Pi Sigma Alpha Activities

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PI SIGMA ALPHA ACTIVITIES 1985-86

Officers

President . . . . Brent J. Belnap
Secretary . . . . Teressa Nielson
Publicity . . . . Rebecca Noah
Socials . . . . G. Wade Leak
Speakers . . . . Stephanie Spong
Colloquia . . . . Michael Knudsen
New Projects . . Wendy Bird
Faculty Advisor . . J. Scott Dunaway

Dialogue and Doughnuts

Dr. Thomas Greene addressed a summer Pi Sigma Alpha audience on Marx: "What Marx Said That is Right and What Marx Said That is Wrong."

Steven Hood began the fall lecture series with a talk entitled "Burying Mao: The 'Right' Takes Charge in China."

Gerrit Gong, special assistant to the Under-secretary of State for Political Affairs, gave his perspective on political science: "A 3-D Look at Applied Political Science: Politics, Bureaucracy, and Foreign Affairs."

Elizabeth Pond, noted author and Bonn correspondent for the Christian Science Monitor, spoke at a lecture co-sponsored with S.A.I.S. on international espionage.

Gunn McKay, former U.S. Representative from Utah, spoke from experience on "The Way Congress Functions: Can It Respond to Current Issues?"
Dr. Robert Rottberg, political science professor at M.I.T., discussed "The Continuing Crisis of Black Africa: Famine and Population."

Professor Michael G. Stathis spoke on a relationship often in the news: "Reagan and Khadafy: Comparative Politics of Antagonism."

Dr. Gary Bryner, recipient of a Women's Research Institute Grant, discussed his current findings in a lecture entitled, "Affirmative Action: The Search for Common Ground."

Lee Wilson spoke immediately before the French elections with "The French Elections: Headed Toward Chaos?"

Paul Rich of the University of Warwick spoke on race relations in South Africa.

Howard Ruff, well-known author and speaker, addressed Pi Sigma Alpha on "The Rational and Philosophical Foundations of Capitalism."

Pi Sigma Alpha sponsored a forum debate on Reagan's strategic defense initiative entitled "SDI: To Research or Not to Research," between BYU physics professors Larry Knight (pro) and Kent Harrison (con) with Steven Hood moderating.

The War College Current Affairs Panel visited BYU in January. The visiting lecturers, in addition to addressing classes, gave four PSA lectures: "Terrorism and Anti-Terrorism" (Lt. Col. Taylor), "The Reorganization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (Lt. Col. Roe), "The Department of Defense Budget and Strategy" (Col. Hansen), and an open panel discussion involving the above three officers as well as Cols. Smith, Hunter, and Welde, wherein they introduced themselves and the aims of the War College.
Welches and Cheese

Pi Sigma Alpha held its annual opening orientation for the purpose of recruiting new members and introducing the officers. Drs. Dennis Thompson and David Bohn gave brief messages explaining the organization. This orientation, in part, led to the largest membership ever in BYU's Beta-Mu chapter.

In September, PSA members met at Dr. Ray Hillam's home and heard him speak about Israeli politics with a special emphasis on the controversy surrounding the building of the BYU Jerusalem Center.

The annual "Oktoberfest" was held at Dr. Monroe Paxman's cabin in Provo Canyon. The evening's activities included an "entertaining" faculty talent show.

Dr. Gary Bryner hosted a November Welches and Cheese in which he shared his insights on the underlying philosophy and the implementation of social welfare policy.

Two War College lecturers, Cols. Smith and Roe, gave a presentation on ethics and the military at the home of Dr. Richard Vetterli.

Dr. Keith Melville hosted a February Welches and Cheese, discussing the evolving powers of the U.S. presidency.

Dr. Ed Morrell described the role of the L.D.S. Church in European politics at the final Welches and Cheese.

The Pi Sigma Alpha closing banquet was held at the East Bay Country Club. Elder Neal A. Maxwell was the keynote speaker.
Colloquia

Papers presented this year by Political Science faculty members to Pi Sigma Alpha included the following:

"Foreign Policy in an Era of Economic Interdependence: The Case of the United States"
--Dr. Earl Fry
  Paper Discussants:
  Dr. Stan Taylor
  Dr. Gary Bryner

"Sufficiency is Sufficient"
--Dr. David Bohn
  Paper Discussants:
  Dr. Ladd Hollist
  Dr. Michael Stathis

"The New Uncertain Sound: A Response to Jack Newell"
--Dr. Louis Midgley

"Nagging and Dragging: U.S.-Japan Relations"
--Dr. Lee Farnsworth
  Paper Discussant:
  Steven Hood

Constitutional Convention

In celebration of the bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution, the BYU chapter of Pi Sigma Alpha sponsored an exercise in Constitution making. BYU students played the roles of delegates from the fifty states in an attempt to create or modify the U.S. Constitution, their purpose being to gain a deeper understanding of current political problems and practice, and a greater appreciation for the document created by the Founding Fathers in 1787. Most of the delegates also participated
in a six-week preparation class taught by Dr. Louis Midgley that discussed underlying Constitutional principles as well as more topical issues. All delegates worked in small committees before and during the two-day Convention to hammer out proposals for discussion in the General Assembly. The students, after much hard work on several issues including congressional term length, school prayer, the right to privacy, a reorganization of the Electoral College, and an attempted rewrite of the first Article of the Constitution, failed to ratify any of the proposals at the closing banquet. However, they did learn much about the realities of political bargaining and the value of the present Constitution.

Financial grants for the Constitutional Convention were received from the national Pi Sigma Alpha organization and ASBYU. Judge Monroe McKay, justice with the U.S. Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals, delivered an entertaining and informative keynote address to the Convention delegates entitled "The Living Constitution." He stressed the need to understand the fundamental principles underlying the Constitution and warned against the tendency to legislate through the Constitution. He also attended the closing banquet and commented upon the weekend's efforts.

New Projects

This year Pi Sigma Alpha sponsored a current events class at the Eldred Senior Citizens' Center. Each week society members volunteered to give presentations or various issues of interest. Some of the subjects covered were terrorism, the Gramm-Rudman Act, the national debt, SDI, and Utah legislation on health services for senior citizens. The class promoted a lively
discussion and was enjoyed by both the senior citizens and PSA members.

Pi Sigma Alpha organized a career night in which professionals in various fields answered questions concerning career opportunities for political science graduates.