

A guest editorial

Concerning Resolutions

By Joe H. McCorkle

Recent actions of the Student Legislature have raised questions about several serious problems confronting student government on this campus.

The first question is whether or not the S.G.A. President should be allowed to veto resolutions approved by the Student Legislature.

Considering the way in which the S.G.A. Constitution is written, it may have been the intention of its framers to limit a presidential veto only to bills.

According to the Constitution, the President has the power "to veto acts of the Student Legislature, provided that he shall exercise such power within ten school days after the bill is placed in the executive offices". Notice the word "bill".

Another serious problem arises now because no body of the S.G.A. has the jurisdiction to interpret our Constitution.

We feel the Student Court should be given the power to interpret the Constitution.

The Student Legislature should not have this power because it would be dangerous to allow the Legislature to interpret the very laws that it makes. Nor should it be the Executive Branch, for its job is to execute the laws.

A constitutional amendment which would give the Student Court the power of interpretation should be drawn up as soon as possible. We cannot wait for a new constitution!

We feel the Student Legislature was correct in over-riding President Stewart's veto. No S.G.A. President should be allowed to veto a resolution because a resolution is a statement of opinion, not a law-making action.

Mr. Stewart and other students on this campus feel that the Legislature does not have the right to express political opinions concerning the Viet Nam War or the Moratorium.

These students contend that the legislators should find out the opinions of the majority of the student body before taking a stand on such issues. We feel that these students have a gross misunderstanding of representative government.

Student Legislature members were elected to make decisions. It would be unreasonable to expect each legislator to "poll" the student body before making a decision.

Personal legislation

A final problem is the 2.00 grade point average which is required for various offices.

At a Legislature meeting on September 19, the 2.00 requirement for editorship of the Rogues 'n Rascals was waived so that two people could fill this position. Also, at this meeting, a motion was made which would have allowed two quality-point-deficient legislators to remain in the Legislature.

This particular motion had been tabled and, at the following meeting, the Legislature decided that it was not in its best interest to approve it.

This past Friday, the Legislature went on another requirement waiving spree.

The 2.00 requirement for Attorney General and Assistant Attorney General was waived so that three certain individuals could fill these positions.

An appropriate term for such action is "PERSONAL LEGISLATION". These motions were made with deference to certain individuals rather than to the specific rules which require the 2.00.

Less than a year and a half ago, Ben Chavis had to resign as Chairman of the University Union because he had lost his 2.00.

Why wasn't a motion made to waive the 2.00 requirement for Mr. Chavis?

Why weren't motions made to waive 2.00 requirements for other individuals who desired a certain office but did not have a 2.00?

We are not questioning the ability of these individuals who do not have a 2.00.

We feel that if the Legislature regards these people as competent in lieu of the 2.00 requirement, then maybe the 2.00 requirement is irrelevant to a satisfactory fulfillment of the job.

It is the manner in which the Legislature has treated the problem that concerns us.

A motion is now on the Legislative table to amend the Attorney General Act so that the 2.00 requirement is permanently deleted. This is a step in the right direction because attention should be given to the rules, not to certain individuals.

And now Thailand

By Howard Pearre

"Today it is Vietnam, tomorrow it will be Thailand." Today's debate rages around the historical facts of our involvement with Saigon. Who invited us there? When were we invited to take up arms against the Viet Cong? Why were we invited?

"Tomorrow's debate will rage around our commitment to -- and in -- Thailand. Who involved us with Bangkok, and why?"

With these questions, Louis E. Lomax begins the final chapter of THAILAND: THE WAR THAT IS, THE WAR THAT WILL BE.

The title clarifies Lomax's feelings if the status quo in that country is not quickly rectified.

This journalistic account, published in 1967, seems to have been somewhat influential in changes that have been made in Thailand.

Lomax points out areas of communist activity, the causes for this activity; and how the United States, especially through its military, is aggravating this activity.

One particular geographic area Lomax points to as a trouble spot is Thailand's northeast section. The section, divided from Laos by the Mekong River, includes several U.S. Air Force bases actively engaged in supporting the war in Vietnam.

U.S. bombers and fighters fly out of bases near Ubon, Udorn, and Nakorn Panom almost every day; cross neutralist Laos; and drop their fiery guts on enemy targets in Vietnam.

Lomax traveled to the border city Nakorn Panom and talked with the Northeasterners about their complaints against the Bangkok government and the United States. Dinner was interrupted several times by resounding explosions nearby. The Thai dining with Lomax explained.

"American bombers were returning to their bases in Thailand after a day of raids over North Vietnam," Lomax says. "Oft-times, the Americans were unable to drop all of their bombs, and rather than run the risk of landing with dangerous explosives still aboards, they were jettisoning them into the jungle belly of Laos."

But, says Lomax, what the Thais resent most about American presence is the Western influence. It

seems to many that the Thai culture, which has never been conquered from without, is now being smothered by American affluence. The American dollar seems to be doing what even the Japanese were not able to do: kill a culture.

He cites the number of dollar-wielding American G.I.s, the gaudy "strips" of bars and massage parlors, and Western business interests centered in Bangkok. The Bangkok government welcomes these innovations and grows fat and rich from them. In turn, the Bangkok government takes care of itself and seems to forget about other sections of the country, particularly the Northeast.

This is where the communists are, Lomax claims. And this is where the trouble will start.

During extensive research, Lomax probed the country-side for opinions, theories, prejudices, irritations, and reasons.

One interview proved more interesting than the others. Through some clandestine maneuvering, Lomax arranged to meet with a Communist insurgent.

Her points, Lomax says, have been verified by events: "There will be a constant campaign of insurgency activity. The Communists will hack away at the back villages, they will deeply infiltrate the dissident Thais, the North Vietnamese, the Lao, and the Chinese in the south..."

She told Lomax how it would happen.

"If an American general were in charge of the Communist insurgents in Thailand, he would have us immediately start a major conflict here; his reasoning would be that this would give America a war on two fronts.

"This is not the way the Oriental mind functions. It would be much more to our way of thinking to plunge you into a war in Thailand on the day you sign an armistice in Vietnam."

The essay was written some time ago and many improvements have since been made. But many more need to occur if another Vietnam is to be avoided. The presence of nearly 48,000 U.S. troops now there would involve the United States in another very costly war.

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