

Magna carta for professors

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Because of the significant interpretation of the functions of a college and its professors included in the statement of members of the Norman branch of the American Association of University Professors to the board of regents protesting against the activities of D. D. M. C. as well as outside interference in the affairs of the university, The Sooner Magazine is pleased to present the text of this Magna Carta in full. Every person interested in higher education in Oklahoma should read it.*

AT a meeting of the local members of the American Association of University Professors, it was decided to appoint a committee which should formulate an expression of opinion concerning the happenings of the past week in which a student is said to have been whipped by a group of masked individuals who were themselves unknown, but wore the regalia of D. D. M. C. In the opinions here expressed we wish to make it clear that we are not authorized to speak for the national organization of the American Association of University Professors, but that we represent the opinion of the local members of our profession of university teachers.

We deplore the incident of last week in the strongest possible manner. Corporal punishment in any form is repugnant to adult civilized society. It is psychologically unsound, and characteristic of a low social level, and it is not often that by it any desirable results are obtained. But when such punishment is administered by masked individuals it becomes morally reprehensible, and a crime against society. Practices of this kind and any organization supporting them cannot be too strongly condemned. They have no place in a university community and any sentiment which condones or supports them is sadly misjudged.

We wish to offer every encouragement to your board and to all duly constituted authorities of the university in your efforts to remove these practices, and also any organization countenancing them, from our community. You have our full confidence and support in all measures you may approve for extirpating this sore from the university body. We also affirm our support of the officials of this

state, or of any subdivision of it in all their efforts to apprehend any criminals whatsoever.

In connection with these matters we wish to make certain observations. A university exists for three purposes and for these only. They are to train the youth, to broaden the frontier of learning, and to disseminate knowledge. As members of our profession, we believe that the university has seriously endeavored to carry out these three functions, and it is our opinion that a large measure of success has rewarded its effort. During the current year the enrolment has reached 5,248 students and we believe that over 5,200 of them are desirable members of our community. Indeed we believe that the work they are accomplishing is of higher character than before, and that in general they are living together happily and with sober purpose.

It is a serious misplacement of emphasis to forget the permanent aims of the institution and the accomplishments of the great numbers of our members in our disgust at the actions of a few whose judgment does not restrain them from deeds which should be beneath persons of their opportunities and training. We urge you and all who are rightfully interested in the greater good which this university accomplishes to take such steps as will lead to a correct appreciation of the great ends which the institution serves.

It is the duty of the administrative officers of the university to set up regulations and enforce them in order that the common welfare may be served, but it should be forgotten that the primary aims of this institution do include policing the student body. Where regulations of that order becomes necessary, they are merely subsidiary to the primary purposes for which the institution exists. College students are not children, and, although every effort must be made to set up good conditions for their work, it is neither possible nor advisable for the university to supervise the intimate details of their living.

We reiterate that the primary purposes of the university must not be lost sight of, for in our concern over this unfortunate occurrence there is danger of an entire misplacement of emphasis.

We deeply deplore also the attempts at formulation of the policies of the university on the part of outside individuals.

The university is an institution of the state and its control is vested in your board by rightfully constituted authority; and interference or ill-considered criticism on the part of outside agencies is not for the greater good. We recognize the function of the press of the state in calling attention to abuses or lapses which occur in public institutions. But we deeply regret attacks which unjustly impugn the motives or misrepresent the character of those in responsible charge of an institution. The good faith of the press may often be shown by its willingness to co-operate judiciously with proper authorities before exploiting the news value of untoward incidents. There are proper means of redress available if the duly constituted officers fail to perform their functions, and until that time of failure arrives—and it has not yet arrived—we object to interference on the part of outside agencies. May we say that the spectre of political domination of Oklahoma institutions has never entirely departed, and it has given many thinking persons in this state grave concern. Nevertheless, it is our judgment that dictation of university policies by any other outside agency or group would be as harmful as political domination. As members of this faculty and of the profession of university teachers, we offer you our support in all measures which you may take looking toward the establishment of higher education upon a plane above the domination by any outside agency.

Respectfully submitted

R. T. HOUSE,

P. B. SEARS,

STEPHEN SCATORI, Secretary

H. H. HERBERT, Vice President,

A. RICHARDS, President.

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THE BEST MARKS AREN'T ALWAYS ON THE BOOKS

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vault with a pulled muscle and so Potts, muffled in a blanket, sat with the spectators and saw five men tie for first place in the vault at the mediocre height of 11 feet 6 inches.

Ray Dunson, the little Creek Indian high hurdler from Okemah, who enjoyed a whirlwind season at Oklahoma in the spring of 1927, had hard luck of a different nature. Dunson was a short man and consequently shaved the barriers closely in a high hurdle race. At the Texas relays Dunson aired the best hurdlers in the midwest, the Big Ten and the southwest only to be disqualified for knocking down too many hurdles. Three weeks later, in the Kansas relays, Dunson again defeated a strong field but again knocked down too many hurdles and lost another championship and the

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