

Unless

(The following editorial was written by Curtis B. Gans, 1959 graduate of the University of North Carolina and last year's Editor of The Daily Tar Heel. The present Editor feels this to be an outstanding example of student expression and certainly worthy of re-printing. It first appeared in the 1958 Orientation Issue.)

The year starts and it is a new experience for many. For many, billed by their high school presidents or school superintendents in a somewhat less than eloquent commencement speech as America's future leaders or citizens of tomorrow, the change will be quite drastic. For most the change is predictable.

There will be first the interminable orientation with meetings, meetings, and more meetings, some of which some of the new class will skip. They will hear many words about the Carolina tradition of freedom, about the Honor System, and about student government and activities in general. They will be told that a proper balance between scholarship and other interests will have to be made.

With much new found wisdom the student will go to his dormitory and get ready for the first day of classes.

Soon the student finds out that the Honor System does not work too well, and that the noise in many dormitory corridors makes study impossible and life only a little unhappy. At about this time they also find that one in five, if that many, professors that they have for freshman courses are interesting—not even stimulating.

So, quite early about one-fourth of them pledge fraternities and more than half of those are never seen doing something useful for themselves between that time and graduation. Others will take out their sorrows on the Tempo Room or the Rathskeller late in the evening, and others still will shortly drop out.

Almost all will forget their academic load until before the quiz and then assimilate what is necessary for quick regurgitation on the next day. They will be attuned to assimilating fact temporarily without placing the fact into context. They will be attuned not to think, and even those who came here not looking for a higher paying job as the primary result of a college education, will give up their goal early.

Those persistent enough to continue with intellectual pursuit will find it difficult to find people to converse with about anything save liquor, sex, and past experiences. A feeble attempt will be made by some to participate in activities, but for most this will mean lies in a yearbook rather than a personal contribution.

By the end of their sophomore year, those who have not received a high office will retire permanently to the bar stool or the uncomfortable cots that grace most dormitories and fraternities. They will content themselves with the activity of a Saturday night party or the intellectual pursuit of Mickey Mantle's batting average. They will be by the end of college little changed for the better by their four years.

They will be reactors rather than thinkers. They will be waiters rather than doers. They will be part of society at the expense of their own individuality. They will be intellectually dead.

There will be several who will become "teachers," but there will be but one or two teachers. There will be a few who will become "lawyers," but there may be one lawyer. There will be many writers and businessmen, but few will see their writings in print and few will rise above wanting to make the most money for themselves. There will be some scientists, but few with the prospective to place the greatly growing body of knowledge into. There will be a few "leaders" and probably no leader. Many will not finish school.

Those that do finish will listen to a brilliant commencement speech by a famous person and comment on how brilliant the speech was largely because they know that the person must be famous for some reason. Few will question how and why he got his fame and almost no one will carry the words of the speaker into life.

Embarking on the long voyage of life outside the ivory tower, "America's future leaders" will be the same generation as the last. They will plunge themselves into Spanish-American Wars, as quickly as they react "Coca-Cola" to "The Pause That Refreshes." They will hear the word communist, socialist, radical, non-conformist, and even individualist and react negatively not knowing what they are reacting to, but blindly taking somebody else's word for it.

In the future leaders, as they have been called, lies not the hope of America but the promise of its annihilation in an age when annihilation can be accomplished easily.

This will happen as surely as you are reading this. UNLESS...

Unless they as individuals try to find what they are and preserve the uniqueness of themselves.

Unless they resist the tide that chips at and ebbs away the curiosity that should be native to students.

Unless they become actively critical of their society and work, not just gripe, towards its improvement.

Unless they realize that reality is not a social whirl but rather is a problem worth coming to grips with and working out on a day to day basis.

Unless they shake the clichés and customs that society has forced upon them and they have accepted as making it the easiest way.

Unless they refuse to subvert themselves at all times to the will of the group.

Unless they think.

The wading against the stream is the most difficult. It demands courage and endurance. A successful passage, however, has rewards that far outnumber any of those received going another way. The road to a personal sense of well-being lies this way; the road to a personal Hell lies in the other direction.

The alternatives are clear. It is their choice. They will probably make the wrong one.

