

+ EMERALD EDITORIALS +

Majority President

If the campus politicians go through with their plan to realign the parties, it will mean a number of changes in the present system of electing officers.

Provision for more than two parties will have to be made, since the number of parties will undoubtedly vary from year to year. The "gentleman's agreement" whereby each party nominates two candidates for the four class offices will be out the window. For the first year at least, several small parties with incomplete slates will probably be formed.

The net effect will be to make the preferential system more meaningful and more valuable, since it was designed specifically to give smaller groups a voice, but carefully considered changes in the election machinery will be necessary.

The most important change will have to be made in the method of electing the student body president. At present the candidate who receives the most number one votes becomes president. This may mean that he is elected only by a plurality, not a majority.

We believe this is wrong for two reasons. First, because his job is to lead the students during the year, he should represent as many of them as possible. Secondly, because majority election would raise the prestige of the president and strengthen his hand in dealing with other groups.

This is not a serious weakness now, because there are seldom more than two or three candidates for president in the general election. Under the proposed system, unless controls are put on, however, there might be five or six candidates, especially if some candidates run for President only with the aim of picking up enough number one votes to assure themselves of senator-at-large positions.

For that reason, a run-off election for ASUO president should be held a week or more before the general election to narrow the field to two candidates, who would run against each other on a ballot separate from the senator-at-large candidates. The winner would become president and the loser vice-president.

Presidential candidates who lose in the run-off should have an opportunity to refile for senator-at-large or the class offices if they wish. Senators-at-large and class officers would be elected on a straight preferential basis.

This method would not only insure majority election of the president, it would keep senators-at-large candidates from running for president just to gain votes and give defeated presidential candidates a chance to be on the senate.

No Shoo-in

Picking political winners sometimes can be a hazardous undertaking, even when "shoo-ins" are involved. And yet some prophets already are talking about the upcoming Morse-McKay battle for the former's U.S. Senate seat. They seem to forget about a guy named Phil Hitchcock. He's the man Doug McKay must defeat in the May 18 primary before he can tackle Senator Morse.

And it's our opinion that McKay will have a tougher time beating Hitchcock than some would like to believe. When the former governor bowed to pressure and decided to run for the Senate, he undoubtedly figured that the other Republican candidates would bow out. Hitchcock's decision to remain in the race must have been quite a disappointment.

Now McKay must conduct an extensive campaign before the primary, something for which he hadn't bargained. And if he does win, it's not going to be in a breeze. Here's why:

1. While Hitchcock was within the clois-

tered college walls of Lewis and Clark, McKay was making policy and enemies as Secretary of Interior. McKay may be better known, but not necessarily better liked.

2. Hitchcock, who is running on his own, will appeal to the voters who dislike party dictation of the type that was exercised in order to get McKay into the contest. In this case the influence came from sources far removed from Oregon.

3. Hitchcock should get strong support from college students, who would be inclined to favor "one of their own." Some indication of this was given by the endorsement he received from the executive board of the Oregon College League of Young Republicans.

4. McKay's opponent has a good head-start on the campaign trail. He already completed a tour of the state, while McKay has yet to begin.

These certainly indicate less than a rout for the ex-Secretary of Interior. Win or lose, Phil Hitchcock will make things interesting.—(J.C.R.)

Tooth-Pulling Operation

The U.S. Supreme Court seemingly performed quite a tooth-pulling operation on the Fifth Amendment last week when it upheld the 1954 witness immunity law in regard to federal grand jury investigations into cases involving national security.

The court decision means that witnesses no longer will be able to refuse to testify because what they say might tend to incriminate them. This is because the Justice department can ask a federal judge to guarantee that their testimony will not be used against them. They can then be compelled to testify under threat of contempt.

Justices Douglas and Black dissented from the 7 to 2 majority opinion on the supposition that the Constitution places it beyond the power of Congress to compel anyone to confess his crimes.

Despite the objections that are certain to arise because of this seeming encroachment on the Bill of Rights, the decision appears to have these points in its favor:

It does not apply to much-publicized congressional committee hearings. Testimony given to a grand jury is secret and protected. This is not true in regard to a committee hearing. Testimony before the latter could lead to trial by newspaper.

Witnesses no longer will be able to protect friends and acquaintances under the cloak of the Fifth Amendment. The latter certainly was not written to permit its use in this manner.

The Fifth Amendment still accomplishes the purpose for which it was intended. Self-immunity originated in early England to prevent the use of torture to extort confessions. Witnesses still will not be convicted for what they say.

It is certain that the Justice Department's work has been made much easier by the decision, but the Fifth Amendment is not yet toothless.—(J.C.R.)

Footnotes

The least the Greeks could do in planning their Greek week activities is to reschedule their women's football team practices. We're not worried about the fraternity members of the varsity and frosh baseball teams and two P.E. classes that were disrupted. It's those Independents in these same groups and the as-yet unaffiliated high schoolers on Eugene high's track team that should be kept from these Greek gambols.

Then there's the physical education student answering the part on the P.E. questionnaire about why he took the course, penciled in, "I took it so I could get the showers in the gym and save on the hot water bill at the Amazons."

Yardboys



"THE HOUSEMOTHER THINKS IT'S NICE OF YOU BOYS TO TAKE AN INTEREST IN OUR YARD."

INTERPRETING THE NEWS

Communist Leaders Torn Internally by Line

By J. M. Roberts
AP News Analyst

The government tax crackdown on the Communists and their mouthpiece, The Daily Worker, comes at a time when the party is trying to emerge from underground and is torn internally by Moscow's new anti-Stalin line.

One of the big questions is whether the party is going to get more good than harm out of the Treasury Department action in padlocking its offices.

Its leaders have been quick to reach for the role of martyrdom and the cloak of freedom of the press.

A court battle looms. The T-men appear to be technically correct in their action, though its method is hardly as routine as they maintain.

There is always something unsavory and unsatisfying about the use of tax laws to reach malefactors who cannot be reached otherwise. The revenue people say this is not such an action, but merely a tax matter.

The circumstances, however, suggest discrimination, in that property was seized before an actual bill for taxes was presented, although the Reds had not filled out information forms presented them.

However all that may turn out, and however correct the T-men may have been, there is a question as to the political wisdom of the act at this time. You can bet that's why Washington officials became so inter-

ested on learning what the New York director had done.

The Communist party in the United States has been trying to adjust itself to two major ideological shifts in Moscow. One which may prove of great benefit to them permits them to drop force and violence from their theory of revolution. It may turn out to give them a chance to evade the basic federal anti-Communist law which strikes at them on this point.

They have been preparing to emerge from underground and resume their efforts, which fizzled two years ago in a wave of public disapproval, to sponsor a new Farmer-Labor party. Any suggestion of persecution now is bound to reawaken a certain amount of liberal sympathy among non-Communists, which is the objective of both new and old "front" organizations now being activated.

The Communists also are engaged in trying to digest the anti-Stalin line and adapt it to an appearance in this country of repudiation of many things which caused them to be so hated.

They are having trouble about this, as they had about the sudden shift from "imperialist war" to "peoples' war" when Hitler reversed his field in 1940. Many members are revolting again against such cynical shifts in party tactics. Attacks from outside tend to solidify the party front instead of widening the rift.



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