

Elder Talks To 50th-Year Freshman Class

By Alfonso Elder

Usually when two people meet for the first time and find out that they are graduates of the same college, almost invariably the question is asked: "When were you there?" The reply generally includes a statement such as: I was there when so and so (some well known, person) was there or I was there when such and such a thing happened. Thus, a point of reference is established for further conversation.

Our freshmen of 1960 occupy

an enviable position in that they can always say: "I was a freshman when the College celebrated its 50th anniversary."

This year will be one of the greatest years in our history. Many persons of distinction will come to our campus to participate in our 50th birthday celebration on November 9-12. We will be honored by their presence. We are honored now by the presence of our freshmen and other students because the ultimate glory and prestige of the College will depend upon the quality of their achievement. So, this year, our 50th year, assumes great importance as a point of reference.

The use of points of reference is quite common and there are many different kinds of points of reference. For example, in traveling, if we wish to know how far we are from our destination, we first refer to where we are at the time of the inquiry. When we are young, we use our parents as points of reference in that we often make decisions regarding our actions on the basis of our knowledge of what we know they will think about our behavior.

There are certain widely accepted points of reference among cultured people. For example, there are certain accepted attitudes toward courtesy, cleanliness, the need for

law and order, and the importance of education. There are certain points of reference which are basic to American democracy; for example, our concept of justice, respect for the dignity of human beings, and our belief in the wisdom of equality of opportunity.

During the last school year, as you know, many college students throughout the country engaged in what has become known as "sit-in demonstrations." In doing this they added a new dimension to the concept of human rights. Their claim was that the Negro should be included when we arrange for the comfort and convenience of human beings.

The justice of their cause was widely accepted as evidenced by the many localities in which the students won the rights on which they insisted. They did not win this respect wholly because there are people who believe that the principle of respect is just and right, although there are many such people. Neither did they win entirely because business concerns were losing money by the economic boycott; yet, the economic factor was an important one. Much of their success - and I am sure of this because of my association with our local Committee on Human Relations - was due to the fact that the young people

who participated in the movement demonstrated that they deserved the respect which they sought. They were intelligent about what they did; they were peaceful and orderly; they looked and spoke well. In short, they commanded by their own behavior the respect which they sought. Somehow, these young people themselves understood that a powerful factor in gaining the respect to which one is entitled is to demonstrate that one is worthy of that respect. The argument that legislation is extremely important in securing human rights does not destroy the validity and importance of readiness to engage in the human right that is sought with competence and understanding.

The students deserve great praise for their achievement in this area of social action. What is next, shall we ask? A proposal seems to be in order and I should like to make one. It seems to me that we are now ready for a concerted demonstration in order to attain a new kind of respect. I have reference to a quality of respect which we at North Carolina College have a large share of the responsibility for attaining. This respect to which I refer is the respect for a person as a scholar.

It should be said here because it is true that the Negro is admired and respected for many

admirable qualities but unfortunately scholarship is not one of these qualities. There are notable exceptions, of course, but it can be said without fear of contradiction that there has not been a mass movement on the part of Negro students as a group to demonstrate that they deserve high praise for their intellectual effort and attainment.

Let it be understood that respect as a scholar is not something that can be gained by parades or public speeches. It is not something that can be legislated and then be said from then on that it is so. This respect is of the kind that must be won by students and by them alone. So my young friends, my suggestion to those who are imbued with the idea of adding new dimensions to the concept of respect for human beings, is that no more fruitful demonstration can be engaged in and no more promising activity can be undertaken as a mass movement than that of establishing by intellectual effort and achievement our worthiness of respect as scholars.

Freshmen and new students, would it not be wonderful to be able to say throughout your adult life: "I was there when it happened and I helped to make it happen"?

You have my best wishes for your success and happiness.

Roving Reporter

By Harrison Willoughby

Question asked of Freshmen: What do you think of North Carolina College?

Jean Harrington, high school honor student and Math major from Carthage says: "For the most part I think NCC is a well rounded school. I think the school is capable of giving all of its students the necessary academic, social and spiritual guidance which goes into the making of a successful student. During my stay here I intend to avail myself of all of these wealthy resources."

Thomas Boyd, honor student from Trenton who plans to major in Physics, is most impressed by the competent staff here at NCC. "I feel that the staff is truly dedicated to the proposition of cultivating the minds of its students. My intention is to take advantage of every opportunity given me here at NCC in order that I not only better myself as a student but for the betterment of the school."

Marion Hilliard, Weldon resident and General Science major, finds NCC to be one of the finest institutions of learning in the South. The young honor student enjoys the generally pleasant atmosphere of the school. She would advise any high school graduate to enroll at NCC be-

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