it shows that the members of Student Council were able, for a moment, to forget their special interests and to act in the interest of the University and humanity as a whole.

Frolik assured the Council that this was not the end of his study, that discrimination in Lincoln would be put to the test in the next semester and another report would be made.

This cannot be the end; Council cannot haul the curtain down here.

This resolution has evaporated only one drop in an ocean of trouble. As one Council member put it, "We have taken half a loaf, because we were afraid we couldn't get the whole loaf." Half a loaf is something but now is the time for Council to bite into the other half and come up with some constructive legislation.

Rich Brown, representing himself as a University student and as a Negro, said, "Nebraska is the worst place in the world. They pass the buck; they are narrow minded." Earlier he had said to a few persons, "It would be more fun to live in Georgia."

The Daily Nebraskan contends that Brown underestimates the State of Nebraska. The surprise action yesterday by Student Council may prove this contention.

However, a challenge such as this cannot be ignored. As Brown pointed out, sitting by a Negro in class does not entitle one to think of himself as a rabid integrationist, to run to Mommy and say, "What an integrationist am I! I sat by a Negro today."

The Council cannot sit by another semester and wait for another report. They must act now.

On this campus the Negro is not persecuted, he is merely insulted.

SUSAN SMITHBERGER



President To Be Popularly Elected

By Cuz Guenzel

To carry through the three branch system, the president and vice president in the new constitution will be elected by a popular vote of the students.

The reasoning behind this change is that both officials will then represent and be responsible to the entire Association. This new sphere of responsibility to a large number of constituents is significant in several obvious ways.

For instance, the arrangement will promote more active political campaigns because the presidential and vice presidential candidates will have to win the support of his constituents, the students, to carry the election.

The only way a candidate will be able to win student support will be to present them with a platform or program showing the areas where he proposes to guide the Senate's work and investigation. Students will then indicate which areas they feel need work by voting for the candidate with the platform they favor.

Thus these two office holders will represent the students in two ways. First, democratically because they were voted upon by the student body as a whole.

They will also represent the students politically because in winning the election they will know most students want work done in the areas outlined in their platform.

Both officials can be held responsible for their platforms because they will play a significant role in appointing committee chairmen within the Senate. They should select Senators who agree with their platform so work can be accomplished in the areas the students have favored.

It will not be difficult in a community the size of the University to detect if work is being done.

After the president of the

Association is in office, his new sphere of responsibility will become most important because he has the veto power. The president must be able to act in the name of the students when he challenges an ordinance or regulation passed by the Senate.

The veto power, which can be overridden by a two-thirds vote of the Senate, was given to the president only after we decided that he would not hold the influential power of presiding over the Senate.

As long as he stays within the bounds of his capacity and does not act as a legislative whip, he cannot exceed his intended powers.

However, a legislative whip is a necessity.

This thought is part of the reasoning behind the executive committee which will be the motivating force or legislative whip for the ASUN Senate.

The committee will be composed of the president and vice president with three senators elected by the senate, so there will be both executive and legislative influences. The committee will work in such areas as appointing committee chairmen and setting the agenda for Senate meetings.

With these duties and powers, the executive committee will be most influential. Its members will be in the middle of ASUN functions so they will be able to prompt the Senate to action in areas that need work.

But it is most important to remember that the Senators will be responsible to the Senate and the president and vice president will remain responsible to the executive branch.

The committee is significant because these five people will have the duty and responsibility to discern student problems and interests with the sphere of influence and power to initiate and promote action.

In addition to presiding over this committee, the president will also head the cabinet. Positions on this body will be filled by representatives of campus organizations.

Although there is not a definite plan to divide organizations into different areas yet, it is probably that such areas as service, special interests, professionals and others will be outlined.

Every organization will be placed in a fitting division and the ASUN president will select a representative from each area to serve on his cabinet.

In this way, organizations on campus will have a direct line to the president of student government. The cabinet can meet with the president and introduce legislation through him to the Senate.

The cabinet will provide a permanent meeting ground for organizations if there is some dispute. Most problems of organizations will be solved on the cabinet level to avoid taking action to the Judiciary.

