The lecture trail: misfortune from misfortune

By Michael McNamee

Now that Watergate is no longer a revelation, with Nixon respectfully buried in San Clemente, the bad guys in jail and the good guys in paradise, it is time to open the doors to the players in cash in their closets and collude. The marketplace is flooded with Watergate books, especially books by principal participants — especially those from Nixon's personal staff. Consider "Mini-Me, Wyo, A Watergate Wife." Am, inevitably, the Big Names that are still on the loose are hitting the road to public the True Inside Story.

Indeed, because speaking tours is a recognized and respected way for public figures to cash in on their poor tax dollars. Jackson, Anderson, the syndicated columnist and O.J. Simpson, are making easy, that's right, easy, money. Taking home a cool estimated $250,000 in a season with his speaking engagements. Rumor columnist Art Buchwald complains that he is being swamped with speaking requests. Tom Wicker and James Reston, the main players in the New York Times, are also among the journalists who frequent the "rubber-chicken circuit." (If you've been to the D.C. dinner, you'll know what that means).

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The latest negative publicity which was given to the UA's concerts which were held in Kresge Auditorium on Tuesday, February 7th, however, has changed my mind enough to activate action and I feel that the time has come to comment on the reward of cooperation between the UA and the student government and through cooperation make life at MIT more worthwhile. Let's meet at least half-way to the MIT Community first; the concerts are a good opportunity to mix up interests in student government but to add another dimension to the life of students who are too often thought of as "think machines;" the funds for the Defense Department lecture are still uncursed; and last but not least, the details of fund-raising the deficit of this concert for future tours. any future concerts will be cooperatively worked out by the Finance Board. Knowing which to think for whom will eventually benefit the student government.

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Ziegler cancelled his speaking engagement.

"Chilling" effect

Silber's position is ideologically and morally sound, since Ziegler was not denied his right as a citizen to speak to whomever he wants. But the practical effect of this middle-road position is to cancel any efforts at getting controversial or interesting speakers to come to BU. If Silber's offer to Ziegler sets a precedent, BU will soon discover that they can't get many people to talk for $1000 - the going rates are much higher.

There is a term in the literature of another First Amendment freedom, freedom of the press, which applies here. Jurists speak of a "chilling effect" when they feel that a governmental action which does not directly stop the press from being free will have secondary effects that will restrict press freedoms. An example is the issuance of subpoenas for reporters who do not want to reveal their sources: while the courts have not stop the reporters from getting stories directly, violating constitutional rights of sources such as the press, the reporter is no longer effective.

Silber offers of $1000 to Ziegler for speaking had a similar effect as if, I suppose, BU could cancel their contract and the outcome of the affair allowed everyone involved to face with a police agreement, Ziegler would say who was the biggest loser.

Public interest

The outcome of the BU case does not offer much of a guide to the MIT student who is considering whether not to hear John Dean speak here in two weeks. BU has not yet indicated a public opinion in having lectures on Watergate, and the Lectures Series Committee and Senate's action in inviting Ziegler, raising that interest well with their two lectures. November 13, I expect you, some people who don't care for the idea of Dean making $3500 off the country's misfortune at MIT will boycott the lecture - not enough to dent the crew, but enough to give one hope for the future of idealism.

Personally, I'm rather saddened by the situation. This is one of those opportunities where a start could be made on public education - and non-commercialization of public education - and non-commercialization, why shouldn't these liberal voices be the first to speak out? I just wish someone would.

Letters to The Tech

Nattering Negative Nabobs

To the Editor:

For some time now I have been mildly bothered each time I read any article about the Graduate Association and/or its activities which The Tech feels is worth space in its editorial column. The latest negative publicity which was given to the UA's concerts which were held in Kresge Auditorium on Tuesday, February 7th, however, has changed my mind enough to activate action and I feel that the time has come to comment on the lack of cooperation between the UA and the student government and through cooperation make life at MIT more worthwhile. Let's meet at least half-way to the MIT Community first; the concerts are a good opportunity to mix up interests in student government but to add another dimension to the life of students who are too often thought of as "think machines;" the funds for the Defense Department lecture are still uncursed; and last but not least, the details of fund-raising the deficit of this concert for future tours. any future concerts will be cooperatively worked out by the Finance Board. Knowing which to think for whom will eventually benefit the student government.

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