

Editorial

Comment

Bulletin

Before it's too late . . .

Can agitation be worth its cost?

When faculty members and students get wrought up over a question to a point where they no longer tolerate divergent sentiments the situation is serious. For strong feeling breeds disunity within the university and is an everpresent source of friction between students and faculty and among the students themselves.

The campus was a hot bed of strife, we are told, prior to the outbreak of the first world war, when resentment and hatreds tore Nebraska wide open as an educational institution. We hope a repetition of such a conflict can be spared the university today.

Starting last week however, certain members of the faculty distributed petitions among their colleagues supporting, we understand, all out aid to Britain "not necessarily short of war." These petitions are to be sent to the leading men in Washington in the hope that the weight of a part of this university's faculty can sway them to a more determined course.

Feeling that an expression of opinion used for this purpose should not represent any single view, but should contain the sum substance of opinions held by this faculty, the DAILY Friday countered with questionnaires giving every member of the faculty choices as to what stand most clearly represented his view.

The petitions stirred up the members of the faculty not in sympathy with their aim and infuriated the large group of students bent on preserving peace if possible. And the questionnaires aroused the backers of the petitions against the NEBRASKAN and against all those holding isolationist views. Powder is dangerously near the fire. A spark now could set things off.

With this setting on the campus and with the NEBRASKAN ready to assume a conciliatory role, excerpts from a letter of A. L. Lugn, professor of geology, is mighty good council.

I am in agreement on every point contained in the petitions and I believe that we should aid Britain

in every way possible. I am not however signing any of these petitions nor am I returning your questionnaire.

This petition business is absolutely futile and wasted effort. Even if it is sent off to the President, he will never see it; and even if he did, what of it? I feel that it can do no good for either Britain or the University of Nebraska. On the other hand, it can stir up strife and dissension, angry emotions, hard feelings, distress and perhaps even dismissals from the faculty here on the campus. We are Americans, and should there be one or two who are loyal to other creeds they need not be made public examples. Furthermore, activity of this kind, (the petitions, I mean) can and may stir up dissension and discord in the State and may react unfavorably on the University. We need clear thinking right now not only on aid to Britain, but on the problems confronting the University here and now.

A. L. Lugn.

Parrying in words has fortunately not yet gone too far. And as Dr. Lugn suggests it would be too bad if the petitions and questionnaires should sound off a large scale dispute. Little if anything could be gained by it and certainly much harm could be done.

Results of the petitions and questionnaires are at present unknown. Though the DAILY has previously expressed itself on the war issues, it will publish the results of these surveys when ready without support for either side, and with the sole purpose of informing its readers as to the stand of our faculty on this important question. Since the cost of a dispute is so high, this paper will seek to report all conflicting views, urge tolerance, and will try to cement together the groups now at sword points.

We will avoid all acts offending the holders of any opinion. And hope that these other groups will cooperate with us and cease further actions causing dissension and strife.

Commentorials

In commending the Innocents Society for its impartiality we made a grave mistake. We failed to take into consideration the effect our challenge last Tuesday would have in certain quarters and the effect it would have on men missing membership in the society. Not that the men chosen did not deserve the seats given them, but the public recognition of their desserts makes rationalizations for not getting tapped on the basis of politics rather difficult.

Acquiescence to our challenge, therefore, by groups having candidates just under the line brands their men with the lack of the leadership and lack of activities necessary for membership. In justifying their positions we should have known they would call the selections political, and the name of Innocency would once again be dragged through the mud.

No matter how an election is made, nor how fairly and impartially an outgoing society views the new candidates, there will always be shouts from those who wish they themselves might have influenced the selection. Despite this clamor that any group can expect, the challenge of fairness is still there. And we still think the new society will accept that challenge and raise the name of Innocency still higher.

Leaving the results achieved by the graduating group for public record, we print two letters representing different views. It is for each individual to evaluate the contradictory views for himself.

Former Innocent contests editor's stand

Dear Editor:

I was startled to see your editorial in last Tuesday's paper which so highly praised the Innocents of 1941. I was especially shocked to see your self-flattering comment up on the manner in which the new Innocents were elected. If any comment is to be made upon that subject, it should not be commendation, but rather utmost condemnation.

I say this in face of the fact that the Innocents chosen on Ivy Day appear to be of as high a quality as any chosen in previous years. What I intend to say should not be construed as any denunciation of these new Innocents, for what has been done is not their fault. They will have enough difficulty in overcoming the damage which you, and the other Innocents of 1941, have done to the Innocents Society.

On Ivy Day, the Innocents are supposed to select the outstanding junior men to continue the society. Previously, it has always been considered, by everyone, to be an honor to be chosen a member of Innocents. But unfortunately, this year selection to this society has ceased to be considered as an honor by a large portion of the campus.

When an honorary organization fails to honor those who should be honored, it no longer deserves the name

of an honorary organization. When it is supposed to select the outstanding junior men, and refuses to honor the outstanding junior man, as many believe was done, the honorary society has lost its prestige and honor and takes the appearance of what it evidently is, a self-perpetuating, closed, social organization with the same semi-benevolent objectives.

I realize it is a matter of opinion as to who is deserving of honor. As members of the Innocents Society it was your duty to know the facts of activities of junior men, and to honestly appraise their values without regard to your own likes or dislikes. To many of us, it appears that you have refused to do this—and to us, selection to Innocents Society has lost whatever honor and prestige it may have had when you became an Innocent.