A Forward Look At The Start

Davis B. Young
1959-60 Editor,
The Daily Tar Heel

(As Editor of the University paper, I am taking this opportunity to discuss some of the major problems confronting the University of North Carolina. It is imperative that an enlightened student population be fully cognizant of the issues confronting this state university in the next few years. I hope that through the presentation of the following information both new and old students will have a greater appreciation of the challenge confronting them in Chapel Hill. The nine points mentioned in this study will be the basis of a large portion of the editorial comment which will appear in this paper in the course of the academic year. The Editor.)

During the past few years, particularly since our friends to the east launched the first Sputnik, the issue of education in America and the crisis therein has been one of the great, burning issues of our time.

Dr. James B. Conant has done a monumental two year study of secondary schools; Stringfellow Barr, Robert Goheen, Hollis Edens, Mason Gross and others have all spoken out as academicians, warning America that she must mend her educational ways.

And here at the University of North Carolina, those of us who have been here for a few years have seen manifestations of this current crisis on our own campus.

We can think of no more fitting time or more proper place to discuss the problems of this great university than in the first issue of the year.

We hasten to break precedent, the long established rule of this paper to use its first editorial page to give a warm welcome to new students, say how glad we are that old acquaintances have returned and to speak in meaningless platitudes.

Viewing The Daily Tar Heel as an educational enterprise, the Editor happily takes this opportunity to explain some of the key issues in Chapel Hill in the hope that the reader will have a better understanding of his own needs, the needs of this University and of the State of North Carolina.

There are now over 7,500 of us in our academic community. Obviously then, the first problem is the problem of growth. If this large figure scares you (and it should), imagine what this University will be like in 1970, when it will hit its expected peak of 14,000.

We question whether we must continue to yield to the pressures of legislators in Raleigh and the secondary schools of this state by admitting an ever increasing number of new students. We do not feel that Carolina should be a disposal plant for every youngster in this state who thinks he might just like to come here for awhile.

The University of North Carolina must push itself to the center of the state's higher education system. There are other state colleges which can pick up the slack.

We maintain that growth is fine when it can lead to a healthier situation for this University and for the citizens of North Carolina. But, we assert that growth for the sake of growth alone is an unfortunate occurrence. We do not object to a large number of people pursuing higher education on this campus.

But, we do object to the attitude that prevails here and throughout the state that UNC is obligated to educate and train for positions of leadership in the future, a great many individuals who because of their educational backgrounds or intellectual shortcomings are not thusly suited.

The General Assembly was most generous in granting funds for items pertaining to growth such as new dorms and cafeterias, but gave a noticeable monetary slap in the face to the library and faculty. This University must strive to meet the needs of those already here before making plans to increase the enrollment to grandiose proportions.

Bigness does not mean greatness.

Coincidental with the problem of growth is the issue of admission standards. It probably comes as no great shock to you for us to assert that perhaps there are a few of you here for Orientation Week who should never have been admitted in the first place.

Chancellor William B. Aycock while speaking to the annual Alumni Association banquet last spring remarked that 85% of the

incoming freshmen have graduated in the upper one half of their high school graduating class.

We wonder what the other 15% are doing here?

We further wonder whether the 85% who were in the upper half of these classes were in reality the really top students. Unfortunately a check of the records will reveal that a large part of the superior high school students of this state (upper 10%) are not matriculating here.

There is no distinction to be found in mediocrity. Obviously then, we see that two educational birds may be killed with one academic stone. Tighten the admission requirements, thus attracting a higher calibre of students, and you can cut the growth at



A STUDY BREAK IN THE SPRING AS EXAM PRESSURE GETS GREAT

the same time.

In any frank discussion of the problems confronting the University of North Carolina, we must arrive at a section devoted to the creation of a proper academic atmosphere, currently missing.

There is too much emphasis placed on non-scholarly pursuit. The common student (and most of us are) takes the dim view that something is the matter with people who are artistically inclined.

He laughs at other students who write poetry, he discourages the boy down the hall from taking part in dramatic presentations, he chides his roommate for spending too many hours in the library and not enough at the fraternity house, he thinks his language instructor is an oddball because he once spent a year in France on a Fulbright Scholarship et. ad infinitum.

He admires brawn, alcoholic capacity and longs for his sophomore year when he can have a car. Obviously this student is not making the proper contribution to the campus at large.

