

Editorial

Irene Schauer

WHEN IS AN ELECTION NOT AN ELECTION?

When is an election not an election? When there are fewer candidates than there are posts to be filled, and a vote of one is a majority. In case someone is wondering, we are speaking of the recent elections which have chosen officers for the next school year.

Somehow, we at Gaston College are very lucky, while few seem to be called to run for office (but all are chosen since only one person runs for each post), all that are chosen serve the college well.

This is why our beef is not with those who have run for office. We thank those who have run and wish them well. We would simply have liked to have seen more participation than what was the case. We consider ourselves lucky because while a minority seem to care, they are responsible enough to take care of the majority who don't seem to care at all.

But, before we leave someone out of this criticism, we do feel that a slight possibility exists that more students would have participated if they had been aware of the elections.

Better publicity is definitely desirable. The GAS LIGHT would be willing to devote space to pre-election news, but somehow we are never told until we receive a letter criticizing us for not covering the elections. Unfortunately, by this time the election is over and all that is left is an editorial like this.

WE HAVE JUST ONE LITTLE QUESTION...

Exactly what do student officers do?

IF WE'RE GOING TO SAVE THE ELEVEN O'CLOCK HOUR FOR CULTURE...

If we're going to save the eleven o'clock hour for culture, why not have some culture? During this past year we have heard all kinds of reasons for saving this hour since it is the only time we have to "civilize" the students. We must assume that these faculty members who are such advocates of the eleven o'clock hour are already civilized since they never seem to come to the few events that we do have.

Since the faculty now counsel students, why doesn't this leave the counselors a little extra time in which to truly plan a series of regularly scheduled cultural events? No- we are not advocating the scheduling of different operas for the little time we have left this year. We aren't even necessarily saying that we should have a single opera for next year- but why not?

Now is the time to plan for next year. If we want to use the eleven o'clock hour for culture, then let's use it, if not then let's turn it over to regular classes.

THANK YOU RICHARD COUCH

During this past year Richard Couch has filled his office of President of the S.G.A. with enthusiasm, dignity, sensitivity, intelligence, and loyalty to the school. While there have been others before him who have done a reasonably adequate job, it will be a long time before anyone can think of anyone in the past, or conceive of anyone in the future, who could or will surpass the job that Richard has done.

As this school year draws to a close, we of the GAS LIGHT just want to thank Richard Couch in print for doing so much for Gaston College. Richard will graduate on May 28, with honors, and as far as we are concerned, the academic honors he receives are equaled only by the honors we feel he has earned by his actions during his stay at Gaston College. Gaston College is a better school for having had Richard Couch as a student and S.G.A. President.

We therefore thank Richard for being so vital a part of Gaston College and would like to tell whoever is chosen as his successor that they have a very tough act to follow.

IF NO ONE WANTS A MAY DAY

If no one wants a May Day, then how about finding some other way of spending the students' money? While printing exact figures would be of no benefit let's just say that for the number of students who participated in May Day, a rather large amount of money was expended. We are not implying that the money was used in any devious or improper way, we are simply observing that since the students have exhibited no marked enthusiasm for the event, that perhaps the money could be put to better use in the future.

Letter To The Editor

Dear Editor,

I realize that this has been stated many times before, but because of a recent experience I had, I feel that it must be said again.

Upon talking with someone who visited our school, I was asked if we had no janitors. This was stated in reference to our student center. The visitor thought that it had not been cleaned in about a week.

I am very proud of my school, but it is hard to give it good support when one is confronted with a statement like this. How can one be supportive by simply saying, "Oh! You just came at a bad time." When is a good time? In the mornings before any of the students have arrived. What does this say for the students?

It is amazing to me, that in a few hours a perfectly spotless place can be turned into a trash pile. These people who do this have the initiative to go get the things that come in the various containers (which end up on the floor). Of course I realize that after those long tiring cardgames, one does not have the energy to walk a few steps to a trash can to deposit the remains.

How many of these same students would throw trash around and stamp out cigarettes in the floor of their own home? Situations like this occur as a result of a few hours that some of our students spend at school. What can this say for the future of our communities?

Please let's practice ecology in our school as well as our communities.

Gail Alexander

LARRY SMITH HEADS

(Continued from page 1)

membership in the national veterans organization and attaining state recognition for the group.

He plans to use the Gaston College club to help run the state organization. His main goal for the local unit is to build membership and to destroy the apathy that now permeates the local group. Smith pointed out that of 400 veterans on the Gaston campus only seven or eight are active here in the club.

"The Veterans Club has in the past been one of the most energetic clubs on campus," Smith noted. "We have sponsored two blood drives, held two membership drives, sponsored two raffles, and we have just concluded the annual bass tournament at Lake Wylie. At present we are organizing a letter-writing campaign in support of McGovern's bill to increase benefits not only to veterans but to widowed wives of veterans and to their dependent children."

Smith urges all veterans who at present are not active member

of the Gaston veterans organization to attend the meetings. He will be happy to provide information to prospective members.

In addition to his duties on the state level, Smith is also president of the Gaston Ecology Club as well as president of the college unit of the Veterans Organization.

College Group Aids Production

When the Children's Center production of "The Wizard of Oz" was staged on May 19, a group of Gaston College personnel aided in the presentation. Mr. Stuart Dunsmore was in charge of sound effects. Albert James operated the lights, and Paul Holman assisted in technical operations. All three are active in Gaston dramatics productions.

Mike Starr and Dennis Perry of the Learning Resources Center audio-visual center aided in the taping of the production.

