

Journal Interviews Blevins

JOE H. McCORKLE

The following is an interview with Dave Blevins who, on October 15, suspended his Social Work 270 class to observe the Viet Nam War Moratorium.

As a result of his action, he is currently before the University Board of Hearings at Chapel Hill.

The Hearings Committee, on Wednesday October 12, heard his case but no decision was reached.

Mr. Blevins received his Bachelors degree from Wheaton College, Illinois and his Master of Social Work from Columbia University, New York City.

The social work course, which he teaches at U.N.C.-C., is an extension course of the School of Social Work at Chapel Hill.

Mr. Blevins is also employed by the Charlotte Area Fund as a training specialist.

Questions were asked by Journal staffer Joe H. McCorkle.

QUESTION: What factors influenced your decision to cancel your class on Moratorium Day?

I feel that our government should take immediate steps to withdraw from Viet Nam. A definite decision to withdraw should be made and implemented immediately.

The National Moratorium Organization listed a number of strategies for the October Moratorium, and among those were a request to boycott classes and for professors and instructors to cancel their classes.

I chose to cancel my class to add my action to that of others to observe the Moratorium.

I did it as a conscious act. It was a positive and definite thing I could do which would have some kind of impact along with the actions of other professors.

Basically, individual acts are ineffective unless they are coordinated and supported by similar actions of others.

QUESTION: Why do you feel the U.S. should withdraw from Viet Nam?

I am not an absolute pacifist. I believe our presence is wrong because we are not helping peace, we are creating conflict and war.

Additionally, we are certainly not defending the U.S. or the people of the U.S.

We are killing South Vietnamese and destroying South Vietnamese territory with the rationalization that we are saving it. It is my belief that we are doing just the opposite.

Although I do not have statistics, I believe the U.S. has caused as much destruction as the North Vietnamese and the Viet Cong together.

Also, the government we are supporting happens to consist primarily of expatriots from North Viet Nam, rather than from South Viet Nam.

QUESTION: How do you feel about the reaction of "the great silent majority" to the Moratorium supporters as "unpatriotic, unwashed hippies who seek to rule from the streets"?

The people who are protesting the U.S. involvement are very concerned about America and that America be right.

Our concern is that our country do whatever it can to bring peace.

Innocent victims of war, imperialists, and political

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domination should be freed from these evils.

I do not believe in the "great silent majority" as Nixon thinks of them.

I think the "great SILENT majority" does not give a damn.

There are legitimate supporters of Nixon's policy but I believe they are a minority.

It is a fallacy to assume the "great silent majority" really cares about our involvement because of the artificial phrase "great silent majority".

Any notion of a "great silent majority" is an unproven assumption.

QUESTION: How did your class at U.N.C.-C. feel about the October 15 Moratorium?

About one-half supported the ideas and strategies of the Moratorium. One-half did not support the actions.

QUESTION: Do you know who reported your action to the Chancellor at Chapel Hill?

Yes. C. Wilson Anderson, Dean of the School of Social Work was bound by administrative procedure to do what he did.

QUESTION: What do you think motivated the Board of Trustees to enact the disruption policy?

I believe the policy on disruption was developed to intimidate students, faculty, and employees of the University, rather than for positive effects.

There are real fallacies in the way it was applied to me. They assume that normal operations and functions were disruptive because class was not held.

QUESTION: Why do you consider your action non-disruptive?

The learning process is one in which the student must take prime responsibility.

The professor or instructor is responsible for facilitating the learning process.

Lecture is only one means by which the professor can achieve this, and probably the least effective method.

The professor has the responsibility to provide the tools by which students can work and learn, the responsibility for pointing-out content that needs to be explored, and for raising meaningful questions which will enable the students to learn.

QUESTION: Do you feel the University disruption policy has any serious defects?

Yes. First of all, the Hearings Committee is appointed by the Chancellor, not elected by my colleagues, the faculty.

The policy itself is very rigid.

The persons charged with evaluating my conduct do not have the power to implement the results of their finding. The President of the Consolidated University pronounces the

sentence.

QUESTION: According to the Policy Statement on Disruptive Conduct, the Chancellor may seek assistance from the campus Board of Inquiry in determining whether or not a person should be charged with violating University policy.

