

SKANDALON

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EDITORIAL

One of the many pressing problems confronting our university today is that of communication between the various branches of the university community. By communication, we refer not only to notices posted on bulletin boards and mimeographed notes passed on via student mail, faculty mail, and dorm mail; rather, we are referring to genuine interaction between faculty, administrators, and students: an interaction that will, hopefully, lead to a lessening of the suspicion (and hostility?) that now exists and an increase in understanding between the various members of the community.

The problem can be approached, and must be approached, from three points of view: student, faculty, and administrative. Skandalon, in coming weeks, expects to consider each of these, to consider suggestions and ideas for improving the rapport between each, with an eye to those questions relevant to determining the role of each within our community.

Let us first, then, look at some of these problems. Most of us are aware of student attitudes toward the administration. The university newspaper has proven an effective medium for conveying attitudes if not for discussing issues. There is frequently a sensation, on the part of students, of some demonic power hanging over them, always ready to cut them down if they do wrong; and this has not been true merely of cranks and newspaper editors, but of Senate cabinet members and senators as well. The faculty, too, labors under some of these fears. One professor, commenting on a not very radical article in Skandalon, by one of his fellow faculty members, asked rhetorically, "I wonder if they'll let him get away with that?" Skandalon, however, believes it is both fruitless and foolish to consider this as anything more than a symptom of the problems involved--a symptom of the lack of real communication.

Some groups on this campus have had interaction, to a significant degree, with administrators and faculty. Almost everyone of them has found his experiences rewarding. But these individuals are unique--among them, we can include student leaders, Myskania, the Student Association President, and B. M. (and W.) O. C.

So, faculty members are alarmed by the vast numbers of freshmen who pass through their classes, only to disappear from view; students are alarmed by the vast numbers of classes they pass through, only to graduate unknown, without professors who can recommend them or give them references of any substance. Faculty are discontent because they feel the advances being made in other forward looking universities are not receiving proper consideration here; students are angry because they have not received the education they had hoped to get from a university. And the administration, justifiably, when confronted with these problems by an angry mob, asks innocently, "Why didn't someone tell us about this, or come in and talk it over--why, we've been thinking about this sort of thing for months, but we didn't know anyone was interested." And then they're apt to add, somewhat disdainfully, "Of course, if anybody had bothered to check this out, then there wouldn't have been anything to write about."

The question as we see it, then, is not simply one of "bettering student-faculty relations." Rather, it is one of providing more opportunities for more discussion on those issues that directly concern all of us. Never has there been greater opportunity for this kind of activity. A university in transition may be a chaotic place; it may have its disadvantages. But if it lacks complete organization, it also lacks a completed power structure. Today, Student Government is planning a complete re-organization. The construction of a new campus allows us to consider the various traps that might be built in to bring about discussion on an informal level. Within the various councils that exist in our university, there are multitudes of possibilities. Only in the Student Personnel Council do students participate regularly. The Educational Policies Board, which is planning the new curriculum for the new campus, has no student participation, even on an ex-officio basis. We hope to consider the possibility of Senior and graduate student participation in a future issue of Skandalon; for it seems, after a cursory glance at the situation, that those about to leave the university could make significant contributions to the future of our community through this Board. We hope, too, to consider the potential power of the Faculty Council, in initiating events that would provide, on an informal basis, for more contact between our community's people. We will consider, too, the feasibility of student participation on the Undergraduate Council, at least in providing a thermometer of student

(continued on page two)

AYN RAND - CHAMPION OF EGOTISM AND SELF INTEREST

Ayn Rand is the most influential of our modern day philosophresses. Her books have been read by millions and her Objectivist philosophy discussed by hundreds of thousands. Ayn Rand, in my opinion, is a noxious nut. But let's look at her philosophy, at least on a superficial level.

Miss Rand is an individualist. Her hero, John Galt, reflects her philosophy, we might suppose, so let us consider him, at the height of his career. John retreats from the world, establishing a small central control station on the top of a mountain, to which he calls the few intelligent entrepreneurs left in the world, rallying them under his banner - a \$ sign. He then calmly waits for the economy to collapse, because of short-sighted bureaucrats who haven't the intelligence to see beyond their own short-term plans.

