

The Candle: Publicity For The Rally

By TIMOTHY RAY
Last in a Series

In Part VI of this series, I described the incident of the insult given to Wilmot Hage, of Monrovia, Liberia, and Gardner's reactions to the incident. Today I plan to present the actions of some members of the press to Gardner and the Free Speech Movement, or Forum, and to explain how those actions have misled and confused many members of the University community.

First, I want to point out that Jim Clotfelter's article in the *Durham Morning Herald* for Feb. 18, is an excellent article and an exception to what follows.

Demonstrations

After the incident occurred, Hage expressed his objections to the treatment given him in a letter addressed to whom it might concern. Now Gardner has been accused, by the *Greensboro Daily News* of Feb. 20 (after they received the University News Bureau's press release) of trying "to blow the matter up as a cause celebre," and by the *DTH* of thinking that the news media of this area, including the *DTH* are "his personal news bureaus" Feb. 13).

What Gardner actually did in the way of publicity amounts to this: he gave a copy of Hage's letter to Fred Seely in the *DTH* office (which he entered only once), and one to the *Chapel Hill Weekly*. In reality, there was no great publicity by Gardner.

Publicity did occur, however, when front page article appeared Feb. 13 that had in large letters above it, "Demonstrations threatened," and began, "Demonstrations like the ones at the University of California at Berkeley have been threatened in Chapel Hill by a UNC graduate student and local rights

groups."

This is simply untrue. Perhaps the author, Ernie McCrary, did not realize that there is a difference between trying to organize public demonstrations, which Gardner did not do, and trying to organize a public rally which Gardner did do.

Or the explanation of McCrary's mistake might lie in his misunderstanding of Gardner in his interview. One of the questions McCrary asked Gardner was what he would do if University officials refused to allow him to hold the public rally which had been planned.

Gardner replied that he did not think there was any reason to worry about that, since rallies had been permitted to be held before by campus organizations. But McCrary still wanted to know what Gardner would do if the rally were not permitted.

Gardner's reply to this question was apparently what McCrary misunderstood, because what Gardner said he said was, "In that case, we would do what was done at Berkeley — we would hold the rally somewhere else." In actual fact, Berkeley students did hold off-campus rallies; so this was a sensible answer.

Gardner had no intention of sponsoring open rebellions, riots or demonstrations. Nor has he ever said that he had any such intention.

I suppose that the word, "Berkeley" connoted that idea for McCrary, making him believe that Gardner planned to follow all of the Berkeley tactics. The only part of them that he had remotely considered following was holding the rally elsewhere.

Rallies of UNC students have been held off-campus before with no ill effect, such as on the Post Office lawn. There is no reason to think that it could not have been done again.

The "Town and Gown" column in the *Chapel Hill Weekly* for Feb. 21 was written, as usual, by Pete Ivey. In this article he asked several very rhetorical questions and then proceeded to offer a contrast between Hage's reaction to being insulted with those of Marines who were in training on the campus.

Students had told these Marines, "You don't look so tough to me."

Now there is really no just comparison between the two cases. Negroes today are seeking to convince the rest of mankind that they should be treated like everyone else, whereas no one doubts that Marines are tough, as they've been widely respected as superior fighting men for decades.

One of the rhetorical questions in "Town and Gown" was "Why was the Liberian student in the Fraternity Court area at the time the UN Model Assembly was in session on another part of the campus." One wonders if Gardner is really supposed to answer that.

Hage had asked Gardner for a ride, and they were walking to Gardner's car. That's simple enough.

It's also the answer to "Why was he escorting the Liberian around at that time of day away from the UN Mock Assembly?" Gardner wasn't interested in keeping tabs on Hage's movements around the campus, or whether he attended every Model UN session.

There's no reason to expect him to account for Hage's activities unless one is trying artificially to build some kind of theory that the incident might have been "a put-up job," as "Town and Gown" speculates. Hage's movements could have telephoned him in South Carolina. Mr. Gardner made that suggestion to a number of in-

quiries.

"Grudge Against Society"

The *DTH* ran an editorial on Tuesday, Feb. 16, which, in my opinion, is actually libelous: "James Gardner: Man With A Grudge Against Society," in which Gardner is again falsely accused of planning demonstrations and a "wild nebulous mass of social protests," in an "unmitigated defiance of reason," which would subject the University to "undeserved public vilification." He is said to be totally careless of the well-being of the University and seeking to promote chaos in order to create a heroic Savio image of himself, and to assuage some kind of inferiority complex or psychopathy.

