MEET THE CANDIDATES

Nominee for the Office of President:

RUTH BAMFORD
Wheaton College, Ill.

Ruth is a graduate of Wheaton College and has an M.A. from Michigan State University. As the Associate Dean of Students and Dean of Women at Wheaton College, Ruth has as her primary responsibilities the women students, residence halls, orientation, student activities, and counseling.

Ruth has been professionally involved in several organizations. For two years she served as regional director of the Christian Association of Women Deans. In June, 1981, she was elected President of the Association for Christians in Student Development.

Nominee for the Office of Secretary:

DAVID WILSON
John Brown University, Ark.

At present David is serving as the Associate Dean for Residence Life and Director of Student Programs. David received his B.S. from Colorado State University and his M.A. at Azusa Pacific University in Student Development. He is presently a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Arkansas in Administration.

David holds membership in several professional organizations related to Student personnel work. Currently, David is serving as the Regional Director for ACSD in the South-Central Region.

ATTENTION MEMBERS OF ACSD:

(This article is proposed by the ACSD Executive Committee)

Change in ARTICLE I, Section 2, Paragraph a of the By-Laws to read: "The annual membership fee shall be determined by the executive committee."

Note: This proposed amendment will be presented for vote at the annual ACSD business meeting during the 1983 conference at Bethel College.
HIGHLY RECOMMENDED READING
FOR STUDENT PERSONNEL PROFESSIONALS:

Getz, G. A.
THE MEASURE OF A MAN

"In his letters to Timothy and Titus, Paul spells out in detail the qualifications for those who serve as leaders." Getz takes these 20 characteristics or qualities and expounds on how they can be developed in our lives. These qualities are not exclusively for man—they are for leaders whether they be men or women.

Tozer, A. W.
THE PURSUIT OF GOD

How to develop a deep and personal relationship with God. "Here is a masterly study of the inner life by a heart thirsting after God, eager to grasp at least the outskirts of His ways, the abyss of this love for sinners, and the height of His unapproachable majesty. It is theology not of the head, but of the heart."

Hendrix, John and Householder, Lloyd, ed.
THE EQUIPING OF DISCIPLES

One of the most recently published books on discipling which brings the expertise of 95 writers together. It has 16 chapters devoted to the various characteristics we need to be developing in our disciples. Each chapter begins with a statement of one of those aspects, proceeds to interpret the Biblical sources for the statement, and concludes with a review of contemporary educational processes for providing the equipping tools.

Wagner, M. E.
THE SENSATION OF BEING SOMEBODY

Wagner takes an in-depth look at the role self-concept plays in our lives. He then explains how our present self-concept developed and how we can overcome the insecurity (inferiority) we sometimes feel. Wagner looks at how the Christian faith holds the key to developing a secure feeling that you are a "somebody".

Blimling, Gregory and Miltenberger, Lawrence
THE RESIDENT ASSISTANT

This is an excellent resource book on the development and training of Residence Life. The book is divided into five sections. The first section deals with the history and philosophy of residence halls and their influence on the development of students. Section two discusses aspects of college student behavior including: patterns of student development, the importance of peer counseling, and behavior problems with subsequent aspects of confrontation and counseling. Conflict resolution, alcohol, drugs, sexuality, and suicide intervention are discussed in section three. The final two sections of this book focus on the development of community in the residence hall setting and the development of the individual Resident Assistant.

Wallis, Jim
THE CALL TO CONVERSION

Definitely at the top of the list on what it means to commit your life to the Lord. It deals with the subjects of community, discipleship, poverty, and worship.

Foster, Richard
CELEBRATION OF DISCIPLINE

Richard Foster's book is an intellectual and spiritual hike up the mountain called maturity for the Christian. Each chapter of this work outlines the history and potential of the discipline discussed, and then shows how to practice that discipline in daily living.

EDITORIAL

I have had the pleasure of being associated with ACSD for almost five years now, and I am continually amazed at the caliber of personnel employed by Christian Colleges. It is truly an encouraging experience each year at our conference to meet and to talk with Student Personnel professionals from other colleges across our Nation. Thank you for your commitment and attitude toward the ministries that you have as you work with the men and women God provides us to work with each year.

