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The Opinions and Views of Ralph Wright - Election Special

Fuller Theological Seminary

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Bob Bason just stormed into my room with a headful of ideas for placing my name and platform before the student body. These brainstorms ranged from a telethon to napkins in the Refectory with a "Vote Wright" slogan on them. I enjoy the dramatic, but this was going a bit too far. Yet I appreciate all the support and suggestions my friends and fellow-students have given to me. It was at their urging that I decided to have my name placed in nomination for the presidency of the student body of Fuller Theological Seminary.

Closely linked to this decision is my philosophy of education. An institution of learning is not a place of indoctrination (though it has been used for such purposes) but a place where ideas may be freely discovered, explored, and developed to the satisfaction of the student. The raison d'être of a school is its students. This does not mean that other groups (i.e. faculty, administration, constituency, Board of Trustees, etc.) are not important, but their importance is dependent upon and secondary to those being educated. A school exists first for its students.

Fortunately the interests of students have usually been held to be important at Fuller. However, difficulties concerning what are the true interests of the students have arisen and conflicts of ideas, opinions, and programs have occurred. It is the function of student government to enter this arena of conflict in order to mediate and represent the needs of the student body. When student government is properly functioning the problems facing students are discerned quickly and programs are developed to meet these needs. The Student Council at Fuller should not only be the students' representative before the faculty and administration but it should also be a clearinghouse for student ideas and activities.

At the present time the needs of the students are not being properly met because of a breakdown in communication. This is evidenced by the fact that few students (including some Student Council members) knew who was on the nominating committee for this election. Where the Council has worked on programs that would benefit all students, the students have been the last to hear about it. A prime example is the 'new constitution' which was drawn up by the 1961-62 Council. Last year it failed to gain the necessary two-thirds absolute majority because too few students voted. All members of the Student Council realise that this must be passed if they are to continue to function both properly and constitutionally. Yet has this been brought to the attention of the student body? I favor its approval and urge all students to vote "yes" on the 'new constitution.'

I believe that I can supply the leadership necessary to make the Student Council once again an integral part of the seminary community. My participation on the opinion and social committee has shown my willingness to assume responsibility in student affairs. If elected, I intend to resign from other activities.

RALPH B. WRIGHT, JR. claims Brooklyn, New York as his hometown. He received his B.A. from Colgate University in 1960 and is preparing for a ministry in the Presbyterian Church, either in the United States or Africa.
in order to devote all of my energies to the responsibilities of the Student Body presidency.

Beginning in September, Fuller will once again have a resident president. Inevitably some changes will occur. Dr. Hubbard and the Student Council must maintain close relations to work out the problems caused by these changes. I promise that I will endeavor to meet regularly with Dr. Hubbard to discuss informally these issues and to present the opinions of the students concerned. Likewise I will work out, with the administration, the issue of a student lounge and game room. Though the girls of Slessor would like a kitchen in the dorm, I know that they would prefer the Public Relations offices to remain where they are so as to have an all student lounge in Payton Hall. This lounge could be open 24 hours a day with ping pong tables, TV, couches and coke and coffee machines. Other issues, small, but vital to those concerned, are: a worship center in the prayer chapel, a study of book-ordering procedures in the bookstore, more student-faculty forums, a greater number of visiting lecturers, continued pressure to increase the missions program, and ways to increase the participation of students' wives in the life of the seminary.

The office of president is a highly involved and responsible job with many pitfalls along the way. All that I can promise, in conclusion, is that with the help of God I will do my level best to fulfill the duties and obligations of the office with initiative and hard work. I will also support the nurturing of all spontaneous student initiative, whether it be in the area of theology, psychology, fine arts, or just plain daily living. Responsible progressive leadership is needed and that I will try to provide.

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WHY WE ARE ACTIVELY SUPPORTING RALPH WRIGHT FOR PRESIDENT

We are supporting Ralph Wright for President because we have seen in him the qualities needed in a good leader. He has demonstrated creativity, energy, and ability to assume responsibility in a multitude of ways in the past: while an undergraduate at Colgate, he was secretary and then president of the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship chapter, the manager of the all-school concert series, and historian of his fraternity; since coming to Fuller, he founded the opinion, served as managing editor and contributor, worked as technical director of the Tri-Theta Players, innovated the new "breakfast bar" plan, brought Larry Christenson and Philip Edgcumbe Hughes to the school, served as group leader for Day of Prayer on numerous occasions, and was the social committee chairman for his junior class; his activities with Student Council have included the co-chairmanship of the social committee for two years (responsible for the picnic, Christmas party, and Spring Banquet) and membership on the committee to introduce the much-needed changes in election procedure; in addition to these in-school activities, Ralph was youth director at the inter-racial Calvary E. U. B. Church in Los Angeles, guest speaker on missions in Africa at various churches in the area, and is now teaching Sunday School and serving on the Christian Education Committee of the session of St. James Presbyterian Church in San Gabriel; in the summer of 1961 he worked as a member of the "Operation Crossroads Africa" project, and this summer he plans to serve in the "Ministry in the National Parks" program. One thing upon which we all agree: "Ralph Gets Things Done." With Ralph as its president next year, Student Council will also get things done.

--The Committee for Ralph Wright for President
Barbara Smith, Secretary