

Editorials

What Ever Happened to our SGA?

"Student Government is alive and well in Union B-6." This statement may well be true, but it is at least as sad as it is true. If there is anything worse than a horse that can not run, it is a horse that will not run. That seems to be the present state of our SGA. It's a static sort of thing. The potential is there by the kilowatt, but there is only a small three candlepower light burning. But, what does the average student expect from Student Government? He expects results that are visible, results that might be described as beneficial to him. He doesn't really care about all the committees that are being formed or about all the studies that are being set up. He's looking for results - here and now. The studies and committees should come as extras. But what, in more specific terms, is the student seeking? The Student Government doesn't know. This makes things pretty easy. If one does not know what to do, he has at least an excuse for doing nothing. Or does he? The SGA must enjoy the situation as it is, for they have consistently ignored requests for a Student Government suggestion box. This is but a token of the attitude that has been displayed. Never in the history of the school have so much running around (in circles) and so many meetings failed so miserably to yield results that can be called visible. Case in point: the legislature needs to change the policy connected with the appointment of an editor for the freshman handbook, and they know it. But they are too content to sit around and tell each other how much work they are doing. If any real work has been performed by this year's legislature, then it is, indeed, an inefficient machine, because there has been little or nothing flowing from the output valve - nothing received by the students who elected the incumbent procrastinators. The only thing they have done (not accomplished, just done) was done poorly. The legislators had no business allocating the student activity fees; they blindly trued through this task (which many legislators consider the symbol of their power) like a group of adolescent myopics at a magazine rack. And do you think that they care if the concesus is that they did a poor job? Not a bit. When President Billups approached the legislature with the idea of surrendering this responsibility to another, more qualified organization, the legislators indignantly (and obnoxiously) refused to do so.

Before the last meeting of the legislature, one "prominent" committee chairman asked, "Do you know anyone who would like to proxy for me? I don't really want to go to that meeting. We won't do anything, as usual." Another quotable quote is - "If you don't give the basketball team a good writeup, we'll take your money back." The legislators see their jobs as a joke; they do not keep in touch with the students whom they are representing; and their chairman is content to sit by and watch the legislators play silly games in the meetings. Useless games. Where is all this leading us?

Why?

Why can't we get a student discount plan in Charlotte, Mr. Billups? Why doesn't somebody get behind the idea and really push it? Will the library be opened all night during exams? Wipe the dust from your eyes, SGA, and begin to look for problems that you can solve. You need not look far. Consider your own structure. As a matter of fact, (and this is just directed toward the legislature members who are not seniors), you'd best being to clean up - as a matter of self-preservation. If you don't, there may not be a need for a legislature next year!

A Little Hope Left?

This is not meant to indicate that we believe the legislature to be composed of a crowd of mindless incompetants. There are a few members who are concerned and who are trying to adjust the situation. Danny Phillips is one. Sherry Drake is another. Allen Hickok, Parry Bliss, and Steve Rayborn are others. But the quiet logic of a few sensible and concerned members is lost, drowned in the burst of demagogical mania that often resounds throughout the room in which the legislature meets. The blind try to cover the eyes of their fellow members. They usually succeed. Mr. Auten seldom is able to turn the tide against this rising tendency to argue instead of debate. It's not his fault; just think, back when Stewart took the job, he didn't know what he was doing, having never even been in the legislature. And look how that organization has come under his guidance.

Symbols Regulate Lives

By Walt Sherrill

During the holidays I heard much said about the symbolic richness of Christmas. One thing led to another, and soon I was counting symbols. This, therefore, is about symbols—the symbols of our everyday life, the symbols that some of us may one day be asked to die for.

Symbols can be poetry. The cross, for example, can be representative of the whole range of human experience: of sorrow, of love, exhalation, patience, virtue, knowing, and sacrifice. It can have all of these meanings and more. Or less. The flag, likewise, can have meanings and more far richer than those we would ordinarily attach to a banner of silk tied to a staff: unity, purpose, identity, a way of life. Symbols can represent a focus-point, an awareness, a sense of affirmation, or a goal. Or they can become hollow repositories of abuse and misdirection. Like poetry, symbols are only as good as their audience.

Symbols let us transfer allegiances from where we live, within ourselves, to a world outside. And once we are outside ourselves we become, like Antaeus the mythical son of Earth, separated from our strength, the ground of our being. Symbols, to paraphrase Eric Hoffer, let us play-act, let us separate ourselves from the overwhelming reality of life and death. Symbols let us get caught up in the search for glory.

Could one conceive of a Third Reich without symbols—without the massed crowds, the myth of a super-race, the Jews as scapegoats, Wagnerian overtures, or an invincible army? Probably not. Symbols are dangerous.

Are you religious? The next time you enter a sanctuary, stare at the symbols of your faith and give some thought to their meanings. Stare at the icons, but don't stare at yourself. Yet were those symbols within you, you'd have little need for the Church—you would be the Church. Symbols in religion are signs of the God without, and people, if they need God, need the God within. Many seek the God without, and live in the world of play-acting, but I wonder how many find a truth?

