

Editorial Comment:

Educational Emphasis On English Is Needed

When Sputnik I was put into orbit a few years ago, this country's educational system suddenly was put in the glaring spotlight of the eyes of the nation's politicians, scientists and educators perhaps brighter than any time before in history.

For it became apparent that something was wrong somewhere—that apparently our schools and colleges weren't turning out the type of student who could compete with those from some European nations, especially in the field of science.

At least that is the way it seemed. Why else, it was asked, could Russia attain its primacy in the infant race for nuclear and space leadership unless we had failed somewhere along the line in developing scientists and improving the teaching methods in our schools.

Because, the argument went, if we had been turning out better science students, we would have been able to achieve successes in these scientific fields earlier, instead of waiting and watching to see—and then fear—what other nations could do.

Hence the advent of Sputnik heralded a new effort to improve the nation's defense network and improve U.S. military and scientific power positions—and right in the middle was education, especially the type that involved the engineer, the physicist, the mathematician . . . and the teacher.

New federal education loans were set up; special military deferments were given to some college graduates in specialized scientific fields.

And as science knowledge became in vogue, so did language—not so much English, but others like Russian, French, Spanish and German.

These languages, it was said, were going to be of more importance to the college graduate now than in any time in history. For it was said thousands of Soviet students were studying English; that France and Germany must be depended on more than ever before; and that to keep on the good side of Latin America was one of our prime problems.

Hence we needed to study their languages.

All of the above suggestions and anxieties were quite valid ones. But it seems that in our quest for a type of education that would balance the world power structure, we may have forgotten one of the most important subjects in American schools today—English.

It is one of the basic fields for learning well in others—especially the foreign languages. Hardly another subject gives such an opportunity for expression and practice of educational virtues such as precision, clarity and accuracy.

But English hasn't been one of the pri-

mary fields of study in the spotlight for improvement lately. The sciences and foreign languages, as mentioned above, seemed to have crowded English somewhat out of the picture.

But recently a number of American educators have recognized the problem and have taken action to do something about it.

One of the best examples is a University of Nebraska graduate who is now superintendent of schools in Washington, D.C. Fifty-four-year-old Carl Francis Hansen has revolutionized the study of English in Washington schools.

In English courses, as in others, he divides classes into four groups. At the top are gifted students with IQ's above 120. Next come two groups embracing those of college ability and those who only propose to finish high school.

Last are those who are slow learners.

Better writing is one of Hansen's priorities. He says, "It seems to me more important for us to know the structure of language than to know how a spark plug works in an automobile."

His program is revolutionary in light of the English programs in most of the other schools in the country. Theme writing starts as early as the second grade; students in the top two high school groups have to write 24 themes a year.

He makes use of college women "lay readers" in arrangement with the Washington P.T.A.

The results since Hansen took over in 1947 have been that Washington students have raised their position relative to other students in the United States by 14 points on three national high school achievement tests.

Another Nebraska educator, Omaha Benson English department head Gunnar Horn, has taken a look at the problem and here is what he has come up with:

"I predict that in a few years there will come a realization that some students had better learn English before they concern themselves with foreign languages.

"I further predict that some time this decade parents will awaken to the fact that written language is still a useful tool. When this occurs, they will insist that boards of education reduce the teaching loads of English teachers to a point where it will be possible for them to give students the frequent practice in writing that is necessary to learning composition."

We can only hope that Horn's predictions come true. And we hope that students and educators alike will recognize soon that good English involves more than just not saying "ain't."

From the Editor's Desk:

It Seems to Me . . .

By Carroll Kraus

Theory on what is to be published and what isn't to be in this year's IFC Rush Book seems to be contradictory in part.

House bills, over-all house averages, etc., won't be published in the book because 1. the IFC last Wednesday passed a motion to repeal the planned inclusion of the averages, and 2. the IFC Alumni Advisers feel that the book shouldn't be competitive between the various fraternities.

House bill and initiation fees should be left out of print since the bills aren't relative from house to house. For instance, some houses charge a low basic fee each month, which looks good in print or in the eyes of a rushee, but hit members for assessments quite often for parties, special dues, etc.