Did the Chancellor at Chapel Hill use the Board of Inquiry?

No.

QUESTION: According to the Policy Statement, at least one student is to be a member of the University Hearings Committee.

Were there any students on the Hearings Committee at Chapel Hill?

No.

QUESTION: What is the main line of defense for you and Adam Stein, your attorney?

We feel charges should be dropped because the policy is not valid. This is not a question that the University Board of Hearings can deal with, however.

I did not "intend to disrupt" nor did I fail to meet my "validly assigned duties".

I made adequate preparations for my students.

QUESTION: Do you feel the disruption policy is an infringement upon your academic freedom?

The main question here is, does a professor have a right to express himself without fear of punishment on issues he feels are vital. I believe it does infringe upon my academic freedom.

QUESTION: Do you feel the disruption policy violates the First Amendment?

Basically, my freedom of speech has been abridged by the Trustee's action.

Freedom of speech not only includes the right to say something but the right to say it effectively.

QUESTION: Since yours is the first case under the University disruption policy, do you feel an attempt will be made to make an example out of you?

Since I believe the policy is intended to intimidate people, if I am found guilty, it would be a discouragement for other professors to do the same.

The trustees are controlling dissent via policy left to the administration. There is no flexibility in dealing with dissent.

QUESTION: Do you plan to appeal to civil courts, if necessary?

That is one alternative route but we have made no further decision. We expect to win the hearing.

QUESTION: We understand that you have received considerable support from students and faculty members. Any comment?

I sincerely appreciate the support that students and faculty have given me.

I received a telegram from the Black student body of U.N.C.-C. which stated, "The Black students of U.N.C.-C. support your civil, democratic, and political right to protest".

The Progressive Political Union of U.N.C.-C. sent a letter, in my behalf, to President Friday.

Also, all of the students in my class have given me support.

QUESTION: Any closing remarks?

The action taken against me does not stop the need for myself and others, that we want peace, now.

I shall continue to contribute what I have to offer, along with many others, in our attempt to bring about peace.

The intimidation by the Trustees did not work.

Play to be presented

A THEATRE GAME- written in collaboration with the actors and director of the Open Stage Theatre company who first performed it at the Cafe La Mama in 1966.

The play is composed of brief scenes which are recreated improvisationally by the actors. There is no identification of actor with character as one finds in a conventional play. Instead, the significance of each piece of action and dialogue is interpreted and re-interpreted as one actor replaces another actor in same role. Since there is no pre-determined scheme or plan for the exchange of actors, the play is created anew during every rehearsal and performance and its success depends

A THEATRE GAME has been described as "a trampoline for actors and director."

Stage Manager: Laura Jacobs
Make-up: James Culpepper,
Diane McKnight, Kippy Walsh
Lighting: Monty Kellar
Sound: Dean Duncan
Acting company for COMINGS and GOINGS: Richard Abernethy, KoKo Knight, Martha MacGregor, Mykle Mariette, Carol Phillips, Lloyd Rose, Jack Shaver, Lloyd Rose, Jack Shaver.
Technical Director: Allon Thompson
Assistant to the Director: Nancy Young
Lighting: Stuart Taylor
Setting: Lloyd Miller

The play will be presented November 20, 21, 22, 1969 at 8:15 P.M. in C-200.

The theatre Workshop Class will also present VIET ROCK.

Seminary weekend planned

A conference on the ministry is being planned by the Lancaster Theological Seminary in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. The conference is for college students who may be considering the ministry as a vocation. The theme for the weekend is "The Uniqueness of the Ministry" or "Why be a minister instead of a social worker who teaches Sunday School?"

The two day conference will begin with dinner at 6:00 P. M. on Friday, December 5, and adjourn on Saturday, December 6 at 3:00 P. M.

The only cost of the conference will be transportation. Room and board will be provided by the seminary. Interested students should contact Dr. Witherspoon or John Wells, Jr. Reservations for the conference must be made by December 1.

Many such invitations for students come to Dr. Witherspoon. Students who are curious about or interested in some phase of fulltime religious vocation are urged to register their names with Mrs. Jacques in B-226.

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