

Sub-rosas—an example . . .

TNE: Is It Dead?

Eleven years ago an organization known as Theta Nu Epsilon came to verbal blows with the officials of our University and apparently came out the loser. Under the leadership of Chancellor R. G. Gustavson, the organization received its "Sunday Punch". If the blow was not fatal, it was hard enough to render the organization senseless, for a period of time.

At the time Chancellor Gustavson announced publicly that "Theta Nu Epsilon has agreed to dissolve itself now and for all time to come." As is usual with this group and its two counterparts, Pi Xi and Red Dot, the lie is always the means to an end. TNE did dissolve, or rather it went underground, but the organization continued to exist at varying strength and apparently continues today from the reports of the TNE insignia (skull and cross bones) appearing on Ag campus.

The events that surrounded the "dissolution" of TNE in 1951 gives a great deal of insight into what kind of organizations these sub-rosas are and why the University has outlawed their existence and prohibited membership.

Following an episode in which TNE's met the city police one Wednesday evening, seven of its members spent the night in the city jail. They had been found painting the traditional skull and cross bones (one red eye and one green eye) at various houses and intersections around campus. Four of these students were suspended by Dean T. J. Thompson, but were reinstated following a conference between high University officials and active and alumni (the strongest force TNE and other sub-rosas have) members of Theta Nu Epsilon.

At this conference, Chancellor Gustavson and other University officials extracted from the members of TNE a list of all its members. They extracted also a promise, in writing, that there would be no recurrence of the sign painting and general "hell-raising" that had plagued the campus for years. Both the list and the promise were housed in a safety deposit vault. This list has supposedly been kept current through the years.

The Chancellor was quoted by an editorial as being "amazed" at the people who were active and alumni members of Theta Nu Epsilon. He expressed shock at "the infiltration of TNE into the faculty, athletics and student organizations."

It is obvious that this incident in 1951 was weaker than thought because the group did arise as did the two other sub-rosas. Now the Administration is left with the only weapon effective against sub-rosas—quick, strong action against known members. This the Administration has done and will continue to do.

Thirty years ago, Theta Nu Epsilon was an accredited national fraternity (it is the only sub-rosa that was ever a legal fraternity) with 14 active chapters, 11 of which had houses on national campuses such as the universities of Illinois, California and Ohio State. Among other Nebraska's Iota chapter, chartered locally in 1865, was not one of these. At one time, the society had 82 active sub-rosa chapters but most of these were suspended and were no longer legally entitled to recognition by the grand council of the fraternity. In 1926, the fraternity was recognized and provisions made that members could not belong to any other college fraternity.

The fraternity in those days was more of a group of mature recognized campus leaders in various positions. Through the years, it degenerated into purely a drinking and political organization. Many chapters reached this point, among them Nebraska's Baird's manual of American College Fraternities estimated that at one time, nearly 400 clandestine chapters existed. It had hardly originally been founded in 1870 at Wesleyan College, to bring together "a group of congenial fellows who possess ability for leadership and representative students in all phases of life."

On the University of Nebraska campus, Theta Nu Epsilon (and this may be applied to all sub-rosas for they are essentially the same except for name and "rituals") exert no constructive influence. It selects "good jobs," some of whom are prominent in activities and some who are relatively nonentities—the latter being more and more from which sub-rosas must draw on for membership. At one time they exerted a great and terrible power and force on campus, but their power has rapidly declined in the past several years as students mature and Administration takes stronger stands against them.

Each time TNE and the other two sub-rosas have become active enough to come above ground, the Administration has forced them to return to their stagnant underground existence. Administration has proved ineffective at the task of completely eliminating sub-rosas from this campus. Why? It is not their fault. It has been, is and will always be up to the students themselves to do the final job of eliminating them. As long as these organizations, if we might call them such, have students to draw upon for membership they will continue to exist, waiting for a time to become active again.

The real responsibility lies with the underclassmen, especially the freshmen classes.

Sub-rosas are a common problem of large campuses. We are not alone. Sub-rosas at Nebraska, however, are slowly dying of starvation of their membership roles. They are disorganized, but the death is too slow. Students and organizations have been doing just this. Most of the sub-rosas are becoming centralized in just a few houses on campus where the leaders are weak and irresponsible to the laws set up by their national headquarters as well as the University and the oaths which they took when they joined their Greek houses.