But scholastic averages from house to house are parallel and tend to indicate to some extent if the fraternity takes men of potential high scholarship and if they encourage study halls and the like.

The inclusion of this material in the Rush Book might be helpful to the prospective rushee who is interested primarily in obtaining an education at the University and finding the proper atmosphere in which to carry on his studies.

With the averages in print, however, this would of course be a means of competition.

But in the format the book is in now, it's also competitive. Each house gets two pages, one of which probably will include a composite picture of the members; the other, including the house picture, several mug shots and house information.

Each house strives in its copy to paint a pretty picture of how it has top alumni, good scholarship, many activity men, etc., which certainly represents a form of competition. And the mug shots generally include some of the house's outstanding activity men.

If there's competition to show quality in activities, social events, and the like, why

not scholarship, which should be a more important factor to the rushee than most others.

I, too, would like to see the book kept on a non-competitive basis — trying to sell only the fraternity system instead of individual houses.

But the concept of the book will have to change before houses will agree to give up their individual portions and produce a really fine, overall picture of the fraternity scene and fraternity men, without attaching a particular Greek name to each.

But since the book is set up the way it is now, and since the IFC is pushing scholarship (as evidenced in last Wednesday's meeting when it approved a \$125 scholarship for a sophomore fraternity man with a good average and with leadership qualities), inclusion of the house averages would be a means of showing that interest in grades is high and that the Greek houses aren't afraid to bare their averages to prove that they practice as well as preach scholarship.

Noted in a column in the Kansas State Collegian that one of Ohio's universities has initiated an unusual approach to the drinking problem.

The university permits it in men's dormitories but only when roommates are present. If the guy next door comes in, it's illegal.

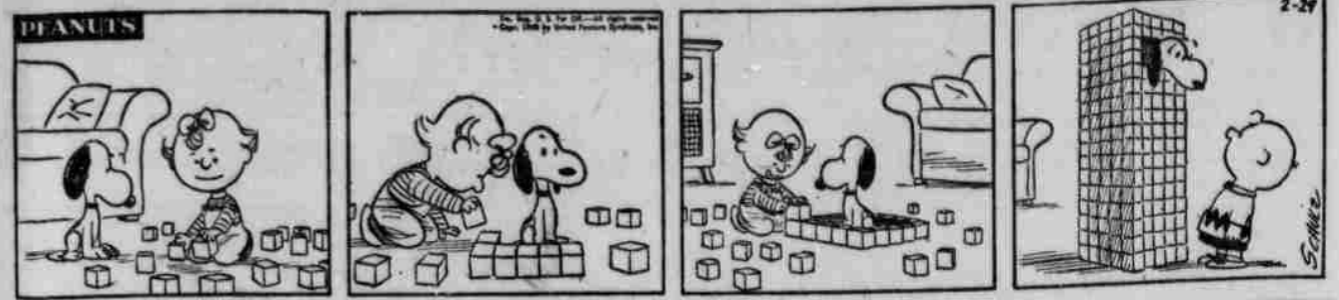
It's also forbidden at mixed functions but is OK at stag affairs if they're chaperoned.

So three is a crowd at a bull session, if they want to drink. Just like at dear old NU; takes two to tango and three to function.

But before the exodus to Ohio, it might be proper to mention that the columnist didn't mention exactly which school it was.

Coed Follies in general were pretty good, it seemed, but sound or acoustics or something didn't go over too well.

About the funniest thing in the whole show was at the very end; the bit about tune in for next week's show.



Daily Nebraskan Letterips

Dorm Organization

To the Editor:

I and other interested fraternity men have been following Tom Eason's series of five articles concerning an organization of independent male students in Selleck Quadrangle. We also have taken notice of the RAM's statements in the Daily Nebraskan and have come to some rather thoughtful conclusions concerning this project and all its implications.

