

College Days 1962-1963

Civil Rights at Ripon College

Friday, September 28, 1962

[1]

Rev. Thompson Given Tentative Nod On Student Exchange Program Plans

Reverend Jerry Thompson has received tentative approval for a program of student exchange with Fisk University in Nashville, Tenn. The University, founded in 1865, was established for the betterment of the new Negro citizens. Under the program, Ripon is to send one student to Fisk in exchange for a student from Fisk. Rev. Thompson received a letter on the 21st of Sept. confirming the idea and possibly the program will be ready for the second semester of the academic year.

The exchange with Fisk includes such schools as Pomona, Whittier, College of Wooster, Denison, Redlands, Beloit, Colby, Cornell (Iowa) and Oberlin. Each exchange student pays the regular tuition, fees, charges for room, board and other activities at his home college; therefore, the expense involved is not significantly altered for either the Fisk student or the exchange student. The Fisk Student Council provides some financial assistance for the transportation of Fisk exchanges who show need for it, particularly those assigned to more distant colleges.

The exchangee must qualify under the following conditions: 1. He must be of Junior standing or a third year Early Entrant. 2. He must be a full time student in the University, pursuing the normal program of studies. 3. The applicant must be in good standing at the University and free of any disciplinary action. 4. He must be in good financial standing with the University. 5. He must hold an academic record of "B" or better. 6. Desirable personal qualities conducive to his success at the exchange college are necessary to the applicant; and he must show evidence that he will profit by the exchange program. 7. He must file application several months in advance with the Chairman of the Exchange Committee. 8. Finally, the applicant must obtain approval of his plan from the Dean of the College and his Department head.

It will be remembered that Jim Zwerg, the freedom rider from Beloit College, was a participant in the Fisk exchange program.

Friday, October 12, 1962

[6]

Guest Editorial

Student Returns From 'Ole Miss; Feels Integration Move Unwise

By Dag Sohlberg

(Ed. Note: Reprinted from "The Daily Cardinal," Oct. 9, 1962

James H. Meredith realizes that his chances of finishing two years of studies at Ole Miss are dim. Very dim. Yet 15,000 Regular Army troops and federalized Mississippi National Guardsmen plus over 200 U.S. marshals who also recognize this fact have been employed thus far to force him onto an unwilling University of Mississippi.

To date, this Carrie Nation type of crusade has resulted in two deaths among the civilian population of Mississippi, 166 injured U.S. marshals, an undisclosed number of injuries among soldiers and students, vast amounts of money spent by the federal government, and a knee in the groin of American prestige.

This senseless waste must be considered just that because the University of Mississippi is just not ready for integration and certainly not under the prevailing circumstances. The students of Ole Miss display more tolerance, however, than they are generally credited for, but even this cannot overshadow the fact that Mississippi is probably the most hard core Jim Crow state in the nation, and any tolerance displayed by the students will be lost in the storm of anti-integrationist fervor evoked by the other citizens of the state.

Thus, even if all the students at Ole Miss accepted Meredith's enrollment, which of course isn't the case, the rest of Mississippi and the South would see to it that Meredith deserves all the protection that he has been getting.

All the students that were interviewed last week in the aftermath of the rioting emphasized the fact that generally they had nothing personal against Meredith, and that the rioting itself was a major mistake precipitated by both nervous marshals and an edgy mob.

The Ole Miss students are ashamed of what has happened at and to their campus, but they readily admit that the same thing would happen again. Segregation is in their blood, and they are not about to accept integration at the point of a bayonet. This is what the financial and moral backers of Meredith and the government must realize.

Integration is inevitable and called for in Mississippi, granted, but it must be initiated at another level, which the burned cars, broken glass, bloodstains, and battle ready troops attest to. Integrate the elementary schools of some counties as a first step, but not stately Ole Miss, pride of Mississippi and the ante-bellum minded South. This is one case where end results do not justify the means.