It is surely unethical and disreputable to publish such unmitigated censure and condemnation without ascertaining the truth of it. This editorial could damage a man's reputation for life, especially if widely circulated. As a matter of fact, the University News Bureau relayed the content of this editorial to newspapers and radio and television stations across North Carolina.

Gardner wrote a long and very polite letter to Pete Ivey, who is also the director of the News Bureau, stating that he had been shown a copy of the official release, which consisted almost entirely of the editorial published in the *DTH*.

Gardner continues, "I would defend with all the energy at my command the right of the editorial board of the *Daily Tar Heel* to express its collective or single opinion on the news of this last or any other week . . . I wish, however, to question your sense of fair play in circulating this editorial under the official aegis of the University News Bureau as a news release without offering the main subject of the news release — James Gardner — an opportunity to state his interpretation of the events which were only peripherally referred to in what the subscribers to the News Bureau's services are bound to regard as the University's 'official' statement on the matter.

Instead of a "routine procedure," Young considered the sending of the editorial by the News Bureau to be the "unheard of step of sending a copy of that particular *DTH* editorial to every newspaper, TV and radio station in the State."

But supposing that it was a routine procedure, sending out such an unroutine editorial without verifying its truth, or giving the subject a chance to comment is to put routine proce-

dures above human compassion or the respect for truth that one has a right to expect in a University.

Other papers, including the *Greensboro Daily News* and the *News of Orange County*, published bits and pieces of the *DTH* point of view, with more restraint, under the mistaken impression that this point of view represented the truth.

In the final analysis, the *DTH* interpretation, when spread throughout the State, did more to bring "undeserved public vishame fact applies to you. Indeed I know it does, for I have had occasion to be acquainted with the devoted energy and skill you have brought to your work for the University.

In his brief reply, Ivey said that the sending of the *DTH* editorial was a "routine procedure" and that "there was no good reason to provide you with advance notice of that action."

An opinion opposed to that of Ivey was expressed by a man on the receiving end of the release, Peter B. Young of WRAL, a very conservative broadcasting station in Raleigh: "The *DTH* lit the fuse for that little explosion at the first rally," and in doing so, "betrayed a great tradition of which I am a small

In commenting on his own motives and behavior, Gardner told Ivey, "I feel now and have felt since my first residence here in 1951 a sense of respect for and responsibility to this University. I have never acted in a private or public way without devoting the most careful and thoughtful attention to the question of how my behavior might reflect on the quality and character of this institution.

"I readily assume that the vilification" upon the University that Gardner could possibly do even if he had tried.

In concluding this series, I wish to explain that the occasional vagueness has been motivated by a desire to avoid, where possible, mentioning the names of individuals or groups who might suffer thereby. While there have been a few complaints, many people have said that the articles have shown fairness and restraint.

I only hope that I have clarified some of the confusion in popular opinion. Finally, I am grateful to live in a country and to attend a University where such slightly unusual opinions as mine can be freely expressed.

An earlier article, containing a misprint, said that the YMCA "is not", where it should have said "is now" sponsoring the open forum.

Speaker Ban A Catch-All, Combats Almost Anything

Editors, The Tar Heel:

I would like to take this opportunity to register my feeling about the so-called Speaker Ban. I think it is one of the most effective ways yet devised to protect our young people from the evils of Communism.

However, Gommunism is not our only enemy. As we all know, the moral fiber of America is weakening. We also now know that we suffer from extensive poverty and, paradoxically, from a wealth of abundance. Cancer (largely lung cancer, from that instrument of the devil, the cigarette), heart disease and other dread diseases take their toll of deaths daily.

I would suggest that the Speaker Ban has provided us with the long-needed weapon with which to combat not only

Communism but these other enemies as well. I urge your readers to write their representatives in the State legislature concerning the need for new or over \$15,000 who has ever even broken a law, who has ever had an income under \$3000 or over \$15,000, who has ever been sick, who has ever smoked, or who has ever refused to make public statements concerning any of these matters, from campuses.

Some critics, of course, will maintain that such laws make as much sense as trying to catch water in a sieve. But in the words of that immortal patriot, Roger Price, "these people should be silenced without hesitation."

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