My preceding comments are not meant to "puff" you up, nor to say that we have arrived in relationship to our position. Rather, I want to focus on the great opportunity that awaits you at the national conference this year at Bethel College. Each year the conference provides for me not only valuable training, but more importantly, an opportunity to talk and to fellowship with other Christians involved in the same type of work that I am involved. Often, I have noticed myself becoming somewhat myopic in my vision, and fail to recognize that other people are involved in the same work as I. The conference takes me from looking at "my problems", and forces me to the realization that I am not alone in this ministry of Student Personnel work.

Please consider how attending the conference at Bethel can renovate you and your outlook toward your particular position. I am personally looking forward to the conference this year with great anticipation as to how God can use you to minister to me, and how I can be used of God to minister to you.

Hope to see you in June!
By RICHARD A. FOWLER, Ed.D.

Conflict Resolution

One of the first misconceptions we have about conflict is that in itself it is evil. Instead, we need to recognize that conflict is an inescapable part of life. True, it can be defined as a barrier to a desired goal, but by itself it is neither good nor bad; conflict only becomes beneficial or harmful when placed into a particular context.

James 4:1 tells us the source for all harmful conflicts: “What causes fights among you? Don’t they come from your desires that battle within you?” Recognizing these desires is a beginning step to resolution, but there are other telltale signs.

Usually when a harmful conflict occurs the tension level is such that even the air seems charged. The people disagreeing eventually sullenly withdraw or angrily explode; the focus becomes people’s emotions rather than the job of dealing with a specific issue. Then there are clear “we-they” distinctions rather than a sense that “we jointly” have a problem. Instead of defining a problem in terms of mutual needs, each person sees the issue only from his or her point of view and begins to develop an “I must win—I must not lose” kind of attitude. Of course competition thrives in this atmosphere and cooperation is snuffed out. The saddest result is that usually both sides lose in many ways.

Such is the case in many marital conflicts. I recall counseling a husband and wife who argued in my office over the husband’s neglect to pick up his clothes. Within a few minutes voices were raised, verbal punches and counter punches were thrown, and tension increased. I abruptly halted them and I asked them to precisely restate what was said in the previous five minutes. Oddly enough, except for vague generalities, the core of the conflict was forgotten. The situation had altered their perspectives from the rational to the irrational, with each side seeking to “beef up” his/her debate without the least bit of interest in listening to the other spouse.

But just as there are harmful conflicts that become destructive agents in our lives, there are conflicts, which when handled in a right way, become beneficial to us. Psychologists argue it is in the midst of conflict that people can draw closer together and values are solidified. That is, as pressure becomes a “barrier” or conflict, the drive for unity among group members increases.

We see this historically, as well as scripturally. History has shown that when a major threat plagues a country, it is then the people solidify (for example, the recent U.S. hostage situation in Iran). Biblically, in Acts we read how the church grew in numbers in the face of adversity and even extreme persecution.

There are occasionally times when we must question a brother or sister in Christ, who is headed in a direction we feel is biblically unwise. But this disagreement can become a positive and beneficial conflict in assisting a person to redirect goals or ways of thinking. The reverse is also true; God can use other people in this way to redirect our lives when necessary.

This can be seen in Galatians 2 where Peter reportedly withdrew from eating with uncircumcised Gentile believers when pressured by some Hebrew Christians. It was a move on his part to “keep peace” with his Hebrew friends. The Apostle Paul, however, turned the situation into a confrontation when he put Peter on the carpet and admonished him concerning his error. By being himself the barrier or conflict in this situation, Paul then was able to redirect Peter’s thinking into an alignment with God’s intention.

Another example is found in John 9 where Jesus healed the blind man on the Sabbath, and the Pharisees divided on whether this miracle worker was of God. In his discussion of this chapter, Arthur Pink (Exposition of the Gospel of John) believes the conflict between the Pharisees possibly involved Nicodemus as the spokesman for our Lord. He asserts that Nicodemus, and whoever else the second speakers were, held their ground and refused to side-in with the open enemies of Jesus. This led Pink to conclude, “All divisions are not necessarily evil, not all concord and unity necessarily good”!