Are you patriotic? Think about the flag—another symbol. But a symbol of what? Most Americans couldn't answer that question; yet let them live their lives and you'd be shown part of the answer. You'd see an America of sickness intent upon healing itself, a land of promises half-kept, a land of half-remembered love; but, in the final analysis, you'd see a land of potential.

It's funny, but when we think about America, we think about America as it should be—about

social problems being solved, about technological advances till to be realized, and perhaps we even think about the flag. The flag, it seems, is becoming a symbol of War—and it may just be that the American people are outgrowing war.

People tend to confuse symbols with reality. We see this demonstrated when raging mobs attack our embassies and burn our flags: they confuse a few yards of cloth with reality. Patriots too, when they witness this destruction, get caught up in the madness. Yet the piece of cloth that was destroyed was only a symbol.

Perhaps we are outgrowing some of the traditional symbols of American life. Whenever our nation is confronted with another international crisis, some of our leaders begin waving the flag and calling for the people to rally; cooler heads, however, usually prevail. But it makes one wonder whether judas-goats wear red, white, and blue as they lead sheep

to the slaughter.

And censorship isn't just censorship, you know, its also the monopolization of symbols. In the Soviet Union, for example, symbols are tools used to direct the people; the Red flag, the massive May Day parades, space achievements, and even the Ballet are used to guide and manipulate the aware and unaware alike. Soviet literature is also well-controlled, so that the symbols and imagery of the writers will not conflict with the symbols of the ruling Party. Why, you ask, so much concern with symbolism? A nation can't fight a war or win a struggle without the right battle-cry. Or so some would have us believe.

Symbols serve practical ends in modern life, and many follow them because they must. But let us hope that the followers see where they are being led before they join the parade. Not even the flag-bearers always know where the parade will end—sometimes they're following the symbols too.

Feedback

Union Replies

Mr. Editor:

In response to Mrs. Stokley's letter I would like to state the position of the Union Program Board in relation to the selection of the Holiday Queen and Court ... the UNION

First, we accept the criticism presented in Mrs. Stokley's letter which dealt with the fact that all of the young ladies who were nominated were not notified of their nomination—that was a serious mistake yet no one was INTENTIONALLY not informed. (sic)

As the union ProgramBoard had decided that the Holiday Queen should be selected on the basis of her "beauty", the Board realized that a general student election might not prove to be an impartial procedure to follow ... obviously some young ladies are better known than others, some photograph better than others, etc... In order to eliminate a personality contest—or popularity contest if you prefer(sic)—the Board invited two guests from the Charlotte community to assist three faculty members in the selection of the Queen and Court.

The judges were instructed to consider only personal appearance as this was to be a beauty contest. Now, if certain interest groups on campus wish to sponsor a "Miss Popularity" contest that might be the proper time for a general election but for the Holiday Queen the Program Board elected to try a new procedure which we were pleased with after the "contest" was completed.

In February a Miss UNC-C will be selected—this is a time for student selection as the young lady is defined to be a person who is attractive and known by her fellow students as a person interested in UNC-C and actively working for her fellow students ... So the time for voting will arrive.

The Board will welcome any procedural suggestions for the Miss UNC-C selection which might be offered by your readers but there are no plans to suggest to next years(sic) Board that the selection of the Holiday Queen been (sic) handled differently—only more efficiently!

Bobbe Berry
Chairman, University Union
Program Board

Trivia

By W. I. T.

This is probably the first of a series of articles on this subject.

Trivia can be handy for impressing in-laws, citing at interviews, cataloguing in class, or just plain confusing comrades. Here are a few questions designed to test your trivia quotient: (1) Who is Mithrandir the Magnificent? (2) Name two types of pears, one that begins with an 'a' and one that begins with a 'b' (3) When is "Bloomsday"? (4) In what work of literature does Dr. Pangloss appear? (5) Who wrote "Fu I"? (6) What is the Spanish word for "perhaps"? (7) Who was sports editor of THE CAROLINA

JOURNAL last year? (8) Where does W.Y. Tindall teach? (9) Who wrote CONFESSIONS OF ZENO? (10) Who was Finn McCool? (11) What is Eric Blair's pen name? (12) Who was Zarathusa? ANSWERS (1) Gandalf the Gray in Tolkien's Trilogy of the Rings (2) avocado and bartlett (3) June sixteenth (4) CANDIDE (5) Ezra Pound (6) "quizes" (7) John Lafferty (8) Columbia University (9) Italo Svevo (10) An Irish folk hero (11) George Orwell (12) the founder of the Zoroastrian religion

And now for the the question the answer to which we know not...

Who, or what, turned the heat off in the Union basement over the holidays?????????



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PRESENTS:

The Works of J.R.R. Tolkien
The adventures of the fourteen as transcribed by Bilbr Baggins in THE RED BOOK and recounted in THERE AND BACK AGAIN adapted by Tolkien in THE HABBIT
and
The Quest of the One Ring as Tolkien relates it in
The Trilogy — THE FELLOWSHIP OF THE RING
THE TWO TOWERS
THE RETURN OF THE KING
Travel with Frodo Gardalf,
and their companions into
the Dark Land of Mordor.