Friday, October 19, 1962

[4,6]

Dick Grimsrud

The Student Body Lacks

Perhaps the greatest weakness in the campus life of Ripon College is almost the complete lack of student interest in anything outside of the realms of social, academic, and athletic activities. Any cultural or intellectual curiosity outside daily academic work is sadly wanting. In short the student body of Ripon College has drifted into some kind of a dream world.

In a world with such technological advancements as ours, such a condition is not healthy. There must be an awareness and an interest in the changing conditions of the world. There is no such place where one can go to escape the consequences of these events. Therefore it is only for one's own good that he have some knowledge of the world situation.

* * *

Not only is there a lack of interest in current events on a national or international scale, but such student organizations as Student Senate and the Academic Affairs Committee are woefully lacking in affluence because of poor student support.

And a further point of student apathy is displayed in the convocational fine arts schedules. True, due to the efforts of a few interested individuals, we have had a creditable calendar of events in the past. But how much better a program could Ripon have if more showed an interest? How often has an economics or philosophy major started a drive on campus to bring a noted economist or philosopher here to speak? How often has someone disturbed over the racial problem in the South made an attempt to secure an ardent Southern segregationist for a speaking engagement on this campus?

* * *

And furthermore, when speakers of considerable prestige do appear, the attendance at such a function is often far below what it should be. The lack of interest over certain cultural phases of college life is almost appalling. A certain well-respected professor at this College once said, "Just as important as the curriculum learning and the knowledge of people gained through close personal contact are the outside cultural experiences which are necessary for the whole college life. The extra books one reads, the lectures and movies one attends can be a great factor in the formation of a complete self."

One last point concerned directly with the curriculum. The most important discussion is that

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Grimsrud...

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done outside of the class and the most important reading is done "over and above" the assigned work. The attitude of looking down on one who seeks to discuss something other than "sports, sec, and parties" is far too common at Ripon.

* * *

Ripon definitely needs active interest and participation in those aspects of the college life which are aside from that deemed absolutely necessary. We need more people interested in making the extracurricular organizations the finest functioning organizations possible. We need more concern and action over the procuring of a stimulating, well rounded convocation and fine arts schedule. We need more students who seek to know more than just the bare minimum in their academic endeavors.

Lastly and probably most important, we need a rebirth of political interest on this campus. Efforts to circulate more and better literature should be made. Organizations with common views on political matters should be formed. Discussions over current news of interest should be both periodically scheduled and spontaneously held. Support for student government organizations should be more universal and enthusiastic. And

active interest in student affairs should be more avid in a greater share of the members of these organizations.

* * *

Only if progress in these directions is taken will Ripon College approach its realization of a true cultural center and intellectual center. Only then will Ripon College truly fulfill the conception of a liberal arts school. Only then will the graduate of this school be truly a well-rounded man.

Friday, October 26, 1962

[1]

Greek Response Negative On Discrimination Issue

At a Student Senate Meeting Wednesday, house presidents of the various sororities and fraternities reported negatively on the Student Senate resolution of last year stating that each sorority and fraternity should do everything possible at its summer national meeting to eliminate racial discrimination clauses.

Of the sororities, three, including Alpha Delta Pi, Alpha Chi Omega, and Kappa Delta, stated that they would "issue no statements" on their respective sorority clauses, but that anyone interested could acquire the information from Dean of Women, Jean van Hengel.

Alpha Phi stated that the National Panhellenic Council prohibited written statements on or written copies of their constitution for the information might be "misconstrued"; however, any oral questions would be answered. Alpha Xi Delta has no such racial clause.

Presidents of the fraternities also reported in the negative. At the Phi Delta Theta national meeting, a three-fourths vote of all chapters passed at two consecutive meetings is required to change a clause. Some school administrations have required a fraternity with national affiliations to become local in order to eliminate the national race clause. The president of the Phi Delta Theta house stated, however, that a national council would probably not grant local autonomy to a fraternity if it felt that the fraternity would accept a Negro or an oriental.