Besides being a unifying agent in disguise and an authentic challenger of Godly goals, conflict can create a necessary “back-door” revival in the Body of Christ. When I was young my family attended a large, denominational church. At one point my father learned the choir director was having an affair with a woman on the church staff. When direct confrontation did not produce any change, my father took the matter before the church at a business meeting and demanded that disciplinary measures be taken. Up to this point those familiar with the situation had “turned their heads” to what was occurring. When the church body became aware of the incident and took definitive action against this man and woman a parallel to Acts 5:11, 14 took place. We witnessed that “a great fear came upon the whole church ... and all the more believers in the Lord ... were constantly added” to our number. Without the presence of a conflict in this case, God’s work would have been crippled. A conflict here was mandated by Scripture; the end result was edification and growth.

As mentioned earlier, not only the word “conflict” but the word “unity” is misused and misunderstood in Christian circles today. This often-uplifted quality, sometimes achieved through negative means, can ultimately nullify the creativity of a group. The results can destroy vibrant, interpersonal relationships between group members.

(Continued on next page)
Plan Now to Attend the 1983 ACSD Conference
June 7 - 10 — Bethel College
St. Paul, Minnesota

CONFERENCE COMMENTS

Plan on attending the ACSD Conference at Bethel College of Saint Paul, Minnesota. The title of this year's conference will be "Community, Commitment and Creative Caring". Some additional workshops are planned for this year's conference that should be of interest to many of you in Student Personnel work.

A new idea is being tried this year with the addition of a Staff Development Workshop on Monday, June 6th. This workshop will be presented by Mr. Russ Rogers. Russ is currently a candidate in the Ph.D. program in Administration and Counseling at the University of Michigan. He has also had experience in Human Resource Development and as a consultant with the American Arbitration Association.

This year the keynote speakers will be Jay Kesler, Kari Malcolm, and John Fischer. Jay Kesler is President of Youth for Christ/USA, and is the author of several books for youth and well known for this radio program, "Family Forum".

Kari Malcolm is the author of Women at Crossroads and is concerned with women in colleges and their ability to find their identity in Jesus Christ.

A special presentation concerning the area of Christian Contemporary Music will be presented by John Fischer. John is well known by many of us since he has performed on many of our campuses.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION
(Continued)

Basically, unity achieved through negative means is derived from one of two variables. First, it can be an outgrowth of a leader's desire to manipulate the group in a totally authoritarian manner. I define "totally authoritarian" as an attempt to turn group members into "puppets" or "carbon copies" of the leader(s). In a church structure, I have seen cases where a dynamic pastor, trying to fulfill his role as an "overseer" of his flock, has in effect molded his "sheep" into patterning their lives after his wishes and prejudices. As a result, the church many times begins to follow a man rather than the Christ of Scripture, the church's true "leader".

In a critique of religious institutions in America, sociologist Stanley Eitzen stated: "From the conflict perspective, religious unity within a society, if it does occur, has negative consequences. Such unity is used to legitimate the interests of the powerful." Eitzen's report reflects society's unfortunate appraisal of many church organizations. Could it be that the world sees our drive for unity merely as a desire to legitimize the interests of our leaders? Worse, yet, could it be that this appraisal is accurate in some cases?

Another problem with authoritarian rule is that it may lead to blind obedience by the group as a whole. In what is called the Milgram Experiment, psychologists have found this to be a frightening possibility. Under this experiment, subjects were manipulated into full compliance with the experimenter's commands. The experimenter, having a charismatic personality, was able through "high pressure" techniques to persuade the subjects to act in direct opposition to their own value systems. The psychologists concluded that such people as Adolf Hitler and Jim Jones were not, in reality, exceptions to high-level authoritarian rule. Evangelicals need to take notice here and stand on guard.

A second situation in which unity can cause negative effects is when Christian leadership places guilt on a group...
CONFLICT RESOLUTION
(Continued)

member for going against "norms." In many Christian organizations I have observed that pressures to conform to a set social order can be so intense that it is almost impossible to function unless the status quo is kept.