Even the Innocents cannot expect to hide behind a self-adorned cloak of godliness, and remain unrevealed.

Until I read your editorial I refrained from mentioning this, for I knew that it would be construed as a reflection upon the newly chosen Innocents—which I did not intend. But, when you came out with such self-flattering comment upon your activities, I felt that at least you should know that by the insincerity or disregard for the activities and opinions of others, which some members of Innocents Society have exercised all this school year, you have alienated a large portion of the student body, and gravely injured the society of which you are evidently so proud.

Robert Simmons,

Nebraskan editor revels in glorious self praise

Dear Editor:

Truly the editor of the DAILY NEBRASKAN is in an unusual position. Not only can he give credit where credit is due, but he also can lavish praise upon an organization of which he himself is a member. Not that I claim that the editor deliberately set himself and his brother Innocents up on pedestal, but isn't it just likely that his membership in that organization has somewhat warped his attitude toward it?

I have seen Innocents come and go in the past six years, and certainly the record of this year's group is no more outstanding, and perhaps less so, than the record of groups in the past. A critical, or even a casual analysis of what Mr. Martz set up as their outstanding achievements reveals that in reality they amount to little or nothing. They officiated at "the most successful freshman reception in many years," so successful that when questioned most freshmen can't remember when it was held or what occurred. They made possible a few more parking spaces. But how many students are still late to classes because they can't find a place to park? They took over the Junior-Senior Prom which was just as po-

litically ridden as ever before; a Junior-Senior Prom whose committee justly felt that they were mere puppets to do the dirty work manipulated by strings in the hands of the Innocents; a Junior-Senior Prom which was no more successful than most of those of the past. They started a drive to inform the students of the needs of the university, but who can judge how successful it has been and what concrete results can be shown? They organized a Senior Council. A Senior Council which may have a purpose, but which has achieved nothing. A Senior Council which is so successful that at its last meeting there were three persons present at the time the meeting was scheduled to start, and some thirty minutes later there were approximately three men and fourteen women present out of a membership of over one hundred. This is the marvelous record of this year's Innocents Society.

But the crowning glory, the trail blazing feature, of our Innocents was their non-political selection of the most outstanding junior men on the basis of merit alone. Who is so naive as to believe that the Innocents are any more than human? Who can deny that except in the most unusual case one Innocent will promote the cause of his fraternity brother—and why not? As to the men selected for the coming year, let us assume that their choice was merited. But certainly they are not the outstanding leaders that were the Innocents of old. Under the point system, men of real ability are limited to a few activities, and men of only mediocre ability can carry the maximum number of points. Who can tell which of the junior men are really outstanding? Certainly there are men whose abilities and activities make them just as qualified to be Innocents and perhaps more so than some of those selected. Perhaps the Innocents are not solely to blame. Perhaps with such a situation existing the number of Innocents should be increased. But no one; no, not even Mr. Martz, should attempt to place the Innocents on a pedestal, for once on that pedestal they are too easily knocked off.

Sincerely yours,

Ernest Wintroub.

Headlong intervention leaves US out on limb

Dear Editor:

Sober-minded Lincoln interventionists are now petitioning President Roosevelt to take further measures of aiding Great Britain even if they are not short of war. These same individuals, with some logic, have their greatest dread, not of a military assault upon this continent by the nazis, but of a process of economic strangulation and ideological penetration. Have they not failed to see that the measures they advocate serve to under cut America's real defenses in the economic and ideological spheres while committing her to climb three thousand miles out on the military limb?

The need is to make American industry prove efficient and more flexible and to make the people more devoted than ever to the privileges of their democratic system, but what is being done? Social advances are being scraped, standards of living are being lowered, the laboring classes are being forced into strikes to get their share of the defense gravy, dissident elements of the population are being branded as nazis, isolationists are being dropped from high posts—the culture in which the fascist germ grows most rapidly is being carefully prepared.

A million men are taken out of the normal workings of the economy and are being trained to fight a mass war into which our president has promised (in the campaign, I fear) he would not lead the nation. The entire national economy is gauged to war production aimed to buoy up the sinking British ship of state and to grow obsolete on American shores, that is unless we decide to defend ourselves in Europe as Japan is now doing in China. We are doing nothing to make American industry more efficient in producing the goods needed in the markets we fear Germany will win from us after the war, but instead we are preparing for the world's most colossal depression and maximum economic dislocation which will result when war demand collapses.

It is not necessary, and certainly not preparation for severe trials, to deal ourselves an economic body blow and to reduce to a minimum our resistance to fascist ideological penetration. Efficiency and ideological contentment should be the goals, not hysterical pugnacity. Let's open the St. Lawrence waterway and further improve other inland navigation thus lowering costs to the internal regions of the nation. Let's rehabilitate the dying cotton industry of New England in the south close to cheap labor and raw materials. Let's advance large scale farming and mechanization. Let's use the electrical power of the Tennessee, the Columbia, the Colorado, the Plattes and the Loups. Let's clear slums and further vocational education. Let's launch huge research projects and improve techniques and processes of manufacture. Let's raise and not lower the standard of living. And let's use the billions now being spent on vain armament to back these programs.

Of course, this is too rosy—great hardships would be experienced, but it would be a constructive program aimed to meet the problem and not one of following the European democracies in their willy-nilly habit of meeting the nazis on the battle ground, at the time, and with the weapons Hitler chooses.

Yours truly,

Ellsworth Steele.