The Two Faces Of America

by
Khalid Hashim

When asked about my opinions of America and her people, I as a foreigner become very apprehensive, apprehensive because I have no desire to be chased around the campus with a baseball bat or to be stoned to death on the street. What I mean to say is that I don't want to antagonize my fellow American students against me. But what I feel as a foreigner is in no way different from what the Americans feel about what I have to say.

America, they say, is a tune. It must be sung together. Some say America is God's crucible. To me, as a student, America is a breeding place for talents; it holds great potential for developing one's talents. With the highly advanced scientific technology and the facilities available for a student, there is a great scope for him in every field. The progress in the scientific field has been so enormous and unbelievable that the word "impossible" in science has almost been rendered meaningless. The success of the Apollo mission has once again proved the undeniable truth that America, scientifically, is far ahead of the rest of the world. In every walk of life one sees the glimpses of their advancement and one cannot help but marvel at it. I feel that I am really privileged to get part of my education in America.

I have many times looked at the Americans with admiration. I am highly moved by their attitude toward foreigners. As far as I know, I have yet to see an American who is prejudiced against foreigners. In my views Americans are the friendliest people I have ever seen. Here I would like to narrate an instance of sincerity and concern that went into the very core of my heart. I know an elderly lady whose acquaintance I gained while out shopping. This lady used to call on me every day during my illness and inquire about my health. The frequency of her calls made me ask why she was so concerned about me. She replied in these words: "I know you are so far from your home and family and there is nobody here to look to at this moment. I thought you might be lonely and need someone to comfort you." What have I done to deserve this? Nothing. This is one of many instances.

Americans, as I find them, are amiable, sincere, dedicated, and hardworking people to whom fun is one of the most necessary



Khalid Hashim

ingredients of life, and I agree with them. Americans are extremely practical. Every idea is touched with the dress of practicality. I wish my own people were as practical. I like the way the young Americans take to their own so early in life. This, I guess, gives them more confidence and understanding. We have just the opposite in Pakistan. In our country we live with our parents as long as we are jobless. Usually when one reaches the age of twenty-one or so he gets out on his own.

The education system here is very systematic. The objective way of answering a question compared to the essay type of answer is much more useful and less burden on the student. Besides this, I am highly impressed by the fact that over here education is compulsory until the age of sixteen. In Pakistan education is not compulsory but there is a plan to make it so.

During my time here I have noted with great interest that there is no dignity of labor. An executive will do the job of a janitor without losing his pride and self-respect. I really appreciate this kind of attitude towards work. In Pakistan this kind of attitude is marred by the social taboos. In this respect we have much to learn from the Americans.

But there is still another side of America. The ugly side. One of faltering hopes and diminishing morality. A world of humans exploding their own kind for the lust of materialistic gain. A world suffering in silent desperation with a look of despair.

I was pained to note the alarming increase in drug addiction and the ages of the users. At the very tender age of thirteen, the youth today have been shown the path of insanity. They have already experienced the effect of marijuana, LSD, and other dangerous drugs. Three out of five students have smoked

Election Shows Student Interest?

On April 20 elections were held at Gaston College to fill the positions of all offices of the Student Government Association. Ten positions were to be filled. In order to encourage more students to vote, deadline for petitioning for office, which was originally set for April 12, was extended to April 18. The reason for the extension was that only three petitions had been filed.

Two days later elections were held, and once again students demonstrated their interest in helping to run their government and to exercise their voice in community affairs. OF OVER TWO THOUSAND VOTERS ELIGIBLE 31 TOOK THE TROUBLE TO CAST A VOTE.

An analysis of the small voting turnout provided an explanation of the student's desire to vote. Of the two thousand-plus who abstained, three had to work, one other did not know where to register, and the rest did not give a damn what happened to the school's student government.

marijuana and some admit taking other drugs too. On asking why they do this, they reply, "It relaxes us." Are the youth of today so much overworked that they have to go into a world of fantasy to find relaxation or is it just an excuse for their uncontrollable weakness? What surprised me most was news appearing some time ago in the Chicago "Tribune" in which it was stated that some top brass in the nuclear weapons division, whose authority is second to that of the President, as far as the launching of weapons is concerned, were found to be regular drug addicts. What does this mean? Whatever this may mean the cloud of pessimism is quite visible. I dread to think of the consequences.

There is one more thing that greatly upsets me; this is the growth of pornography. This, I strongly feel, is the creation of the most perverted minds, and these people have put a great blot on the American society and culture. Even time, the immortal enemy of mortality, will find this blot difficult to erase. With these kinds of people around, morality cannot and will not stand unaffected. "Today's morality is just the old immorality," says the disturbed older generation. Frankly speaking, anyone who goes around saying that morality is in no way affected is talking through his hat.

The root cause of all this evil in the American society is the excessive freedom. Even freedom has to be restricted in order to enjoy it. The new generation chants for complete freedom, but little do they realize what this freedom can lead to.

One more thing I have very painfully noted is something concerning food. The Americans are very generous to their garbage cans. The amount of food thrown away so thoughtlessly and with such indifference enough to feed half of the globe. What a shame that half of humanity has to suffer like this. It's high time that somebody started some kind of campaign to stop wasting food like that. If we don't help our own kind, who is going to?

I have, in these few paragraphs, said a lot of good and bad things about America. I didn't write these things out of malice or prejudice. I don't feel any satisfaction in finding faults with others. I didn't have any intention of affording anybody. I didn't criticize as a Pakistani or as a different nationality. I believe our true nationality is mankind.