

Oregon Daily Emerald

University of Oregon, Eugene

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Day Editor This Issue—Barbara Blythe
Night Editor This Issue—Leonard Delano

Unsigned comment in this column is written by the editor. Full responsibility is assumed by the editor for all editorial opinion.

THE sun might as easily be spared from the universe as free speech from the liberal institutions of society.—Socrates.

All of Which Proves What?

OUTSIDE of being a doubtful tribute to those persons who revised the A. S. U. O. constitution not so long ago, what is proved by the existence in the constitution of publications—committee control over the Emerald? Nothing. And we willingly admit that it has been the Emerald's good fortune and, may we say, the University's, for many years that the by-laws provision, whereby the policy control is vested in the editor, has had precedence.

But just now, all this means little. While proponents of the control-shift legislation are able to point out that the change is simple—simple in crossing out a paragraph on page 77 of the "Hello" book and writing it in on page 89—the possible effects are no whit different than they might be if the measure were altogether new.

Let it not be forgotten that the authority given the publications committee, enforcement of which will be decided upon soon, is so vague as either to promise ineffectiveness or threaten "gag" rule. Who is going to interpret the authority? Who is going to interpret the best interests of the student body? Who is going to decide whether the editor will be required to submit his policies before-hand to the committee (as was outlined in student council meeting) or whether he will simply be called upon to repent after outraging some council's feelings? Whichever is done, students may rest assured that any writing done under the shadow of a big stick can no more be interesting, sincere and worthwhile than thin dishwater can be substituted effectively for turtle soup.

The publications committee, under the dormant section of the constitution, is supposed to watch over the "best interests of the student body." Let us suppose then that the executive council—and this is mere fancy—should vote to appropriate \$5000 of student money for deepening the mill-race so that hazing might be more effectively carried on. Suppose the editor thought this was wrong and wished to protest. Suppose the publications committee, exercising its wide range of authority that may be included under "best interests," decided that the best interests would be served by suppression of criticism. Then what? We would have "gag" rule, but glory be to God, the "best interests" would have been served!

Let us suppose, on the other hand, that the council, lost in its maze of authority, or perhaps outwitted by a naughty editor who denied having any "editorial policies" that might be inspected, decided to keep quiet. What then? Status quo. And this is the condition the proponents of the measure think most likely. If so, why bother with changing the by-laws? If, on the other hand, the publications committee, perhaps cheered on by a belligerent president and an insulted council, decided to apply censorship, we would have "gag" rule. That is why the amendment should be defeated, not because of what the committee probably will do, but because of what it might do. The evils in the possible exercise of a vicious power.

This, we hope, answers the communicant who can't see the forest on account of the trees. Why worry, he asks in substance, over a little shift in the constitution? Well why not? Let him try to edit a paper under threat of censorship and he will find that one's style can be considerably cramped by the threat of decapitation if the cam-

pus folk-ways are left behind. It perhaps would become a sin to differ in opinion from the council, which, as another correspondent points out, perhaps never is selected on qualifications and convictions but on various and sundry points that are of questionable value in interpreting student sentiment. For after all, the council members follow their own minds, and trust that their constituents approve. They would deny this privilege to the editor. Why not simplify the whole process and leave the editor not to the people's servants but to the people themselves? If the recall is too cumbersome, simplify it. Any editor would rather take a chance with the people who elected him than with the councilmen or a publications committee bent on scalping him.

But to get back to our communicant, while we thank him for delivering the communication columns to the editor, we must inform him that that is usually reserved for the readers. However, it may be that the editor will be reduced to that level if the measure he supports wins.

As to the testimonials from without, let us hastily assure the writer that we forgive him his insult. Many of the messages were unsolicited. Those that were, are from persons who know something about newspapers, college newspapers particularly, and more to the point, the Emerald. One such appears today from a former editor, well-remembered, and surely our correspondent won't say that this man doesn't know whereof he speaks? The messages that brought the statements were simple statements of fact. The original copy is available for all who wish to see.