The sub-rosa is dying and will die, but the damage it does now while it is trying to regain its lost strength is immense—both to the University, the Greek system and the individual. Of the three, only Pi Xi has shown real activity on campus but the others still exist.

Let us help them to die. The Nebraska will. The Administration has.

Another student confessed today of activities in Pi Xi. Before the year is over, more will be revealed as members in not only Pi Xi but also TNE and Red Dot, and the list will include many prominent students on campus.

Students must help to rid the campus of the sub-rosa. This will include whole support for Dean Ross. He is new on campus and has not yet acquired the complete confidence of the student body. Many are still suspicious. But he is now earning our respect, confidence and help.



CAMPUS FORUM

Writer Proposes Jolly Red Giant To Replace Huskie

There has been much critical comment about Huskie the Husker recently.

Much of it is well-deserved; however, the only thing wrong is that no one has come up with a better idea in the way of constructive change.

Nebraskan Sports Editor Rick Akin recently remarked in his column, "I don't like the looks of Huskie either, BUT I can't think of anything that signifies the Cornhusker more appropriately, and the Cornhusker symbol should not be abolished."

I think there is a symbol that can better signify Cornhusker. It's a natural, and everyone has been using it for years—"Big Red."

Since the school colors are red and white, and since the term "Big Red" is already in many of our cheers and is well known around campus, and since Cornhusker is associated with agriculture, and since everyone across the nation knows of the Jolly Green Giant advertisement and associates it with husking, it seems a natural move to make our symbol "Big Red, the Jolly Red Giant!"

This symbol could quickly become famous throughout our area because of the above reasons. Also "Big Red" could be painted entirely red (just as the jolly Green Giant is entirely green) which would make him easy to see.

His structure could easily be as massive as Huskie's, but we could give him a physique that would be both powerful looking and, at the same time, graceful appearing. Indeed, we should make an exact replica of the Green Giant, and have the Giant smiling in a triumphant manner.

This would be a great improvement over the clumsy-looking Huskie.

"Big Red, the Jolly Red Giant" would quickly become a symbol of power and majesty. He would symbolize the spirit of the University, and he would speak well for the football team and the student body.

In short, he would give the University one more thing of which to be proud!

Larry Myers

a jaundiced eye

by susan stanley

Monday evenings at 8:30 KUON-TV features probably the finest television drama extant.

It's the "Play of the Week," now in its second season on the University's educational television station. Through its auspices, we are offered performances of some of today's top stars—among them Helen Hayes, Julie Harris, Richard Basehart, Carol Lawrence, Shelley Winters, Siobhan McKenna, Eli Wallach . . . the list goes on and on.

Last Monday night, the unsinkable Tammy Grimes was an alley cat with none-too-questionable morals named Mehitabel. Archy, a philosophical cockroach, was played by Eddie Bracken. The occasion was "Archy and Mehitabel," a musical adaptation of the stories of Don Marquis.

The whole performance was delightful, due to the performances of Miss Grimes and Eddie Bracken. Miss Grimes' Mehitabel was deliciously corrupt. Her voice is an indescribable raspy purr, and her upturned nose and ridiculously bouffant hair lent themselves well to the part of the object of Archy's reforming tendencies.

The music for the most part was forgettable; the rendition of it was excellent.

It's hard to be a convincing cockroach, but Eddie Bracken did it, and with real feeling. He did a wonderful "drunk" scene (drunk, that is, from drinking Flit with a DDT chaser), ending with an encounter of lady bugs who weren't. Much of his action was set on a giant typewriter, and he hopped from one key to another, bemoaning his cause and love for his friend.

There were a number of production numbers which rivalled anything Gleason has offered.

Next week—"The Velvet Glove," with Helen Hayes and Robert Morse.
Nov. 19—Highlights of "New Faces," with Ronny Graham and Paul Lynde.
Nov. 26—"The Wingless Victory," with Eartha Kitt and Hugh O'Brien.
Dec. 3—"He Who Gets Slapped," with Julie Harris and Richard Basehart.

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