I'm not quite sure, I must confess, of the significance of all this. One might point out that America's greatest problem to date hasn't been due to the collapse of production but, rather, to over-production. But it seems clear that the setting is merely symbolic; it is the man and his philosophy that we are to observe.

What does Galt believe in? Unfortunately, he has many opinions; one might almost call him opinionated. For example, it is his opinion that "there are two sides to every issue: one side is right and the other is wrong, but the middle is always evil." It strikes me that a good many issues depend on whose side you're on; and while I might be attacked as a milksop, I've never regarded "peaceful coexistence" as particularly evil, especially when confronted with the alternative of extermination. Of course, Miss Rand believes that man's "moral obligation is to do what he wishes, provided his wish does not depend primarily upon other men. This includes the whole sphere of his creative faculty, his thinking, his work." (*The Fountainhead* - italics hers) I must be excused for regarding this doctrine as somewhat debasing; my social consciousness is probably a bit overdeveloped. But it is my opinion that man's greatest achievements are made through cooperation and coordination, and Ayn Rand's approach, while not entirely incompatible with these, seems to build more barriers than it destroys. In fact, Miss Rand calls upon her readers, in the words of John Galt, to withdraw from the corrupt society in which they live and to "build a productive life of your own with those who accept your moral code and are willing to struggle for a human existence." She would forsake the present institutions and build new ones - which would not, perhaps, be such a terribly bad idea if possible, and if there was any assurance that the problems that would arise under a system such as she proposes could be any more effectively dealt with without establishing some kind of dictatorship.

Men, either singly or in groups, have always tried to dominate. The justifications might be sound, but one never looks for an explanation in an a posteriori argument for the supremacy of one political group over another. Miss Rand calls for the abandonment of the old ways. Yet the selfish demagogues far outnumber the selfish demi-gods like Galt, and the rhetoric is all too fitting for both. Miss Rand smashes into the problems of our world head-on - bad professors, stupid bureaucrats, cancerous mysticism (religion); but after splashing them all over the landscape, she is no closer to solving the problems that these were meant to resolve: poverty, crime, hunger, famine, fear, prejudice, natural disaster, inhumanity, war; lost in a fantastic philosophy that calls for the withdrawal of men from the world in which they find themselves, Miss Rand contributes to those problems. Perhaps I am a cynic; but I have known few omniscient men such as John Galt. Perhaps John Galt could save our world; but not when his name is spelled G-o-l-d-w-a-t-e-r; not when his approach is to attack civil rights, or Proposition Fourteen, or Social Security, or national welfare, or medicare, without a single constructive thought for the resolution of the problems they attempt to deal with. Show me a man who can wipe out the hunger in a small child's stomach by granting him absolute freedom from any bureaucratic interference, and I'll show you Mr. John Galt, next President of the United States.

-Guy McBride-

Skandalon is the biweekly journal of Campus Christian Council. Articles, poems, essays, drawings, or short stories are welcome. Welcome also are written responses to articles published in Skandalon. Anyone interested in submitting his or her work should contact Guy McBride, Editor, via Student Mail, or leave materials at 501 State Street, the Office of the Campus Minister.

TRANSPORTATION SCHEDULE FOR THE CHURCH OF THE UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY SERVICE:

Cars leave Sayles at 8:15 and the Thruway Motel and the State Cafeteria at 8:20. A bus leaves:
Sayles 8:30
Thruway Motel 8:40
New Dorms 8:45
State Cafeteria 8:55

At 10:00 the bus returns to Sayles by way of the New Dorms and the Thruway Motel.

Lost and Found

Anyone who ended up with the wrong coat at The Golden Eye on November 6, can get his own back from Mr. Wilson in the Art Department, Draper 305, with his apologies

THE NEW CAMPUS AND "WHERE WILL STUDENTS WORSHIP?"