So let us forget the petty detail that so unfortunately irks the attacking army (and we have often heard say that the truth hurts) and get down to the point.

Shall the Emerald be free to express honest opinion and honest criticism, or shall it be subjected to censorship? Shall the students themselves be given the power (and we again suggest an easier method of recall) to decide whether or not their best interests are being served, or shall an appointive committee do their thinking for them?

And if, as so many speakers reported in so many houses last night, the editor's power will not be curtailed, why the amendment? Why run the risk of abuse? These are the questions for the proponents to answer.

Postscript on Personalities

It has been the Emerald's hope that the amendment under consideration might be discussed on its merits and without reference to personalities. This, we are certain, has been the intent of the leaders in the war to adopt the legislation. That is why we take this special opportunity to reply to a communicant who accuses the editor of personalities and insufficient regard for the facts.

First of all, we demand that the writer substantiate the charge that the Emerald is taking unfair advantage and disregarding facts. Every statement prepared by the opposition has been given "top-head" position. Every communication, regardless of its fairness or unfairness (such as the one with which we now deal) in support of the amendment has been published. What else does the writer ask?

As to personalities. He refers to one specific case. We refer him again to the communication that inspired the Emerald's "personalities." He may perchance find as we did that the writer started the "personalities." Should the editor say nothing when he is accused, without proof of any sort, of having



BEST DRESSED MAN CONTEST

Here's the final count on the leading six men. There were so many votes cast that we decided it would be fair to include the six and select the winner from these.

- WENDELL GRAY 6010
- HAROLD BRUMFIELD 5400
- FORBES EHLERS 4740
- GUS GREULICH 4660
- DICK GORDON 4290
- BILL JAMES 4220

And now for the selection of the winner. We've decided to have ballots printed and distribute them to all the persons at the Seven Seers ball Saturday night and allow them to vote then and there. The ballots will be counted and the winner will be announced during the evening. We feel that this will be fair to all the men and that the vote will be representative of the sentiment of the campus.

THE FIRST FLORIDA JUNE PEAS ARE NOW ON THE MARKET.

Proportionately the women won more debates than the men this year. Only one more indication of their argumentative ability.

Architecture students may adopt the Wilcox hat if they want to. That's all right, but gosh, I do hope they don't keep on with the idea and all appear in capes one of these days.

36 KILLED IN RUSH TO TAKE BATH IN INDIA

(Hdline S. F. Examiner)
Sounds very much to me like most any Sunday morning in a one-tub rooming house.

A freshman newswriting student called the moot court trials the mute court trials the other day in a paper. Quite a bit of irony in those words, frosh.

POEME

Mr. and Mrs. Smith don't speak to each other much. She beats eggs with his brand new crutch.

CAL HORN isn't running for an office or a street car but he is making a little house to house pigging.

There are surely some advanced merchants in the town of Sutherland. I saw a grocery window full of Fly Tox down there the other day.

SHOOTING FARMER HELD

(Hdline Portland Oregonian)
We've heard of shooting stars, but we always thought farmers were inclined to be slower in motion.

Gretchen thinks the R. O. T. C. is like a dentist. The soldiers drill and the captains bore the soldiers.

OUR MEANEST MAN

The bozo who gives his friends homing pigeons for presents.

BOB HUNT still thinks the Alpha Gamma Deltas should have won the singing prize. He says they served a real meal.

BUGHOUSE FABLE

Once upon a time a candidate kicked a dog and none of his opponents said anything about it, but that was once upon a time.

caused continual disruption in the student body? Shall he fail to take notice of the charge that for no reason whatever, save possibly an evil temper, he has disagreed with the council just for the sake of creating discord? Who, Mr. Writer, started this?

But now comes the catch; a debate is suggested. We mean to insinuate nothing, but does it interest our readers to know that this idea originated with other backers of the measure and that the letter was delivered not by the gentleman who signs his name, but by two members of the council (women) who are fighting valiantly for the proposal? We wonder who inspired the suggestion.