Any academic achievements he makes (if he makes any at all) are completely overshadowed by these immature attitudes which have been known to prevail here.

Any student can be a well rounded nobody, but true academic prowess is demanding of respect. The number one challenge confronting the University of North Carolina today is to find the means by which a student may understand and benefit from the "totality of university experi-

ence." A student must learn to use what he receives in class during his time in other work at the University, and vice versa. He must be taught to make a practical application of his knowledge.

Point Four. This concerns the budget. Aside from the obvious pun, a serious financial problem exists at Carolina. The State Assembly played butcher with this biennium's budget for the Consolidated University of North Carolina. Despite some last minute restorations of funds, particularly pertaining to the faculty, we are faced with the ugly possibility of having to hold the status quo on a shoestring, with progress being next to impossible.

In just another year and a half we will become involved in an-

other crucial budget fight in Raleigh. The point that student government and young lobbyists can play in such a monetary power play is large.

It is certainly not too early for new students to acquaint themselves with the financial needs of this University.

As for this current biennium, we can only be thankful for John Motley Morehead and other generous benefactors of Carolina.

Point Five. "The Case for a New Student Union" is the title of this point. The University of Wisconsin has a splendid union. So does the University of Texas and the University of Oklahoma. In case you can't afford a trip to one of these schools, you can see equally superior facilities at W.C.U.N.C. in Greensboro and at State College in Raleigh.

At Carolina though, we see an edifice built over 30 years ago, obviously meant to accommodate only a fraction of the present student population. A student union can and should be the center of campus activity, literally the home away from home.

Aside from the social outlet that a modern union can provide, office space is also provided for all student organizations.

Presently, an outmoded Graham Memorial Building on this campus is lacking in both of these fields. If the State Assembly will not help us, as it helped W.C. and State in their recent quests for new unions, we will be forced to build our own union through a process of self-liquidation.

We do not object to athletic scholarships as long as the athlete is capable of and indeed does meet his academic responsibilities. Big-time athletics can be a healthy stimulant to any campus.

Aside from the obvious financial gains from winning teams, there is created a unity among students, a sort of nationalism or better yet campism.

What we do object to is the sort of emphasis on athletics and de-emphasis on the books that has hurt so many fine schools in the past few years. This we must guard against.

There is no reason why this University can't have both the best football team and the best library in the country.

Point Eight. We are here concerned with isms. We refer to conservatism, liberalism and radicalism, the three favorite words

of student government leaders.

They tend to group cliques and political organizations under these convenient headings. We strenuously object to this narrow mindedness on their part.

It is somewhat unfortunate that the University which has long claimed to be the hot-bed of liberalism has fallen into the position of tagging its citizens with these titles, not exactly a liberal thing to do. Currently, both campus political parties are anything but liberal.

Student leaders brand anything and anybody who is for change, progress and anti-status quo as being radical.

They accept the title of conservatives themselves. The true liberal, the person who will speak out for the basic rights of individuals, who believes in an exchange of ideas and who is not afraid to put his political future at the University on the line is sadly lacking.

The bright young lad, the pusher and hustler, is soon swept into the tide of expediency or backslapping. It is hoped that from within the ranks of the new students here this week will arise leaders who will resist these pressures and temptations.

We must push for increased freedom of student action and the perpetuation of our autonomy. They were not easily won, but can be lost at a moment's notice.

Point Nine. Our final aspect of this introductory editorial deals with individuality or the lack thereof on the Carolina campus.

There is nothing wrong with Ivy League clothes. At the same time, there is nothing evil about growing beards. Beer is nice, but soft drinks are fine too. Fraternities are loads of fun, but there is just as much dignity in dormitories.

But, these are merely the peripheral aspects of individuality.

"What will make you stand apart from the crowd will be courage and creativity." Nobody will hand these to you, they are acquired through hard work. But just the desire to work at this will set you apart from most. The choice is yours.

Expediency points to conformity.

And so that's it. Just nine short points, a mere handful of issues. There are many more, even some that transcend these in importance. Rightly or wrongly, we have perhaps been a little pessimistic in this, the opening editorial of the 1959-60 journalistic season.

But, take comfort and be secure in the knowledge that these are not problems which are unique to the University of North Carolina. They are found on virtually every campus in America, particularly at state universities.