The pink letter that was distributed by the "in-

dependents" rather amusingly brought out some very important truths. Any organization must be composed of members who are willing to give up some of their individuality, time, money and effort to promote that organization and to help it realize its goal. It is my opinion that no man who is not willing to give up these things should be coerced into membership in an organization that will require personal sacrifice.

There are 23 active social fraternal organizations located at the University of

Nebraska for the purpose of providing a well-rounded college life to members who voluntarily join, knowing that more will be required of them in time, money and effort than that necessary for a weekly RAM meeting or dormitory "sock hop."

Selleck Quadrangle was built with funds provided by the University of Nebraska to provide adequate housing for male students who, for one reason or another, chose to keep their complete individuality in daily living. Just as the majority rules in fraternity living, the majority shall rule in the dormitory system, maintaining a comfortable atmosphere for eating, studying and sleeping, and leaving the other phases of college life up to the individual.

Those who desire group effort in social and other endeavors should join a group which has the know-how, the members' interest, the financial capability and the tradition to carry on such activities—the Greek-letter college fraternity.

There are good reasons why an organization such as Mr. Eason proposes will fail. First, it takes a great financial capability to provide services and entertainment for an organized group. Only willing members will help pay this cost.

Second, it takes a slow cultivation of social skill and awareness on a group level. This obviously requires every member's complete cooperation and much of his time.

How many Selleck men

are willing to donate 1 to 20 hours per week to promote the "social order of RAMS?"

Third, it requires a certain amount of tradition and brotherhood to carry on a successful social fraternity. How many Selleck residents are willing to pay \$2.50 for a composite picture of all their dormitory "brothers" to hang on their wall?

Fourth and most important, a successful group must maintain some prestige and acceptance among other similar groups. Certainly no true "independent" will ever boost this RAM house organization; fraternity men will reject it; and the sorority system will laughingly ridicule it.

People who seek the things Mr. Eason proposes in his project should and will join fraternities. Organized Independent "factons" or "colonies" have failed miserably throughout the nation with few exceptions. Mr. Eason will never accomplish the things that fraternities have stood for and achieved long ago.

George Porter
President, IFC

—On Other Campuses—

CWC Plans To Grant Baccalaureate Degree

The Board of Trustees of Colorado Woman's College recently approved a plan to change CWC from its present status as a two-year junior college to a four-year baccalaureate degree granting school, effective with the present freshman class.

CWC president Dr. Eugene C. Dawson said the college will remain basically a liberal arts school in "a wholesome religious atmosphere devoted to giving girls an effective education for personal and intellectual maturity, education for home and family living, and for vocational activities."

"Gentleman's C" Satisfaction with the once-fashionable "gentleman's C" appears to be giving way to serious thoughts about the "under achiever," according to the Alma College (Mich.) Almanac.

A new policy is currently in operation at Amherst College which seeks to solve the problem of the "under achiever."

According to the Almanac, President Charles W. Cole of Amherst explained in his 1959 report to the board of trustees that the college has decided to grant these students a year's leave of absence "in hope that some months in another environment would give them enough added maturity and perspective so that they might return here and perform at a higher level."

Fifty sophomores and juniors were suggested as possible under achievers in the middle of the last academic year. They were informed of the college's new policy; conferences were held with the faculty, administration and parents; and the students' performances were watched throughout the spring semester.

Of these, 12 were granted leaves, 14 began to work up to capacity, 12 were found not to be laggards but students with limited intellectual ability, 9 will have their records studied further and three withdrew voluntarily for a year. Although seniors were not

included in the mandatory Foresters used to caliper women. But this year they're going to caliper trees, according to the University of Minnesota Daily.

Calipering is an old tradition at Minnesota. On a designated day, foresters roam St. Paul campus and measure with calipers the upper anatomy of coeds and secretaries.

The decision to abolish Calipers Day this year was made by the university's Student Activities Bureau and School of Forestry representatives.

Feelings ranged, said the Daily, from general apathy on the part of non-foresters to anger in some forestry circles — and outright relief of coeds who have witnessed past Caliper Days.

One woodsman said, "It looks like creeping paternalism has crept some more."

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... Forget It

By Dick Stuckey

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