Thanking the kind gentleman for his compliment about about oratorical ability, we choose to decline the offer. We would rather settle this question on its merits and on facts than by flights of oratory. A debate would bring the question down to the personal level. This matter is not a quarrel between the editor and the president of the student body, and we do not choose to make it such. We admit that a handful of unbiased (sic) listeners such as the writer of the letter would most likely decide in favor of the suggested opponent. We are not seeking to decide the issue on personal popularity, but we do choose to deal in facts, and facts can beat down even the specious arguments of our communicant.



For the Defense

To the Editor and students:
My reply to the question, which Hugh Biggs says is fundamental, concerning the editorial column: "Should the editor of the Emerald consider the editorial column an agency for the expression of his ideas alone without regard for student sentiment, or should the editorial expressions seek to interpret and represent student opinion. . . ?" is as follows.

First, it is clearly impossible for the editor to express his ideas "with-out regard for student sentiment," because he is himself a student.

Second, it would be absurd for any person, be he editor, president, or committeeman, to pretend to know or represent student opinion, or even a considerable minority of it. Something approaching unanimity of opinion may exist in grade schools and in very small towns, but certainly it can not and ought not to exist within a university student body. I doubt that any two students who do their own thinking could quite agree on any question.

The number of different policies suggested by a committee (whose members are optimistically supposed to represent the "various elements") will probably be exactly equal to the number of its members.

A process of addition of those policies would leave the editorial column as unhampered (and effective) as it has been in the past. The complete policy would contain permission for almost any kind of expression. If, on the contrary, only the parts common to all or a majority of the policies were retained, the limitations of the editorial column would make it useless.

Since the committee could go little further in the futile task of determining student opinion than the editor, whose training has brought him many more than the average number of contacts, what is the use of paralyzing him to gain such a small advantage? Did any of the members of the council ever try to write a foreful essay using some one else's ideas? Who is likely to know the art of editorial-writing better, a heterogeneous committee, or an outstanding senior in journalism?

It is a kind of insult to the whole student body, to insinuate that an editor cannot be chosen whose abilities and judgments are worthy of respect. Why assume that the students are better fitted to choose a president who is able and trustworthy, than an editor with the same qualities? And is the student body to be considered too dull-witted to recall any editor who is doing apparent harm?

If it happens that council members and others feel sure the editor is wrong, why can't they try to prove their theories to the editor and students? Why haven't they? Very probably the editor will be open to conviction, and ready to mend his ways.

"There can be promoted a closer unity of purpose, a better spirit of co-operation . . ." says Mr. Biggs. This spirit should not need to be promoted. The editor will give support where he thinks it is deserved. It seems to me that what the council members actually want is a vindication for their actions, which have been held up to public criticism. Freedom from criticism would be beneficial to office-holders' undying fame, but not to the "student interests" they speak about so euphuistically.

The recognized function of an editorial column is to give expression to the frank, honest, heartfelt opinions of the editor. All the rest of the paper is devoted to facts, and to thoughts and opinions of others, likewise freely expressed. Let the administrative committees administer, and let the popularly chosen editor write his editorials.

All So Simple

To the Editor:
So much space upon the front page of the Oregon Daily Emerald has been devoted to the so-called threat of "Gag Rule," and stifling of the much cherished right of freedom of the press, that the topic seems to be foremost in discussion on the campus, even putting the politicians into the background on the eve of nominations.

If all the propaganda regarding the danger of "gag-rule" should be true, one would think that the early exponents of freedom of the press, who fought so valiantly that the rights of the editor should not be questioned, would arise in their graves in holy horror at the very thought of such a catastrophe affecting the power of the editor of the Oregon Daily Emerald. But so far as I can see the appeal does not go back so far as that, but is only being extended to a number of the leading newspapers throughout the state, and to other college dailies for support against the threat.

