

Charter Day Evaluation

The case of the missing student is still the biggest problem of the Charter Day committee. And last week's fourth commemoration of the event indicated that no ready solution for the problem can be expected for next year, at least.

Why concern over student non-attendance at something that involves primarily faculty and administration in the first place? Faculty and administration are the participants in most of Charter Day's events, to be sure, but Charter Day itself is a commemoration of the University's founding by the University community. And students are the essential part of any university community.

There were those who said that the students did not know enough about the Charter Day observation—that just a good job of publicity and promotion would result in the desired turnout. Increased public relations in this area each year has produced little results, however. More student members were added to the committee; student leaders pleaded through letters and brief talks to living organizations; houses were urged to sit together. But each year the students stay away.

Anticipating the students' logical maneuvers when any classes are dismissed has failed also. The Student Union has been closed, the library has been locked, but the students find other places to spend an afternoon—quite obviously.

Some said it was simply a matter of the weather. For three years the academic procession proceeded only down the corridor of McArthur Court; the rains took care of the colorful cross-campus march. And if there were no procession, many students not otherwise reached would not be drawn into the main convocation. But last week's program proved that sunshine has even greater drawing power than shower—away from the Charter Day event.

Still others said that the program was the deterrent. The students who attended the lectures with the promise of a culturally satisfying experience came away disappointed too often—and left the following year's program for other "first-timers." But the Charter Day committee, backed by a fund allowing generous honorariums, will go anywhere in the world to find speakers.

Unfortunately, the success of the committee has been poor, these critics say, climaxed by this year's program.

And this comment may be the most telling of any. The speakers at the afternoon convocations have all too often been outshone by the men who addressed the evening assemblies. But attendance at the evening programs has not been so much of a problem because Eugene townspeople add to the Student Union ballroom crowd con-

siderably. And the afternoon convocation is the principal event of Charter Day—the time when attendance by the student segment of the University community is most desired.

The 1956 convocation address by President Lee DuBridge of the California Institute of Technology was not spectacular. Students, disappointed there, made no special effort to get to the evening assembly where Robert Redfield made one of the most outstanding speeches in University history. It was not the first time that many thought the order of speakers should have been reversed.

This year seems to have been no exception. Walter Paepcke's main convocation address was unimpressive to say the least. George Gamow's evening talk was excellent. Gamow's subject, however, was not especially suited for a Charter Day observance, particularly with a Condon lecture series taking up approximately the same subject in two weeks.

The experience of a college generation of Charter Days points to one overwhelming difficulty in program arrangement: the quality of the speaker cannot, unfortunately, be judged by his background only.

Too often it is the case that the very successful activities of a man in the board room of the laboratory or the administrator's office do not necessarily qualify him as a man with a message for a Charter Day audience. Here, let us say that we realized the difficulty under which Paepcke labored as a last-minute substitute for Robert Hutchins. But we had almost forgotten this until his repeated mentions of the fact convinced us that he was nothing but a man off the bench.

Solution of the speaker problem, a difficulty in itself, may not be the automatic answer to a really successful Charter Day. It probably isn't. Students need more than a promise of outstanding addresses before they will forsake the Side for obviously less recreation pursuits. What this promise would be, we do not know. (And if the Charter Day committee finds out, we would like to know; sincere student interest or even attendance at anything on this campus is a big problem.)

But failing to answer this question, the Charter Day committee should not abandon the event. There is still value in stopping to look at our beginnings and consider our future. And Charter Day offers this value to an entire university community, sitting down together. But if it is to be an entire university community, we might do well to present speakers who can comment more ably on our beginning or our future.

of Los Angeles to a destination.

All of which, we realize, is almost disastrously premature thinking. There's still California (victor over USC this weekend and also eligible for a Rose Bowl trip this year) and four other rough opponents to be overcome before all this dreaming becomes a reality.

But it sure feels good to see our Webfoots perched atop the conference standings. And a little enthusiasm never hurt anybody.

Footnotes

Publisher Robert Harrison of Confidential, praising the "reaffirmation... of the freedom of a publisher to publish and... the freedom of the public to read," left out a couple of words. "Trash" and "filth" should have been in that sentence somewhere.

Good Thing He Wasn't a Pledge!



"SO I GAVE HIM BACK HIS OLE FRATERNITY PIN."

Dave Cass

University's ROTC Program Has Faults as Well as Values

Shortly after the finish of the Civil War a far-sighted Congress, along with abolishing slavery of the body, passed a bill allowing the establishment of land grant colleges. In essence, this measure provided for allotment of federal lands to public institutions of higher learning, who would in turn agree to instruct their male students in the mysteries and intricacies of the military.

It is my purpose today to evaluate the outgrowth of this act, to discuss the role of the underclass ROTC program at the University, its values and its faults. This is not a discourse for women, campus mascots or inarticulate presidential aspirants.

A defense of the military program on this campus must hinge on the fact that the services need high quality leaders in large quantities, and that these can best come from the cream of the nation's youth, its college students. With this in mind, we must ask first, how well does the program provide for good leadership, and second, how well is the program woven into the fabric that is the University?

Almost any draftee or enlistee will tell you that in the services the ROTC boys are the most disliked and incompetent of the officers. This general attitude of course has partly to do with the fact that college kids are 'too' smart, they see themselves as better than other people.

But even more vital are the more or less parallel facts that what a person emerges with from college has no bearing in the services and therefore that the very nature of the ROTC program precludes continuance by the more qualified students. What's wrong with the ROTC that makes these two facts true?

One might say that the institutions of the military and of higher education are diametrically opposed in outlook and practice. Does this mean that the two should be entirely sep-

arated? I hate to think so. But yet, in every aspect the ROTC program is in conflict with the spirit of the University.

Where else in the University, except by stupidity or incompetence, is such stress placed on rote, unquestioned acceptance and subordination of mind? Nothing revolts the thinking person more than the idea that the military should be accepted as it is now, without criticism.

But, answers the military man, this is the heart of the military. True, and if the military would realize this basic discrepancy with the scholastic life, reconciliation might be affected.

This might require a rather hypocritical approach, to realize what must be on the one hand, while evaluating it on the other. Instead, the ROTC is committed to the doctrine that one must know what is presently so, and at the same time must accept this as right. This is untenable.

The actual organization of the program and the caliber of instruction leave much to be desired. When a semi-literate instructor, teaching a class outside in below freezing weather, tells his class, "You can't think with your hands in your pockets," or when a true-false test comes up with a question such

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Seconds and Inches

Three weeks ago, at about this time, we were discussing the importance of a few seconds in a football game—then, it was with a touch of regret. Today, we'd like to say something about the even-greater importance of a few inches—and it's with an almost uncontrollable enthusiasm that we tackle the subject.

A deviation of a few inches in the arc of a kicked football—plus, of course, a team that doesn't know the meaning of the word "quit"—has changed the connotations of several common words for thousands of Webfoot fans.

A rose, for example, is no longer something presented at serenades or placed on floats; it's now a word with more magic than "Abracadabra" or "Shazam." And Pasadena has changed from a mere suburb