

THE NIMBLE SPANIEL
by Sam Warren

The apparently widespread campus interest in the university's affiliation with NSA is indeed a healthy indication of student thinking IF it can be assumed that students are giving it more than superficial consideration, and if they're asking something besides, "What will it do for ME, personally, right away?"

One upper class leprechaun, prominent in leprechaun activities and with a High I. Q., who happened into our lair, has currently been worrying its friends with such positions as these regarding the NSA. "The NSA wants to dictate everything the student does," it said. "And I'M not going to have any organization watching MY every move." (The NSA is not conceived or constructed in such a way as to make any such interference possible, nor would any university administration's direct control over students allow it, we told the student leprechaun.)

Next our spritely friend declared that its church authorities opposed NSA, although youth groups from its church membership were among the initial proposers of NSA, and although denominational schools of its church appear prominently on the list of colleges already affiliated with NSA.

When this argument failed, our elf-like chat-mate turned to the Communism scare, as have many people including a national association of college and university deans who watched last summer's constitutional convention with great interest. Along with other observers, the deans were relieved to see that the convention decided to admit only STUDENT GOVERNING BODIES to membership and to EXCLUDE ALL OTHER GROUPS made up of students, ranging from YM and YWCA's and denominational church groups to radical political groups such as AYD and Young Communists! In short, no special interest groups may become members.

Delegates to all conference and conventions—regional and national—must be chosen either by a campus's student governing body or by an all-campus election. National officers and administrators in turn are chosen from these delegates. If student voters and leaders in student government are not alert enough to choose delegates discerningly in a day when everybody is looking under pianos and card tables for Communists, then no campus election can guard democratic principles. Why, we might even elect a Communist May Day Queen if we're not careful.

Forsaking the Communism scare, our friend held up the boner, "NSA can't do anything that local organizations don't already do." And this of course is the crux of the whole issue. Can NSA benefit our campus, and if so, how? The ramifications of the answer are too many to present in one short column, but this writer would like to make two points.

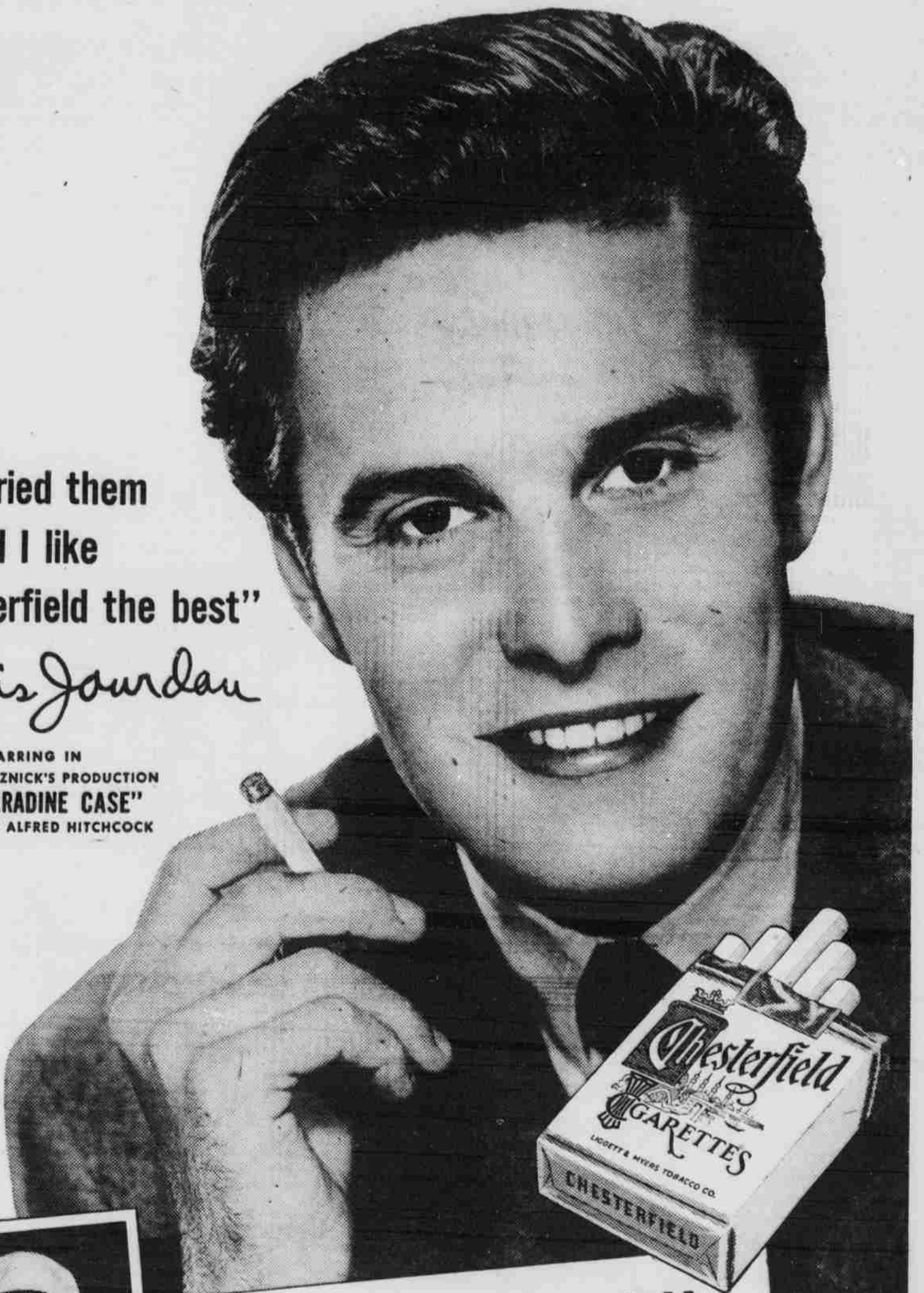
First, that the benefits for students will be primarily indirect. That is, as a federation of student governing bodies, NSA can provide a centralized source for the interchange of ideas, methods and projects between one campus's student council, and another's—not only on broad subjects that require long-range planning (such as the elimination of racial discrimination's many manifestations), but also on countless other matters substantially less momentous but nevertheless of particular interest to students, yet matters on which it would be physically impractical, if not impossible, to compile information as to how other colleges met the situation.

Its possibilities, which cannot be enumerated in this space, are infinite. Our Student Council, for example, would have a tremendously greater chance of persuading the administration to accept a new project if the Council could present evidence that 17 or 29 or 54 or 104 other campuses had taken similar action.

The second point is that NSA offers to the students of America, as such, a medium to voice their collective opinions to educators, legislators and others interested in student affairs.

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