

The Foundation of Law

by Steve Lambert

Those students who have lately become the victims of society's myopic persecution of marijuana users may have better reason than I to despair over the college administration's participation in that blindness, yet I feel compelled to enter a somewhat belated reply to Dr. Young's column concerning college policy as it relates to grass, when it appeared in the Oct. 20 issue of the Compass. The statement itself stands as a classic example of society's ever-present willingness to pay homage to the great god Law, while forgetting that this god is a servant of the people, and not their master.

The college position regarding marijuana makes the usual quantum leap from particulars to universals. For them, anyone who ignores a particular law, such as that which protects society from these sinister marijuana addicts, is in effect undermining the very foundation of the universal concept of Law. Surely, they argue, no individual should be accorded the right to determine what constitutes "acceptable conduct." The college administration accepts the view that society must be the final judge, as if society were some entity apart from the individuals who make it up.

It may very well be an entity estranged from its members, but if so it is only because its individuals have foresworn their responsibility as individuals by allowing their personal ethics to be molded by the laws, instead of their values determining the content of the laws. They

have forgotten that it is their individual respect for the law, as long as it reflects reality, that gives the law its foundation. Instead, they have allowed the laws to create their reality, and have replaced individual self-respect with respect derived from sheer obedience.

If one believes that a law is just, it is because it is relevant to the individual's life, to his reality. The substance of law arises out of the respect a person has for it, but such respect is real only insofar as the law is real. When a law outlives its time, or when it arises out of fear, ignorance, and apathy, it becomes unreal, and is held in contempt by those who are aware of its divergence from reality. But those who allow the law to replace their own sense of personal responsibility see no conflict, as a law to them is sanctified merely by coming under the heading "Law". Once they accord the right of judgement over the merits of law to "society", they are no longer members of that society; they have alienated themselves from it by ceasing to participate as individual, thinking members. They are overwhelmed by society because they no longer possess the element to which society must relate if it is ever to be a servant, not master, of

men: the individuality and sense of personal integrity of each citizen. Their respect for law arises not out of their individual recognition of its validity, but rather from their acquiescence to its divinity. Such people subvert their

individuality to the role society offers them, they exist to fulfill their function under the law, and thus the master has become the servant.

If I ignore a law, it is not because I hold no respect for the concept of law, but because I am aware that this respect arises out of the law's ability to mirror reality. I am willing to allow such a concept to become tarnished by laws based on lies and ignorance. If a law is to be obeyed, it is not because it is the law, but because it is necessary. I sanction a law only if I can relate to it. To set the law above my own sense of the real and accord it the right to structure my existence is to mitigate and undermine the real foundation of law, which is the individual's sense of personal ethics. A law, if it is to be valid, must merely set the limits within which an individual may develop himself into "all he is capable of being" as himself, without harming others. When it no longer fulfills this function, it can no longer be called a law.

To obey the law merely because it is "the Law" makes a mockery out of the real foundation of law; it divests people of their individual responsibility to their lives and makes them responsive to an artificial reality. When this happens, the laws cease their true function as guides and limitations within which a person may develop himself, and become instead the masters of reality, not the reflection.

To the Student Body:

With Registration falling after Thanksgiving, I'd like to throw out an idea that you may have heard before, but never considered seriously. I hope that you'll now give it some thought.

As you know, there are some faculty members who are being ineffective at their job, and as you also know, there are not many means by which you can do anything about them. But there is a way and it is a very effective way. This semester, when it comes time to register for course x from professor y, who you know is a poor teacher, refuse to register for his course and get other students who you know who are intending to register to do the same thing. If no one registers for the course, there is no course and therefore no teacher. Thus, by a simple refusal, you could show that something was wrong. Seeing that you are paying tuition, you have the right to refuse to register for a course, so why not start exercising a few of your rights.

All it takes is a little communication with others. So why don't some of you people who know what you have to look forward to in terms of faculty for next semester, get together and do something about it.

Remember the motto, "Without students, there are no courses, and without courses, there is no need for a teacher!" Think about it.

Dave Sargeant



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Re-cycling

A program for the re-cycling of bottles, cans and paper has been instituted in ten of the fourteen dorms on campus.

The project is well organized and runs smoothly. Each dorm has a dorm captain, usually a student from the Biology 280 class, and a representative on each floor. The materials are collected on the floors and then a pick-up is arranged by the dorm captain.

Pick-ups are made by students on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays, however, support has been so great that soon they will probably be made everyday.

The administration has been very helpful and there is a re-cycling set up in the Erwin building. Mr. Pete Least

is further helping the project by checking for other places on campus where re-cycling can be started.

The most active dorm on campus is Suffolk. They have formed an Environmental Education Committee to help show students the importance of re-cycling. They are beginning programs of films, and lectures and the first one will be on Thursday, Nov. 9th in Suffolk.

The four dorms that do not have a re-cycling program going are Wyoming, Monroe, Wayne, and Niagra.

If anyone is interested in heading a program in one of these dorms, they should contact Peggy Fabric at 5878 or 7591.

This is a good program and deserves the support of everyone on campus.

Central Council News

By Dru Haines

S.A.S.U. was the major topic of discussion for the Central Council meeting held on November 6, at 7:00, in the Ballroom Lounge. This weekend, Nov. 11-12, Mark Regan and Mathew Baynes will be attending a S.A.S.U. workshop held in Oswego. The major topics of the workshops will be the Board of Trustees and the health plan. Any candidate for S.A.S.U. delegate is welcomed to attend the meeting.

Another topic discussed at the meeting was concerned with the Pass-Fail Option for Health and Physical Education classes. Dr. Mullen said he would recommend the option to the faculty of the Physical Education department. An action committee has sprouted from this which will investigate the overall grading policy on

campus for the next four weeks.

The Food Co-Op, headed by Dan McComb, reported on their progress. Their group now has obtained 1,200 signatures on petitions supporting the Co-Op. Dan talked to Dr. Quaal concerning the project. Dr. Quaal recommended that Mr. McComb present the plan to Dr. Young and President MacVittie. He also suggested the basement of Blake A as a possible location for the Co-Op.

Matt Baynes expressed pleasure with the progress of the recycling program. Ten of the fourteen dorms, Courtside Apartments and the dining halls all have initiated programs. It was reported that as of Monday, Nov. 6, that there were three pick-ups per week.

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NEWS

You May Have Missed
News you may have missed if you are the typical Geneseo apathetic student:

by Helene Siskind
President Nixon won re-election Tuesday by an overwhelming majority of 62%. Nixon's landslide victory over Senator George McGovern confirmed the predictions of the polls and restated the country's belief in the present administration. Bonanza, the NBC television program which has been on the air for fourteen years, has been cancelled due to low ratings and will be off the air at the end of the present season.
Diahann Carroll and David Frost became engaged in London last week. They plan to be wed at Easter time.
Carly Simon and James Taylor were married last week.

COMPLETE ELECTION COVERAGE IN TUESDAY'S ISSUE OF THE LAMRON...