

Dissidents revolt ASF would concentrate on education, drop social issues

By DILLARD STONE
Battalion Staff

"How feasible is a second national student organization?" is the question facing one Texas A&M University student.

Jeb Hensarling, president of the American Student Federation, is trying to lay the groundwork for what he hopes will be an organization devoted to the free expression of education-related ideas.

Not only is the future of the fledgling ASF still somewhat in doubt, but its birth involves a great deal of controversy.

Until last summer, educational lobbying on the national level had been the domain of two groups, the National Student Association and the National Student Lobby.

In the spirit of unity, the two groups voted to merge last summer. The result was the United States Student Association.

However, all was not as rosy as the merger would indicate. A group of dissidents, led in part by Hensarling, and calling themselves the Reform Caucus, protested that USSA and NSA/NSL had some major flaws that were unacceptable to a large number of American college students.

Probably most importantly, the reformers claimed that USSA emphasizes "social issues," like abortion, at the expense of "educational issues," such as federal financial aid to students.

In fact, educational issues probably took up a minority of their time," Hensarling said.

These "social issues" have little significance for students in the United States, Hensarling said.

When USSA took an official position on a "social issue," the result was a far-left stance which had little relation to the feelings of the average college student, he said.

ASF will concentrate solely on educational issues, Hensarling said, since emphasis on social issues causes two problems: misallocation of resources and increasing divisiveness.

"With limited resources, we must prioritize," Hensarling said. "There simply won't be enough funding left for social issues."

"Second, if you introduce social issues into the educational arena, you tend to have more divisiveness," he added. "There's not a national student consensus on things like affirmative action. USSA thinks there is."

Other arguments voiced against Lindbergh's college haunt keeps old tag

CAHOKIA, Ill. — The sign leading into town reads, "Welcome to Cahokia, Home of Parks Air College." But there is no such school. The school known as Parks Air College was taken over by St. Louis University 32 years ago and the name was changed to Parks College of St. Louis University. But because the college was frequented by aviation leaders such as Charles Lindbergh, Amelia Earhart and Jimmy Doolittle in their flying days, the students and town have stuck to the previous name.

"When it was Parks Air College, it was a pretty romantic place," explains a college official. "I guess it's a question of the heritage shining through."

USSA are that it does not accurately represent student opinion because the majority of board members are appointed, not elected, and because wealthy schools could afford to send more delegates to conventions than some larger, but poorer, schools.

One of Hensarling's main concerns in the ongoing controversy is that most of the nation's students don't know or care that either organization exists. He stressed that they should know.

"There's an organization in Washington called USSA going onto Capitol Hill and telling our congressmen that students across the nation, including Aggies, believe in federal funding for abortions, nationalization of key industries, and cutting the defense budget in half," he said. Such positions are unacceptable to a large number of American college students, he added.

The status of USSA's finances is another of Hensarling's concerns. USSA is in serious financial trouble, he said.

"They owe the Internal Revenue Service an ungodly amount of money, as well as to many businesses in the Washington area," Hensarling said. This lack of credibility in the financial arena hurts

Research sellers offer 'custom' jobs

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it is a Class B misdemeanor.

But as Zagano points out, for the most part these laws only prohibit these companies from doing business in their own state. They say nothing about advertising and selling papers through the mail in states with no laws.

She further says that even if she bought a paper in New York, a state with a law, from a company in California, it would be next to impossible to prove that company was doing business in New York.

Spokesmen at two term-paper companies — Pacific and Research Assistance of Westwood, Calif. — declined to give interviews when contacted.

The Texas A&M University English Department is adamant about its dislike for the industry.

"As far as I'm concerned, a student who buys a paper should receive an 'F.' That's a serious offense," says David Stewart, department head. "With the purchased term paper, there is no question about plagiarism."

Faculty members also say they have no trouble identifying a bought

paper.

"It's really quite easy to tell," says Dr. Samuel Kirkpatrick, head of the political science department. "The papers are so mediocre, they (students) would be foolish to buy them."

Zagano calls them "terrible — absolute junk." She adds, "You just don't know the quality of work you are going to get."

Stewart agrees, saying the papers are usually over-generalized and superficial and at best would rate a "C" or "C-."

But the problem of purchased papers at Texas A&M does not appear to be serious. At least that's what Stewart, Kirkpatrick and Dr. Keith Bryant Jr., the head of the history department, report. Stewart says there are only about 12 cases a year of plagiarism in freshman English classes, and that only two or three of those involve purchased papers.

If a student is caught using one, the teacher has several options. Among them are inviting him to rewrite it, giving him an "F" for the paper, failing the student in the course, or recommending he be expelled.

thesis to the USSA," he said. "We are more interested in providing an intelligent forum for debate and discussion of national educational issues."