Why should the simple matter of the amendment of a by-law to a measure already long standing and previously unquestioned of the Oregon Student Body Constitution arouse such a sudden burst of righteous indignation from our capable

editor. No one questions the fact that the present editor is sincere in his stand, or that he should be denied the right to express his opinions. But it does not follow that the style of any future editor is going to be seriously cramped by the passage of the amendment of this by-law.

The constitution already provides for a committee on publications, and the present amendment is simply to amend the by-law so that said committee may cooperate with the editor in forming a constructive editorial policy. The editor may still have his say and even use the communication column if such should become necessary to freely express his opinion. At least that is the best that others can do.

The measure is one which can hardly be said to affect those other than members of the Oregon student body. Then why should not the propaganda either for or against the measure be restricted to the bounds of the campus itself? The state newspapers, presented with only the one side of the question, namely the editorial comment and press dispatches of the Emerald, could hardly benefit the amendment anyway should it come to a vote, even if they did have an unbiased understanding of the effect of the measure. Oregon students alone must decide and so why the state-wide propaganda?

As a matter of procedure it would seem that much-ado is being made about nothing, which in fact threatens the power of the editor of the Emerald, or which stifles either his originality, his initiative, or his ambition for bigger and better things.

WARD COOK

Another Defender

To the Readers:
I wish to express my hearty support for Sol Abramson in his fight for a better, cleaner, truly representative rule of our Student Body. He is much to be commended for the stand he has taken, and for the unwavering courage he has displayed; nor does he shrink from criticism.

All year he has been trying to raise a feeling against the rule of the student governing bodies as it has been carried out. It is true that the officers of the Student Body are elected. But there are never any issues involved more than those of social position—of what "house" is the candidate a member, or something of like importance and appeal. There is a large proportion of un-affiliated students, but nevertheless students, who take no interest in elections; who never vote; whose interest is never aroused by any campaign. These students cannot be disregarded in considering what the will of the students as a whole is, simply because their will is unexpressed. But Sol Abramson has adequately expressed by opinion of those actions of the Student Council, of freshman hazing, and of the use of student funds. As one of them, I know that there is a very respectable number who agree with the editor. Then who can say that the editorial columns of The Emerald have been used to express the opinions of one man, the editor? He has really expressed the attitude of many students who have not made themselves heard. But he has also awakened these students to action, and if the question comes to a vote, there will be a number surprising to the Student Council who

support Sol Abramson with a larger proportion than one to fourteen, which is his power in that council claiming to represent student feeling. Already the largest class in the University has unanimously declared its support for the editor, and many upperclassmen are with them.

AN UPPERCLASSMAN

So Personal!

To the Editor:
The present controversy concerning the justice of restricting the power of the Emerald editor through a publications committee lacks, in the writer's estimation a sufficient regard for the facts. The editor, in exercising his power of refutation, a power which his position gives him while it is denied his opponents, has allowed his statements to become highly personal in tone, accusing dissenters of mental immaturity, ignorance of journalism, et cetera. The editor's avoidance of the last word in all discussions carried on in the Emerald guarantees the student body a biased if cleverly worded interpretation of all argument in variance with the editor's opinion and, it seems, detailed information about the personal deficiencies of the opposition.

In order to equalize the advantage to both factions in the support of their causes and to give the student body a clear knowledge of the facts, may it be suggested that the editor and the president, as representatives of the two opposing camps and as orators of known repute, meet and debate the merits of their respective stands publicly at a convenient time and place?
LEONARD HAGSTROM

Have You Heard?

PAJAMAS are to be the rage at the---
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Saturday Night

If you want to be distinctive, cut a big chunk in the evening, so to speak, wear a pair of Nobels—with the colors that make a rainbow blush, and styles and patterns --- you should see! Here's a wonderful opportunity to initiate your spring night wear and at the same time have a splendid evening.

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Lewis Stone
Anna Q. Nilsson
Chester Conklin

in
MIDNIGHT LOVERS