There is nothing inherently wrong with having these problems. Perhaps because of their presence, Carolina will someday be a better place, because being like a fighter, we will fight best when we are hungry.

The only wrong, is the wrong manifested by various inhabitants of Chapel Hill who don't make an effort to understand and to cope with these issues. These people represent the biggest problem of all.

So, if you are unafraid to face reality, if you are willing to contribute your best, if you have the courage to stand up for principle under fire, if you can muster up the energy to pursue the purpose and the direction of making Carolina a better place, and if you believe in the ultimate potential of this University, then WELCOME.

If not, you are the loser as well as the University.

Same Edits

The editorial page of today's issue of The Daily Tar Heel is a re-print from the Special Freshman Edition which appeared on Monday.

It is being re-printed because we feel that the information contained therein is pertinent to both old and new students.

The editor would like to take this opportunity to extend a welcome to all new students and to say hello again to returning veterans of the Chapel Hill scene.

As in past years, The Daily Tar Heel will continue to hit all of the issues, avoiding no items of importance. Letters to the editor are encouraged, but must be signed. We will leave your name off in publication when so requested.

Command Post

Peter B. Young

Wednesday, thanks to some skulduggery in the local YMCA, it was my privilege to address 150 freshmen at the annual 'Y' orientation camp.

The main room in which we met was rather sizeable. I estimate this room could hold perhaps as many as four thermonuclear bombs, with an explosive power equivalent to approximately 40,000-000 tons of TNT.

If we had filled that room with four thermonukes, everybody would have wandered by, and said: "OOOOH, AAAAAAH, WHAT POTENTIAL!"

But the room was not filled with thermonukes. It was filled with something vastly more impressive—150 bright American boys. My God, what potential these kids have got! To borrow from the Bible, they have the potential to move mountains, if they only will. They have potential to move the earth, change the destiny of man. Their potential, in contrast with that of the bombs, is absolutely unlimited.

No, that's not quite true. Their potential is not unlimited. Their potential is VERY limited, very limited by their daring (or lack thereof), very limited by their vision and intellectual strength (or lack thereof).

In four years, this University will, of course, chop them down to size. When they get to that final finish line, when they think like robots, then they are ready for the degree and what is loosely called "the world." The University (like all institutions) will largely vitiate the enormous potential, the exuberant vitality that I saw in such abundance Wednesday.

But is it possible, is it just barely possible, that one or perhaps more of these boys will survive their four years in this University? Will survive, that is, as thinking human beings, rather than mechanical robots? Is this possible?

If so, then which of these boys has Destiny tapped? Because, you may be sure, this lonely individual is just about the most important guy on this campus. He is the guy that this campus is here for. It is for him that Chancellor Aycock arrives at work every morning at 7 o'clock. It is for him that janitors and teachers and clerks and stenographers exert themselves. All the rest of us are just along for the ride. But there exists the haunting possibility that one of these new freshmen is different, is here to play for keeps.

And the other "Y" campers, the Plain Joes. What of them? Their potential, so impressive Wednesday, more impressive than thermonukes, will dissipate in daily dribbles of confusion compounded. But will there be a residue? When, as hardened cynical seniors they step forward to receive their diplomas, will there be anything of this once-magnificent potential left? The answer to this question is Yes, but the really crucial question is: HOW MUCH OF A RESIDUE?

It is the nature of man to grow older, to vitalize his potential, to grow weaker, and to die. It is the nature of institutions to assist materially in this process. Russian institutions work, in this respect, just like American institutions. You may be sure, that at this very moment a group of Russian freshmen are entering the University of Moscow, or the University of Leningrad. Their potential too is enormous. Their potential too will be dissipated, as they become "educated," wise in the devious ways of "the world." But in the U.S.S.R., as in the good old U.S.A., there will be a residue of that burning youthful enthusiasm.

Will the Russian residue be greater than ours? On such questions hang the delicate future of the world.

And is there something, anything, that this University can do to keep alive the precious enthusiasm of its freshmen? Dr. George V. Taylor heads an interesting program for "superior" freshmen. Is Dr. Taylor getting enough support? What does he need, and how can we help get it for him?

