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Scorpion VIII

The Scorpion Staff

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SCORPION TALKS

NO. 8

For THE
BEAUTIFUL
PEOPLE

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If your goal
is people expect
THE
IMPOSSIBLE
DREAM

Joe Gallagher, a senior here at Kearney State, would not have been allowed to graduate as he had planned this May 29th because of his activities on the staff of the Scorpion, a recognized campus newspaper much in the present administration's disfavor because of its role as critic of administrative policies.

Joe Gallagher is no longer affiliated with the Scorpion because it was feared that further action would have been taken against him if he had maintained his ties, but the Scorpion wished to tell his story in hopes that a redress of this grievous injustice might have been accomplished.

Joe wrote an article, "Notes From a Student Teacher", in the sixth issue of the Scorpion dealing with his initial experiences in the Omaha Public School system.

The main issue was that he was forced to cut his hair and shave off his moustache in order to be allowed to student teach. This he was prepared for and did so willingly. In his article, he merely related the factual occurrences surrounding this issue. Nothing was done abusively or underhandedly. He even sent copies of his articles to the assistant superintendent, Mr. Walker, and the superintendent, Mr. Knutson, of the Omaha Public Schools to insure that they would have first-hand information concerning his action.

But Mr. Hansen, the principle of South, could not stand to see the truth concerning themselves and the situation he had created revealed. They retaliated by kicking Joe Gallagher out of student teaching with only three weeks left till completion. They took this action in spite of an extremely favorable report from Joe's cooperating teacher at Omaha South. They took this action in spite of a three-fourths reduction in the class skipping rate for the classes Joe was student teaching. They took this action in spite of very favorable character references from Dr. Shada of Kearney State College.

This injustice, we cannot hope to find redress for, but an even greater injustice was awaiting Joe Gallagher's return to K.S.C.

On the Monday and Wednesday of the week following Joe's dismissal from student teaching, hearings were held for the purpose of determining what action Kearney State college would take against Joe for exercising his constitutionally guaranteed right of free speech. No representation was allowed Joe. He also was not allowed to be present for the entire trial-- a trial with him as the sole point of focus.

Dr. Adams, Dr. Westerfield, Mr. Stumpf, Dave Smith and Richard Kopf appeared as character witnesses in Joe's behalf. All spoke highly of Joe's record and potential, especially Dave Smith. Unfortunately, some of the jury chose to argue with nearly every favorable point concerning Joe that Mr. Smith brought up. Their minds seem to have been set before the trial began.

The alternatives available to this jury were as follows: 1) allow Joe to be graduated with a degree in education in May, 2) re-student teach this summer and be graduated this summer with a degree in education, 3) re-student teach next fall and be graduated next January with a degree in education, 4) non-teaching degree in May. After the second hearing the committee closed its doors for about 45 minutes and then returned its verdict. When it was all over it was announced that Joe would be given an incomplete in student teaching and be required to be reassigned next September to finish his requirements for his degree. Also stipulated was a rehearing sometime in August, to determine if anyone has changed his mind about Gallagher's fitness as a student teacher. Little or no explanation was given as to why the third alternative was chosen, but the committee decided against the fourth because the committee did feel Mr. Gallagher had a future in education.

This decision would have meant that Joe would have lost approximately \$3,500 because he would not be able to sign a teaching contract in May, and he is also subject to the draft because his four year student deferment will be up in May.

And to climax the injustice, Joe was told that the hearing will be held in August to review the matter and that he could end up getting booted out of K.S.C. He will be required to wait the entire summer not sure of whether he ever will graduate from Kearney or not.

For these unpardonable and unconstitutional actions taken against Joe Gallagher, a peaceful demonstration of discontent with these actions was to be held Wednesday, May 14th, beginning at 1:00 P.M. in the Student Union. The peaceful demonstration would have moved from the Student Union to the Administration Building for the purpose of influencing President Hassel to review Joe Gallagher's case and allow him to be graduated in May with a degree in education.

Some stories have happy endings. This one has a happy continuation.

The threat of a student demonstration had a profound effect, to say the least, towards opening the channels of communication between the administration and students.