Some students still "go to church" (as Protestants tend to put it). Where will they, and those who stand in other religious traditions, as well, worship once they are in residence on the new campus? Neighborhood churches will not be a block or two away as they are for most students now. The University is on the western edge of the city, and, as everyone knows, in the West distances come big.

Those who worry about these matters (and such are always with us) have been pondering this one for some time. Their first suggestion was that students be allowed to gather for worship in some building on campus not being used at the time (It seems reasonable to suppose any number of lecture halls might be vacant on Sunday morning, for example.) This was blasphemy to State officials who make legal policy: everyone knows students must not worship on campus; public prayer would violate the Constitution.

"Well, back to the drawing board." The plan now proposed calls for an Inter-faith Center (and by inter-faith is meant here Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish), to be built on privately owned land more or less adjacent to the new campus. All involved seem to be enthusiastic about this; the only problem is to find the necessary acreage. Land near the new campus is, to say the least, extremely scarce, and, if commercially zoned, fantastically expensive. The appropriate people ("those who worry about these matters") continue to pursue the question, however.

First Steps

In the meantime, life goes on, and we have begun The Church of the University Community as a congregation "of" and not merely "for" students and faculty. Articles in "Counterpoint" and earlier issues of "Skandalon" by Elizabeth Webre and Frances Colby have described why we decided to establish such a church, the rationale, as it were, for such a venture. Here, let me say something about the mundane matters of time and place, and perhaps more significantly, something as to the guiding concerns.

United-Fourth Presbyterian Church, located on Western Avenue, more or less midway between the old and new dorms, very kindly made its building available to us, and we meet there. We begin with an 8:30 a.m. Service of Holy Communion for Episcopal students and faculty, conducted by Canon Edward Williams, Chaplain at Albany Medical College and Albany Law School. At 9:00 a.m., we begin the Service of the Word, which is for all--Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists, Congregationalists, and the like, as well as Episcopalians. Here, students and faculty read the lessons, lead in prayer, and, on occasion, preach. (One student has already done so and two faculty members will in December). Then, at 9:40 a.m., we conclude with a Service of the Lord's Supper for all who wish to take part.

All this is at a rather early hour for most of us, but that is not the only problem. There is also the matter of transportation, since "midway between the old and new dorms" is not where anyone is really likely to be. Accordingly, we have arranged for cars to take people to the 8:30 portion of the Service and a bus for the 9 to 10 portion. It leaves from in front of Sayles Hall at 8:30, gets to the Thruway Motel at 8:40, the New Dorms at 8:45, and the Cafeteria at 8:55. Then, of course, there is a return run at 10:00.

Guiding Concerns

As to more basic matters, it is our concern to be as genuinely "ecumenical" as is possible at this point in history--i.e., to build a service which can and will include students and faculty of many denominational backgrounds. Obviously, it will not be precisely the sort of service any of us is accustomed to. The way of worship will be different at many points: for some the hymns will be unfamiliar; for others the manner of prayer will be strange. But no compromise of principle is involved, and we hope students and faculty are excited enough by the ecumenical possibilities of such a service to accept what may appear novel.

Furthermore, it is our intention that this be a service by students and faculty, with everyone taking an active role. If there are hymns to be sung, it is the congregation which must sing them and not a choir recruited for this purpose, and the readings and prayers, as we have noted, are the responsibility of students and faculty. This amounts to a minor revolution as the service is made the "work" of the whole people rather than merely the clergy.

Who is behind all this? Campus Christian Council "sponsors" the service in cooperation with the Board of College Work of the Capital Area Council of Churches. The Board, in turn, represents seven denominations. This means that the service is held on behalf of these denominations and The Church of the University Community is, then, at the same time, the church of students and faculty from these seven denominations: Methodist, Presbyterian, Reformed, Congregational, Episcopal, Baptist, and Lutheran. Of course, those coming from other denominations and traditions are more than just welcome, and we hope that they will feel this to be their church, too.

Frank Snow
Campus Minister