And what about those freshmen who are not "superior"? What about the boy who came up to me Wednesday and asked if he should start reading the New York Times? What can we do for this particular boy, who right now wants an education so badly he can taste it?

I final extend to have any answers (least of all in a new exam time). But these new freshmen certainly raise the most haunting kind of questions.

Good luck to them, and good luck to us.

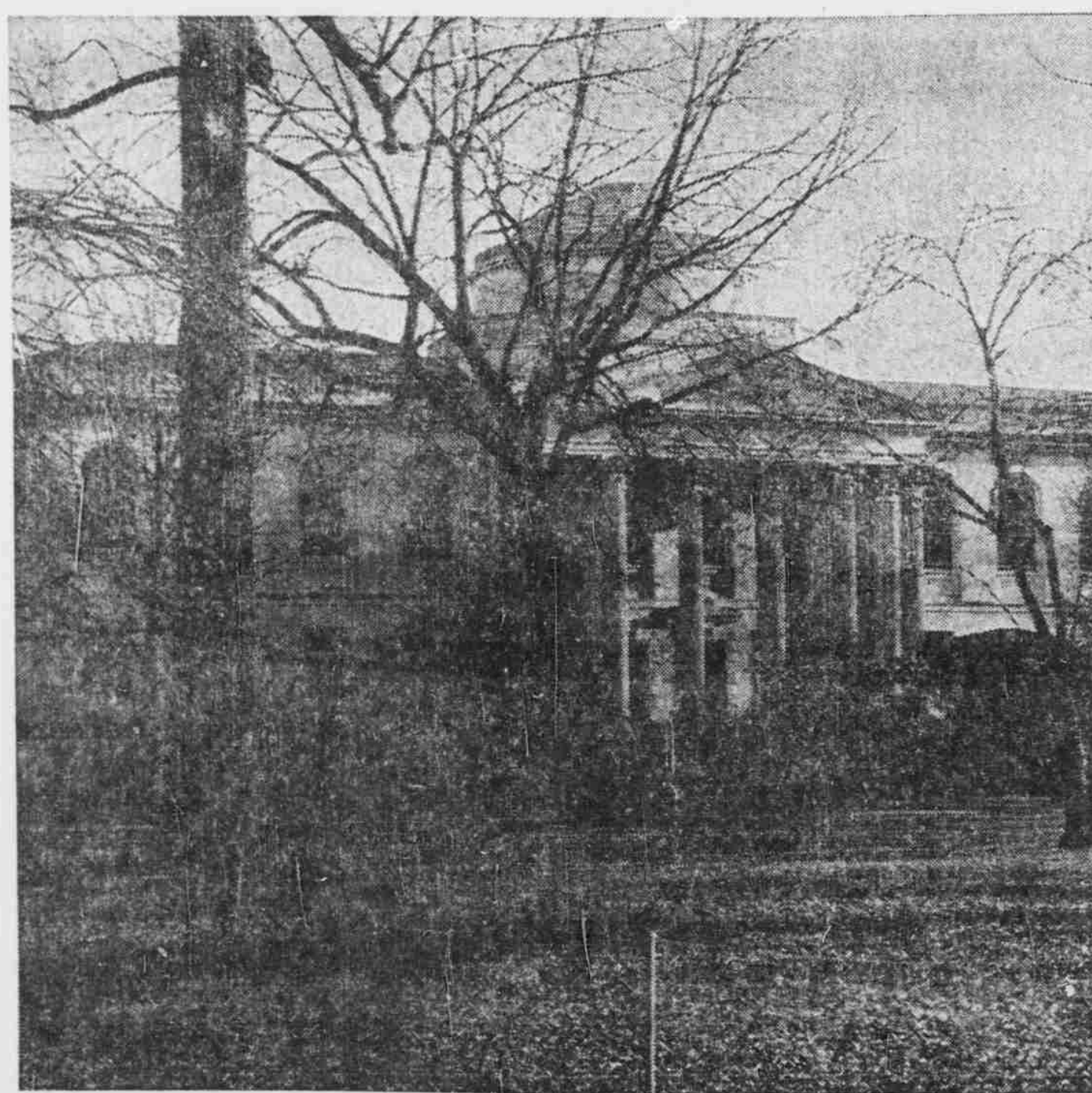
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