

ASUN--not where it's at Notes from the oven

by STEVE TIWALD

The ASUN Student Senate, with its regular Wednesday meeting this afternoon, had better come to life soon or it will find its already fading stature has completely vanished.

Of the Student Senate story so far this school year, only one thing can be said for sure: Senate is not where it's at. This observer sees that the senators themselves are finally realizing that fact; lack of a quorum at the last two meetings has canceled any potential action.

Other student government groups have been responsible for the short list of ASUN accomplishments this year. The new Council on Student Life is handling policy, and it can take the credit for abolishing women's hours.

The ASUN Faculty Evaluation Committee has been hard at work and its product will soon be available to aid the masses of students in future registrations.

The ASUN Service Committee has been attempting to set up a student co-op record store; the outfitting of a Union room is all that's left to do, but this job is now ensnared in University-brand red tape

and only slowly being untangled.

The ASUN Education Committee has seen the acceptance of suggestions for an integrated studies major, changes in the Arts and Sciences College science requirements, and new non-lab science courses.

All this work has been done oblivious of ASUN Senate except for the senate's ratification of the budget early in the year. What are the reasons for the ineffectiveness of ASUN Senate? In the past it has always been able to at least limp along.

While some feel that partisan politics, especially early in the year, were responsible for an initial deviousness that has crippled the Senate ever since, this observer sees that as only a small part of the senate's problem.

A much larger factor is the senate's structure itself. The large size, 35 members, is unwieldy and the individual seldom gets to know very many other senators outside his own group.

It's hard to work with people you don't know. And because the senators are apportioned by college rather than chosen from geographical living units,

there is no effective feedback from their constituencies. The ordinary student does not know his senators, and the senator does not feel pressure to be active.

These factors, coupled with a lack of leadership — both within senate and from the ASUN executives — have brought Senate to its present low point.

Talk of structural change is in the air. Besides people planning to run for ASUN office in the spring election, who traditionally have big plans, the execs have seen the problem that grew up under them. Ideas range from having a bicameral legislative branch of ASUN to disbanding the Student Senate in favor of a student-faculty joint senate.

Reapportionment, which lost in a special referendum last year because of inadequate voter turn-out, is again being debated in some student government circles.

Which direction ASUN goes will be determined by several key people — present and potential officers and senators. If these people fail to act, student government at NU will lose even more stature than it has already lost among students and administrators.

by KEN WALD

It is time for a really frivolous column. Aside from the ham and eggs investiture of Chancellor Varner, which has all sorts of grave teleological implications, nothing really exciting has happened.

It has become a campus fad of late for the multitude of seers in our midst to predict the ultimate demise of the fraternity and sorority system. These wonderfully perceptive people argue that such socially-oriented organisms are becoming anachronistic in a student world increasingly dominated by concern over war, racism, freedom.

The sustaining characteristic of the Greek system since its origin at Harvard in 1775 has been uniqueness — a fraternity chapter's difference from both the rest of the world and, more importantly, its competitor chapters.

Toward maintaining this distinctiveness there have arisen a plethora of names, traditions, rituals and images. Each house projects its own aura and only through the maintenance of individuality can the Greeks expect continued existence.

At first glance, all would seem to be well for there is available a literally infinite number of possibilities for name combinations,

ceremonies, images and other Pagan rites. But stop for a moment and think about the key to uniqueness: each house's very own handshake.

If you've looked at your hand lately you're aware that it possesses only five fingers. If you are reasonable about the whole thing, grant that the number of remaining handshake possibilities is small.

Note that some chapters have reached the crisis point of using another chapter's "grip" and you see the truth: The collapse of social fraternities has nothing to do with pledgeship or philosophical turmoil but is due solely to the inherent limitation of five fingers.

Ah, but is it actually inherent? Of course you could begin to selectively mate six-fingered men and women, but genetics would work against you. So put your right-hand palm-down on a flat surface and look. There is only one logical place for a new digit to sprout and that is along the right edge of your hand, next to the little finger with the dirty fingernail.

If you want to save the Greek alphabet from complete obsolescence, get your family and friends together. And start pulling that flabby skin up and away.

Think of the possibilities! Aside from multiplying the possible handshake combinations, you will probably eliminate war. After all, you can't fight without using your hands ... at least not with style.

And more than that, friends, a new finger raises some interesting prospects for the proliferation of obscene gestures. Don't think about it, just pull!

I told you this was going to be frivolous.

Young Lords reflect church in action

by DICK GREGORY

The recent ten-day occupation of the First Spanish United Methodist Church in New York City's East Harlem by a group of young Puerto Ricans known as the Young Lords is just one more example of what is in store for the institutional church during the 1970's. Some time back a Young Lords group in Chicago pulled off the same maneuver, curiously also at a Methodist Church.

The Young Lords of East Harlem reflected the rhetoric of the church in action much better than most churches themselves are doing. They conducted a free breakfast program for hungry children of the East Harlem community. They provided free clothing for those in need. They provided volunteer medical service, both highlighting and meeting the need for health services in communities of the poor. They did all those things churches talk about doing but somehow seldom get around to putting into practice.

Of course, the institutional church hierarchy and the local congregation put an end to the takeover of the church after awhile. An injunction was obtained to have the Young Lords removed. Now the laws of man are deciding what future form the world of the Lord (and the Lords) will take.

The institutional church is in real trouble, unless, of course, it is really able to hear the instruction of Jesus about losing one's life in order to find it. An earlier attack upon the institutional church came from James Forman and the National Black Economic Development Conference. Forman focused his attack

upon the institution itself, confronting the hierarchy — denominational executives, mission boards, trustees and the like — with the demand for reparations to the black community.

Forman challenged the institution to recognize and admit the wealth it holds and to give over a realistic portion of that wealth to the have-nots of our society. Forman took the institutional church bureaucracy seriously, recognized who was really in control of church resources, and focused his attack upon that power structure.

There is a rising cry coming from some of those white churchmen who have long been identified with the church renewal movement (Steve Rose, Harvey Cox, Will Campbell, Malcolm Boyd and others) which speaks of disestablishing the institutional church; becoming poor with the poor Jesus in the name of God so that church rhetoric is not continually blasphemed by investment records.

One cannot help wondering what Jesus would say to church bureaucrats seeking his counsel today. After all, he told the rich young ruler to go and sell all that he had, distribute it among the poor, and then come back and talk to him.

As community sentiment solidifies and institutional forms existing in a community which are not there for the benefit of that community are no longer tolerated, the churches cannot expect to be exempt as they are in the tax realm.

Churches have too long identified with the aspirations of people rather than with their condition. Whether the aspiration is salvation on the other side or a vicarious identification with the

preacher's new Cadillac, the result is the same.

The church is not enacting the healing word here and now. In increasing numbers, young blacks and Puerto Ricans are becoming terribly concerned with their own aspirations and those of their people. They realize, however, that those

aspirations are best met by doing something now about existing conditions. And, as Jesus taught, they begin by feeding their sheep.

I would venture a guess that that act alone has more value in the eyes of the Almighty than all the denominational budgets to date.



"I understand he's next in line for the U.S. Supreme Court if we turn down Carswell..!"