A two-thirds majority of the chapters voting is required at the Sigma Nu national meeting, and the "future looks dim" for at least six years for the Sigma Nu's to rid themselves of the race clause.

Sigma Chi technically has no clause; however, pledges must be "socially acceptable" to the national fraternity. Sigma Alpha Epsilon declined to comment about their race clause last wee, while Theta Chi believes that they have no such clause but are not certain.

Merriman, the only local fraternity on campus, has no racial restrictions and admits that "every race and major world religion" is present in their fraternity.

[4]

George Elliott

Fraternity Discrimination

The Student Senate passed the following resolution on April 25 of last year: that during the summer of 1962 each Ripon College fraternity should, at its national fraternity meetings, do all it could in its power to eliminate any clause that restricted membership to the fraternity on the grounds of "race or creed."

This resolution was passed because it was the belief of the Student Senate that such race clauses are "incompatible" with Ripon College standards and "should be stricken immediately." Much debate was aroused because it had been stated that one who joined a national fraternity with full knowledge of such a race clause but not in agreement with this clause was surely hypocritical. I would disagree with this for the following reason: one cannot possibly work on any problem from the outside and hope for an effective correction. Certainly, an administration can force national fraternities to leave campus because of such a race clause just as the federal government can force a realtor to sell a house to a Negro; but does this really solve any problem? I feel that outside interference of any sort does not help, but rather undermines the work of those that are trying for improvement through a new understanding.

* * *

The question of social privileges, definitely excluding the civil rights question, has to do entirely with personal decision. The restriction of private clubs, including fraternities, comes under this personal decision.

I feel that the local autonomy should be the only deciding factor; no national organization, administration, or government should tell one what one can and can't do in this respect.

* * *

Why we put up with being told what we can and can't do is something we should deal with next. While inspecting this point we must return to the national fraternity, and expand our examination of the "clause" to the entire concept of the FRATERNITY system. Is it worth being a national fraternity if we must accept their regulation to the form of a "clause"?

I think it is worth it for several reasons primarily for the advantage that a national can afford its local. If taken advantage of, their loan fund for the building of houses, house improvement and the like is of much financial value. Also the legal

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Elliott...

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Organization behind a local fraternity corporation is useful.

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Lastly I feel that the name and organization behind you in matters of rush and administrative organization is invaluable.

Personally, I think that everyone should be judged as an individual and that all efforts within the frame work of the national organization should be made to have these "clauses" stricken from their constitutions.

The Student Senate has stated their belief, and I feel that that is proper course of action. I don't think they should push the point for a private problem of private organizations, but I would hope that every fraternity man or sorority woman would

remain national, support their national membership requirements while working to eliminate the bad and strengthen and enlarge the good.

[5]

Faculty Commends Mississippi Colleagues

(Editor's Note: The following letter from Grinnell College to the U. of Mississippi was endorsed by the Ripon College faculty at the last meeting.)

We the faculty of Grinnell College, send respects to our colleagues on the faculty of Mississippi. We honor the statement in the University of Mississippi Bulletin which says, "A university is a community of knowledge." We recognize the difficulty of maintaining that freedom which is necessary to learning when a university becomes the object of political manipulation and when its policies have for long been influenced by considerations which are foreign to the academic purpose. We consider the act of the political officer in assuming an academic office of a university to be a direct threat to academic freedom everywhere. We commend these courageous members of the University of Mississippi faculty who have indicated their willingness to protect against the recent interference by officials of the Mississippi state government in the affairs of the University. We realize the difficulty of their position, but wish to assure them of our unqualified support in their resistance to any violation of academic freedom.

We hope that the members of the University of Mississippi faculty learn of our support.