The cabinet will be a place where better coordination can be developed between campus organizations and between these groups and student government. It also provides a setting where Senate legislation can be explained and enforced.

Most important, the cabinet will give campus organizations a direct voice to and from student government.



By Frank Partsch

A column in memoriam to Student Council on the day after it destroyed itself would be an unpleasant and distasteful task.

An elegy to Larry Frolik on the day after he willingly committed political suicide would be even more heartrending.

Thanks to 27 Student Council members, however, who voted yesterday in favor of a resolution against "white clauses" in organization constitutions, neither of these is necessary—at this time.

Whether or not Frolik has become extinct won't be known for sure until May. But Student Council, acting in the final days of operation under its obsolete constitution, has salvaged its honor.

By approving Frolik's resolution, the Council can hope to gather but little tangible evidence of its effectiveness; by rejecting it the Council would have betrayed the student body and all connected with the University.

Political suicide. I can do no more for Frolik than to remove my hat to his courage and to wish him luck in the future.

Political suicide is a strange animal. The very words imply the performance of duty at the expense of glory. They imply a one-man uphill battle, which in this case was predicted by many observers but seen by few.

I wonder about this uphill battle. Were the Council members won during the debate? Did they bring their votes to the meeting with them? Why were they drawn away from their passionate arguments against the motion?

Listen to some of the arguments and try to decide.

"The Council is not against integration. We are really rapid integrationists," Mike Barton.

"This motion should not be passed; the Negro is apathetic. The report quotes one Negro as saying he doesn't mind if we dislike the color of his skin as long as we don't say so to his

Closet Case

face. They have no interest in this problem," Bob Kerrey.

"Nebraska is the most narrow-minded place in the world," Rich Brown.

I think Brown said it right there. Nebraska, Nebraska, Nebraska. How can we purport to know anything about the problems of the Negro?

The problems of the Negro should not be least among the considerations here. We did hear about moral issues, we heard about consistency with the Civil Rights Law and we heard about the solidarity of the fraternity. We forgot about the problems of the Negro.

Withholding a right or courtesy from a Negro because he is apathetic is like depriving a cripple a crutch because he cannot walk over to get it.

Voting against this resolution is telling a Negro to his face that we don't like his color.

These were some of the arguments heard at the Student Council meeting yesterday.

The battle need not be fought here. The report on discrimination in off-campus housing, which Frolik promises for next semester, will be another and larger step in this program. Yesterday's report was good, even though some Council members were disappointed because it lacked the nature of a poll.

Those of us who earlier saw no reason for Council to study discrimination are now happily surprised. The possibilities for progress in this area are unlimited. If this be political suicide, we want more of the same. This might not even be half a loaf; it might be no more than a few crumbs. But we were starving and it tasted good.

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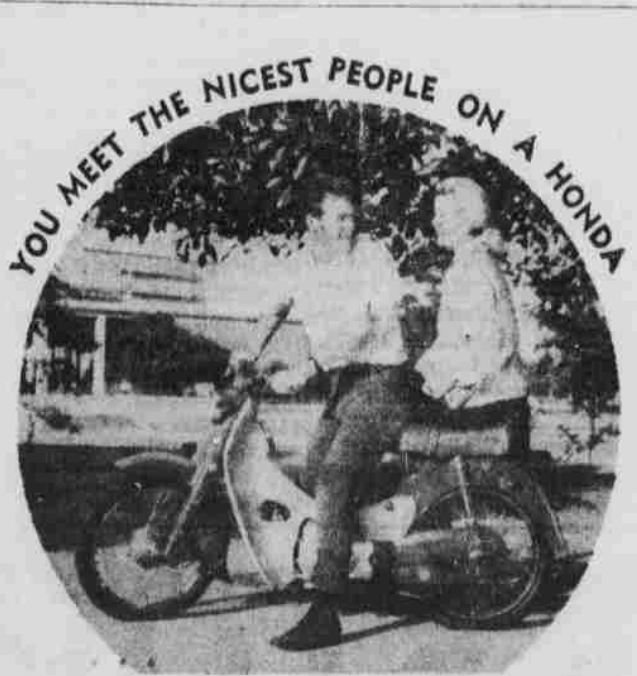
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