Talks between Dean Stutheit and Dean Hutcheons representing the administration and members of the Scorpion staff representing Joe Gallagher were begun on Monday in order to reach some solution that would avert a demonstration and at the same time achieve an equitable solution for Joe.

We, on the Scorpion staff also contacted other concerned parties, who must remain anonymous, and talked with them extensively to find alternative solutions that would be acceptable to both parties and replace the decision handed down previously by the education department committee.

Three alternative solutions were the result of these proceedings and are: (1) abolish the committee meeting that was to have a rehearing in August and find a definite placement for Joe's remainder of student teaching this summer and be graduated with a degree in education in August (2) allow Joe to finish his student teaching this summer and be graduated with a degree in education in August and (3) have Joe student teach the first nine weeks next fall and then sign a contract for the remainder of the year with the same school.

Tuesday morning President Hassel reviewed the entire situation including the minutes of the two hearings with the education committee. Because he found certain irregularities in these proceedings which had detrimental effects on the decision, President Hassel agreed with Dean Hutcheons and Dean Stutheit that allowing Joe to finish his student teaching this summer and be graduated in August with an education degree would be the best possible solution.

It was agreed that this was the end that the planned demonstration had hoped to accomplish and, therefore, no demonstration would be necessary.

Much credit and appreciation is due certain members of the education committee which sat at the two hearings for Joe and various members of the faculty of Kearney State for recognizing the injustice which had been done to Joe and for speaking out in Joe's behalf.

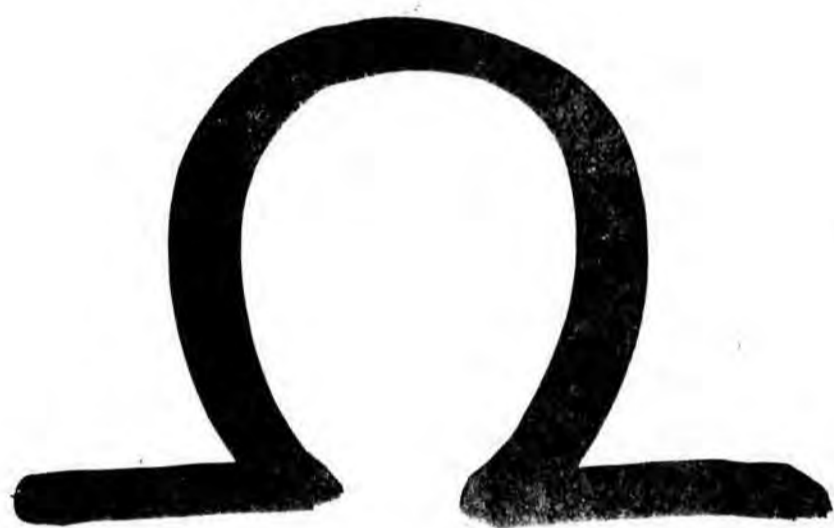
We do believe that the previously obstructed lines of communication (between the administration and the students) have been, for the present, opened and did function as smoothly as could be hoped. Unfortunately, they were so clogged that only a threat of a demonstration was able to free them of their hindrances.

Students on this campus are real people. They have things to say, as it is too sadly true of the past, the administration chooses to minimize dialogue with the students, fantasies shall abound on both sides and we shall live in a world of fiction. Both sides have questions. Both sides have answers. Both sides need to have their questions answered with the other's answers.

Like we said, now the lines have been opened. But how long shall they remain open? This is critical for Kearney State College. In this case, we believe our threat of a demonstration (which would have been carried out had no solution resulted) was the correct means for breaking down the barriers to communication on a two way basis.

Of course students will be required to make their feelings known through the proper channels. But most importantly, the administration must redouble its efforts to make itself aware of the students' attitudes and respond to them directly. Secrecy belongs on quiz games. The relationship between the administration and the students is no game; it is real life. Real living requires answers--truthful answers.

We sincerely hope these truthful answers shall continue to be exchanged in the future. The Scorpion shall be back next year to aid in this process. For now---VICTORY.



**KNOW YE THE
TRUTH AND
IT SHALL SET
YE FREE**