Friday, November 2, 1962

[6]

Letter To The Editor

In the October 26 issue of the Ripon College Days," it was stated, and we quote, "...Theta Chi believes that they have no such clause (racial discriminatory) but are not certain." Bill Beyer represented Theta Chi at the October 24th Student Senate meeting and stated the following when asked if Theta Chi had a racial clause: I think it was repealed six years ago." This statement was grossly misquoted by the College Days. The doubt in Bill Beyer's comment as to when the clause was repealed was shifted to say he wasn't sure if head a clause. As bill Byers stated, we have no racial clause. It was repealed at the 1954 Theta Chi National Convention.

The Men of Theta Chi

Friday, April 12, 1963

[6]

Biloxi Trip Aids Mission; Students Learn Of South

Seventeen Ripon College students, Miss Beaumont, a mathematics teacher at Ripon, and the Rev. and Mrs. Thompson spent Spring vacation at Biloxi, Miss., where they worked at the Black Bay Mission run by the United Church of Christ.

Situated in the back part of the city, the mission is in a "poorer" section, but also has a church in the wealthier area. Neither place is integrated, but the director of the mission hopes to organize integrated church activities shortly.

The students had such service projects as building a large, elaborate wooden cover for a trampoline, hauling sand for a sand box, gardening, and painting houses. The work was much lighter than what they did last year because a group from Lawrence had been there the previous week, doing the heavy jobs and starting some projects which the Ripon students finished.

The seven-hour day began with breakfast at 7:30 a.m. This was followed by a mandatory fifteen-minute worship service led by either Rev. Thompson or a student. Working until the early afternoon with a half-hour break for lunch, the students were free for the rest of the day.

In the evening, there were speakers and discussion groups on problems of the Mission and the deep South, usually involving the race question. By talking informally with the speakers, the Mission staff, and the townspeople, the students gained insight into the problem of integration.

This insight was augmented by a close, friendly contact with the wealthy and poor people of Biloxi. The students found an appreciative and friendly attitude among the people, and became close friends with a number of local white boys, some of whom had just finished reform school.

Of the three trips planned for the entire group, the first was an oyster fishing trip on Tuesday afternoon. Besides eating raw oysters caught about ten miles off shore, the students went swimming off the boat.

On Wednesday evening, there was a beach party and weiner roast. After a co-ed football game, some of the students went to night clubs on the beach front.

The most eagerly awaited trip was to New Orleans, about ninety miles from Biloxi. There, the students were particularly interested in seeing the French Quarter and Bourbon Street. The high point of the trip, however, was the experience of working at the Back Bay Mission and getting to know the Southern people.

Friday, May 10, 1963 [20]

"Memories of the past"

[photo of cross burning on a lawn in front of a house]

Friday, May 10 [17], 1963 [21]

[1]

Students Protest Minstrel Show

[Photo of picketers outside Red Barn Theater]

Ripon Students (l. to r.) Wally Labhart, Mohamed Adan, Neal West, Chuck Taylor, and Frank Gold, voice their protest of the Kiwanis Minstrel Show outside the RedBarn Theater. (See story on page 3).

[3]

Students Picket Minstrel Claim Moral Injustice

By Chris Braun

The Annual Kiwanis Minstrel Show held in the Red Barn Theater Wednesday, May 15, received more attention than its blacked face “minstrels” anticipated. A group of Ripon students originally including Chuck Taylor, Frank Gold, Neal West, Wally Labhart, and Mohamed Adan, picketed the performance with signs stating “Unfair to Old Black Joe,” “Minstrel Shows are Unfair to Negroes” and “Don’t cross the line into Uncle Tom’s Cabin.” When interviewed, these students expressed the following opinions concerning the principles involved in the presentation of any show involving a Negro lampooning, and the reasons for the thought provoking demonstration.

It was stated by these students that a minstrel show, involving as it does, they feel, the portrayal of the Negro in an unfavorable situation, should not be tolerated on a free, democratic society. A minstrel show portrays a slapstick clown-Negro image, one which these students feel is not representative of the Negro race, and one which has no business being further perpetuated. It is felt that such thoughtless portrayal is “not quite appropriate” to any adult level of perceptive intelligence and feel that for adults to “put on such a show” is a mistake.” It was impressed upon this reporter the earnestness with which this demonstration was undertaken, and pointed out that minstrels shows have already been banned in several states.

