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President's Page...The State of Delta Sigma Rho and the Fourth Congress

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President's Page . . .

"The State of Delta Sigma Rho and the Fourth Congress"

PART I

First, a brief word about the present state of Delta Sigma Rho.

A. *Our financial status is good.* We have gone through the lean years of the war and the post-war inflation period in relatively good shape. We have kept out of the red without drawing from our capital investments. In spite of the sharp rise in the cost of labor and materials, we have not missed a single issue of the *Gavel*, or raised the initiation fee one cent. The fees for installation of chapters have remained the same. The little cabinet, composed of Gilbert L. Hall, Kenneth G. Hance, and myself, has held numerous meetings during the course of the last five years. At these meetings, we figured out various methods and means for cutting corners and putting our modest investments to the best possible use. These efforts have, in the main, worked out for the financial good of our Society.

B. *The forensic picture among the chapters in general is encouraging.* A review of the chapter news as reported in the January issue of the *Gavel* is indeed heartening. Probably never have so many chapters reported so glowingly in one single issue of the *Gavel*. A total of 23 chapters gave excellent reports. Although there are a number of chapters which have not regained their pre-war forensic status, it is evident that in most cases, we are coming back to normalcy.

Here are a few phrases selected from these reports, which hint of the dynamic nature of these local forensic programs:

"With 72 debates, 3 tournaments, numerous radio broadcasts, and public discussion, X University has concluded one of its busiest first semesters in history." "Over 120 speakers from 13 schools participated." "One of the largest tournaments held at X University in recent years." "X University debaters have had an unusually busy fall semester." "The usual four-fold program . . . intercollegiate forensics, extension visits, coffee forums, radio panels." "Ninety-four men and women tried out for Varsity debate." "Eleven debates on the Varsity calendar for December." "Between 35 and 40 women were accepted for the women's squad." "1948-49 will be one of the busiest of recent years." "We have had 203 intercollegiate debates in '47-48." "Interest in debate and discussion is increasing during the current season."

C. *Our National Society is consolidating its position by continuing our policy of taking out the dead wood.* Several dying or dead chapters have been dropped entirely from our roster. A few dormant or inactive chapters have revived activities and are now carrying on strong forensic programs. Two new chapters, University of Hawaii and University of Nevada, have come into our fold during the last two years.

Several applications from promising colleges and universities are now being processed, and the Executive Council will deliberate on these at the Chicago Congress.

PART II

The Fourth Delta Sigma Rho Congress

And now a few words about the coming Fourth Delta Sigma Rho Congress. The merits of this type of forensic venture need not be repeated here. The place of the properly directed and supervised legislative discussion in a well-balanced forensic program has been well established. The coming Congress gives promise of being the best one we have ever had. The student congress has now "come of age." We have had enough experience with this activity that the "bugs" are now pretty well worked out. A special committee of experts has spent many hours in conference to work out the final blueprint for the coming Congress. Professor Thorrel Fest of Colorado, general director of the Congress, with the able assistance of William Howell of Minnesota, John Keltner of Oklahoma, and Jeffrey Auer of Oberlin, have worked most diligently and enthusiastically to give us the rules of procedure and a detailed formula for conducting a high quality Congress within a period of two short days. I do not think that I exaggerate when I say that the Congress has the makings of the best of its kind held in this country during this forensic year. The quality of this forensic venture will give the student delegate a rich and unusual experience which may be the high spot of his entire college career.

Although the central and primary purpose of the Congress is to benefit the students, let us not forget that its purpose is also to benefit the National Society of Delta Sigma Rho. It is our one single act by which we, as a National Society, may come together to discuss our mutual aims and problems. The Congress poses as an excellent medium by which we, as a national body, may reappraise our work in the presence of each other, and thus strengthen our bonds of unity, and make us all more conscious of the larger meanings of our Society.

In these days honor societies everywhere are being weighed in the balance, and we may expect that tomorrow educators and college administrators will ask us to give some account of ourselves. It is evident, therefore, that Delta Sigma Rho needs the Congress, and the Congress needs Delta Sigma Rho.

As President of this Society, I sincerely hope that every chapter will make a sincere effort to have at least one representative at our meeting in Chicago.

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March 1, 1949