Hensarling cited the success of a California state student lobby, ranked as one of the 10 best in California by that state's press. He said the reason for the group's success was that it focuses only on educational issues.

Forty schools have already joined ASF, Hensarling said, and more are expected to follow should the fledgling take flight. Some schools are waiting to see how viable the organization is. Others are already committed to USSA for the rest of this fiscal year, Hensarling said.

ASF's plan of attack involves several steps toward its eventual goal of opening a Washington office.

These include: —Incorporation, already accomplished in New Jersey under that state's corporate laws.

—Obtaining financial support from charter member schools. Each member is being asked to contribute \$300 toward helping form the organization.

—Withdrawing member schools from USSA. Texas A&M University's student senate voted to withdraw from USSA at the same time they decided to join ASF.

—A massive recruiting campaign, initiated several weeks ago and continuing through the spring. Hensarling said he is talking to many student body presidents, trying for more personal contacts. "We've been pretty successful, particularly in the South," he said.

—Obtaining financial support from corporations, funds and foundations.

—Setting a national conference for April 20-21, in Dallas. Hensarling expects about 75 delegates from 25 schools to attend.

—And finally, setting up a Washington office, possibly by the fall.

"Initially we'll be concerned with recruitment," Hensarling said. "We need 100 schools to be a viable student organization. Prospects for viability look good, he said, although, as with any new undertaking, the future is uncertain."



Jeb Hensarling, American Student Federation president
Battalion photo by Jeanm

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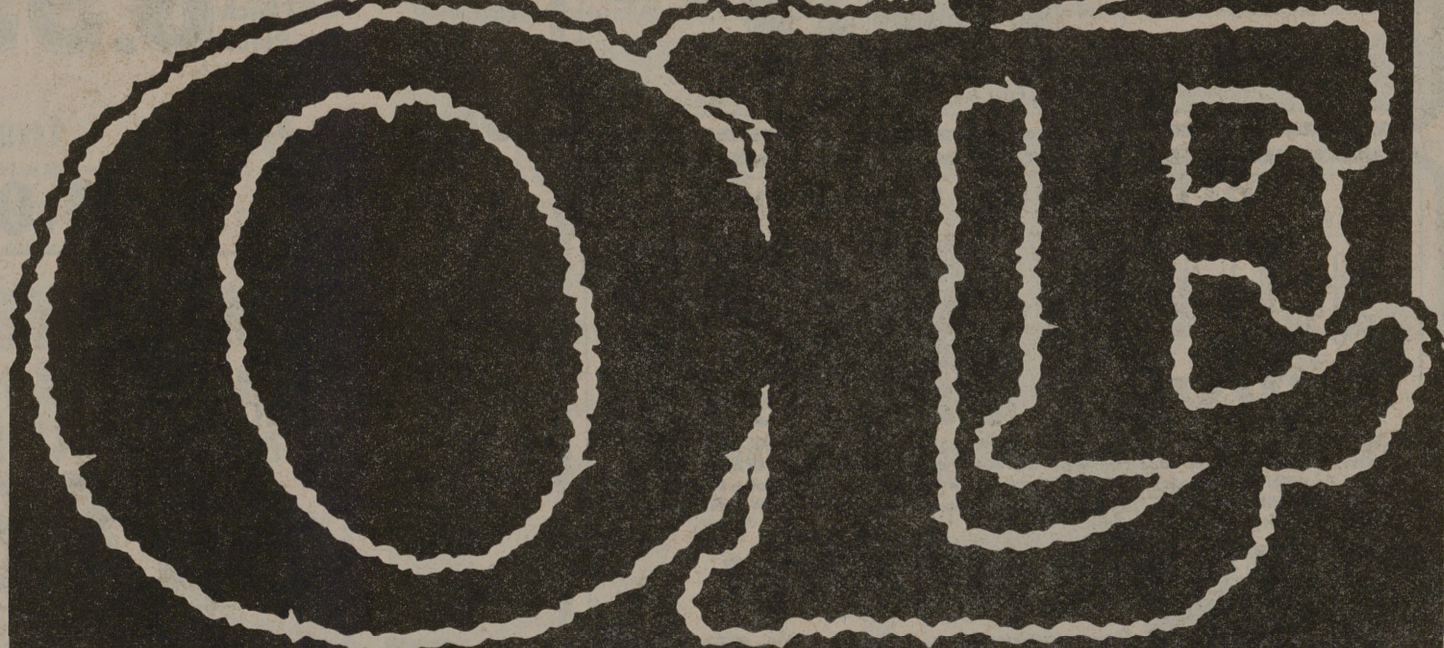
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