As the crowd which packed the Red Barn Theater for the performance filed out, several comments were made with reference to the picketers. Among them were such remarks as: “They’re just college kids,” “Let’s get serious,” and “These are too young to be Rotarians.” (referring to the traditional rivalry of the Kiwanis and Rotarian organizations in Ripon.)

A recent editorial in the “Commonwealth Press” was cited by the picketers. In it, it was stated that “college kids will be college kids,” but that such ideas as presented in The Three-Penny Opera does damage “when placed into the fabric of their daily living.” This, the students felt, is exactly and ironically true of the Minstrel Show. In connection with the same editorial comment, Frank Gold was quoted as saying that “The Commonwealth – Press complained about the college’s sexual degradation. Tonight we are protesting Ripon’s moral degradation.”

[5]

Guest Editorial

‘Provincialism’

Editor’s Note: The following, for the curious, was reprinted from the Commonwealth-Press, May 9, 1963. This editorial does not represent the opinion of the College Days rather it represents those views held by Ripon’s only and finest newspaper.

Last Friday we witnessed a play – the Three Penny Opera – at Ripon College and have seldom enjoyed a more entertaining evening. The play was almost brilliantly acted and directed, the singing was professional, the scenery was good and the casting couldn't have been better. We venture to say that some in the cast could go on and become professional actors if they cared to.

* * *

However, the selection of the play itself was disturbing. With such a wide panorama of musicals and comedies to choose from, the appropriateness of this play for college kids could certainly be challenged. Some of the lines in the play were so risqué they made the audience blush.

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This same play is now packing 'em in at Chicago's Civic Opera House, and a photo in the Chicago Tribune shows Jenny, the wench who plys her trade in a house of ill repute, wearing low cut gown. We imagine this play – by professional actors – would make the Ripon College version look like "Oklahoma" by comparison.

* * *

We frankly enjoy naughty plays as much as the next person, but on the professional stage. For college students to put on such a show is a mistake. (As a matter of fact, on the same weekend that Three Penny Opera was playing at the college theatre, several students were in trouble because of illicit activities at Green Lake.)

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Some will say that college kids will be college kids and a play isn't going to hurt anything and "these kids know everything that was in the play anyway and more." These comments are true by themselves. But they do damage when placed into the fabric of their Daily living. Sex on the campus is already flaunted and a play of this type where the hero is more than just a big lady killer does little to improve this situation.

Letters To The Editor **Insults And Minstrels**

Editor's Note: As a result of the above editorial, the College Days is printing the following letter from Dave Schwarz. This letter does represent the opinion of the College Days.

It was interesting to learn that the Ripon Commonwealth was horrified at the display of sexual frankness in the college production of the Three Penny Opera to which it linked with even more horror the alleged sexual promiscuity on campus. This is indeed a matter of grave concern to the Commonwealth reading public, the breeders of cows and pics which ennoble the fair city of Ripon. Manifestations of human love are a disturbing influence on a town such as this, and the Commonwealth is to be commended for an expose which as a credit to the profession.

* * *

Perhaps it is college pride, but I cannot see the College Days out-done on this score. I therefore call the attention of the editor to a "scoop" on a moral outrage which makes me blush—not with self-righteous provincial prudery, but with shame. I am ashamed that I can be identified as "white" with a group of "people" who, as I write this letter, are

making a mockery of a whole race of people, who for the sake of raising money for a “good” cause laugh away the human dignity of the Negro race. I refer of course to the Ripon Kiwanis and but this time they are showing inexcusably poor their God forsaken “minstrel show.” It is in poor taste to ridicule a people which is even now waging a most valiant battle to assert its humanity before the world. This insult against humanity, this “minstrel show,” should mangle the delicate corn-fed sensibilities which were bruised so easily at the mere suggestion of man’s animal nature. It does mine.

Sincerely,

David Schwarz