

A Philosophy of Student Government

Nell Goldschmidt, current ASUC President, has seemed to some as only an upstart campus politician with some weird and new ideas about student government, its purposes and the way it should operate. To those of us who have been close enough to see Goldschmidt's philosophy in action on a day-to-day basis, he and his ideas have heralded what we think could become a better and more advanced student government, more in tune with the increased student activism of the times, both on the campus and off. Because of this, we asked Goldschmidt to submit to an eight-question interview concerning his philosophies.

With ASUC elections in the very near future, aspiring student leaders might take a second look at what he says. More than this, anyone interested in the changing ideas of today's student would do well to look even closer.

Q. In a few words, what is your basic philosophy of student government?

A. For purposes of philosophy alone, I could probably tie my basic philosophy down to one word—exposure.

By exposure, I mean that we can, and we ought, to regard student government as merely, at best, a flexible structure by which we can offer small interest groups and individuals access to both funds, and certainly to student legislative efforts such as our ASUC Senate, to accomplish whatever they are interested in doing. You can no longer rely on numbers of stu-

dents as your criterion of merit as far as something being worthwhile. I see it as the student body president's job to make sure these people have access to anything student government can offer them. I think the three committees established this year can credit whatever they have attained to the fact that there were small groups of students interested enough in picking up the ball and carrying it.

I think it's important for us to recognize that individuals who may be interested in working on the canoe fete may not be interested in working on a committee on civil rights. It is the responsibility, then, of student government to expose our students, and to offer them alternatives as to the type of activity they wish to participate in, and I don't think we have done that in the past.

Q. How does an organization such as NSA fit into your philosophy?

A. Allen Barth makes a statement that I will paraphrase that I think represents the approach that I would take to NSA, and I think this relates back to our student government. He comments, in a book on civil liberties, that when people cease to be concerned about their civil right, they are well on their way to losing them. NSA, to me, represents an opportunity to encourage and develop the kind of leaders who care about the basic issues confronting Americans, and particularly the University student in American society.

The vital thing to me is that

NSA is the only recognized national student group. This is the only place in the United States where you can be assured, as students, of being exposed to the undercurrents and the problems of American society as a whole.

It is important, and it ought to be understood, that the change in student government effected by membership in NSA would only be a secondary effect, because the first step is the broadening of the individual's scope. It's not a specific thing, it's a general outlook we are speaking of.

Q. What are the more important things you feel your administration has accomplished this year?

A. Personal animosities aside, I am hopeful that our students in student government, and those out, have been exposed with satisfactory reactions, to an independent and aggressive executive, to the concept that no president ought to be considered as another senator. I hope that we have continued to move along the lines that were established before I was elected to see students represent themselves whenever and wherever their interests are concerned. I

don't know whether we have demonstrated it efficiently, but I believe it is the responsibility of the president to recruit for student government, members of the intellectual community.

Finally, there is no guarantee that things that we might call "project awareness programs" will continue, but one of the real objectives I have been most closely associated with has been to establish the need for student involvement in civil right and statewide problems such as migratory labor, and even in international work, such as this attempt to start a work project in Mexico. I think it was our hope that we would be able, in controversy, and in concrete results, to convince the student body at large that they ought to continue to demand this type of activity of the president in future years. I think we felt that if this was done, we might bring the activities of student government much closer to the intent and purpose of the academic process.

Q. What do you feel are some of the more important things left undone?

A. Specifically, I think I can number some that ought to be done as soon as possible. A

realistic evaluation, by the new Senate, of the use of parking fees and the decrease in parking space for students. An evaluation by the new Senate of the final judgments of the state legislature, particularly with regard to tuition, in order that effective discussion might be carried out with regard to involuntary fees such as the athletic fee and others. A careful scrutiny of the dormitory reserve funds and encouragement to the dormitory officials to develop specific plans for a non-self-liquidating recreational center in the dormitory complex. A new constitution for the ASUC. I also think our student government should take a second look at the athletic stadium when it comes up.

Q. How do you feel about a student bill of rights and our present discipline code?

A. A student bill of rights is most effective when adjudicated by students. As far as we know, final power for discipline lies with the University president. If the ASUC were to write and create a bill of rights for students, we would be duplicating the work that our present student-faculty discipline committee (Continued on page 9)

HUAC Opposition Listed

(Continued from page 2)

of the left wing", the "Communist Party, USA", "International Communism", and some vaguely defined trend of sinister conspiracies on university campuses. Just how these tenuous association are to be supported is far from clear; apparently, the Civil Right Committee is a victim of guilt by association.

Mr. Pearson denies that there is, in fact, considerable opposition to HUAC as the petition states in its preface. He submits that the opposition to HUAC "might seem to be considerable, but that it is instigated by a very small minority." He should take note of the following people who have advocated the abolition of HUAC: Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt, Reinhold Niebuhr, Bishop James A. Pike, Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam, Prof. Henry Steele Commager, Prof. Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., Franklin D. Roosevelt said of HUAC: "It is sordid . . . and un-American." In 1959, Harry S. Truman stated: "The Committee on Un-American Activities is the most un-American thing in America."

Many prominent organizations have publicly proclaimed their opposition to HUAC: American Association of University Professors, Young Women's Christian Association, American Baptist Convention, American Jewish Congress, United Auto Workers, Young Democratic Clubs of America, Association of Motion Picture Producers, American Veterans Committee, National Federation of Catholic College Students, National Council of Churches of Christ, U.S.A., to mention only a few.

In 1960, the New York Times editorialized about HUAC: "Fortified by ample appropriations almost automatically renewed each year by the House, the Committee pursues its heresy hunt, endangering constitutional guarantees in the process, weakening at home and abroad America's reputation as the land of the free—and all to what avail? If the security of this nation were dependent on the kind of exposure for exposure's sake the Committee has repeatedly indulged in, whether investigating actors in New York or school teachers in Washington, then our country would really be in a dangerous condition."

In the same year, the Washington Post editorialized in ref-

erence to HUAC: "House of Representatives ought soberly to ask itself if it wants to go on indiscriminately punishing Americans for resisting a Committee which has long since ceased to serve any useful purpose and which has probed relentlessly into the area of private conscience and belief."

One can readily see from the few examples given that the opposition to HUAC is not inconceivable.

Incidentally, Mr. Pearson's excessive concern over the "correct name" of the Committee strikes us as a bit trivial. Whereas it may be true that the "lunatic fringe of the left wing, including the Communist Party, USA, consistently refer to it as the 'House Un-American Activities Committee,'" it is also true that such reputable publications as Time magazine and the New York Times use the same name. It seems somewhat rash to stigmatize such publications as representing the "lunatic fringe of the left wing."

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