This pressure comes from the need of one or a few to generally predict and regulate the climate or behavior of those in the group. Diversity many times causes stress and results in a threatening situation. I am not referring here to doctrinal differences. For example, I have observed individuals who, when questioning the order of the church service, church financial matters, or the goals and direction of the Sunday school, found themselves ostracized or even discriminated against. This attempt at suppressing individual differences advocates unity through external pressure and guilt. A common rationalization might be: "For the good of the church and for the unity of our church body, you need to follow our leading." This statement is true to a point, in that we should be submissive one to another; however, people who raise legitimate questions, or challenge the validity of existing social norms, should not be stifled, nor should social guilt be used as a means of control.

True unity based on positive means ultimately can build and edify the whole group, providing it with purpose and direction. The vital key is a homogeneous message. Since the message is then the pivotal point of unity, a doctrinal compromise cannot be made. And with a strong doctrinal basis, everyone is able to understand his or her role in relation to the whole body.

For unity to exist, all parties must first acknowledge each other as equal brothers and sisters in Christ (James 2:2-9), and then acknowledge that God's absolutes must guide in our relations to others.

It must be an accepted fact, however, that even with a homogeneous message comes a heterogeneous application of that message. The message sets the ground rules; the application expresses a concern for individual differences and particular needs. In this context, group leaders can have a strong and dominant personality, but must recognize and accept the need for individual expression and creativity in the group.

First Corinthians (12:12-31) addresses this issue. Here the Apostle Paul implies that diversity may result from the variety of spiritual gifts, which incidentally is an indication of a healthy group. This variety may lead one believer to have more discernment on a particular matter (even a social issue) than another member. And, as Paul pointed out, these diverse gifts are given to us by God so "that there be no divisions in the body ..." Of course it is the following chapter, 1 Corinthians 13, which elaborates that love provides the protective boundary where differences can be expressed.

In achieving unity through conflict, I would like to make some final suggestions in conjunction with Acts 15. This chapter describes a dispute between not only Paul and Barnabas, but an undisclosed number of men over the issue of circumcision (15:1). As you recall, Acts outlines the transition from Judaism to Christianity, and in this process, many conflicts needed immediate attention to keep the message "pure." Here the main disagreement was over transferring Jewish laws to Gentile believers.

In solving this issue, the incident provides us with insight on how to achieve unity through existing conflict:

First, all conflicts are not bad. Nowhere in this passage was the disagreement considered sinful.

Second, unity is achieved through conflict when the goal is "win-win" and when mutual respect among the believers is practiced. This foundation encourages active participation and different points of view.

Third, we need to realize all members have particular as well as interdependent needs. Putting everyone in a "mold" tends to be counter-productive. In Acts 15 we see individual personalities emerging, resulting in a genuine attempt to solidify the body of Christ as a unit.

Fourth, any conflict should be expressed in a nonemotional and rational manner, where all parties involved respect the others' contributions. This includes good listening. In Acts 15, when the conflict occurs, emotions were undoubtedly high. The men, however, waited until they could debate the issue rationally in Jerusalem. Verse 12 supports this as all the multitude kept silence and gave audience to Barnabas and Paul.

Fifth, to solidarity unity, when a conflict is resolved, the body needs to express confidence in the decision reached. To insure this confidence, follow-up times and written agreements need to be made. This was the procedure followed by the council at Jerusalem.

And last, once a conflict is solved we must go on with the business at hand. We must decide not to use this past conflict as ammunition for future conflicts. This will result in confirmed direction and peace of mind for those involved (15:31, 33).

We cannot rest on the successes or unity gained as a result of conflict resolution. For apart from the Holy Spirit's continual leadership we can fall back into destructive rather than constructive conflicts (as was the case in 15:35-41). God as Sovereign, however, will ultimately work out even these situations in accordance to his perfect will.

Dr. Richard A. Fowler, Longview, Texas, is a psychology/sociology professor and director of guidance and counseling at LeTourneau College. His book The Christian Confronts His Culture (Moody) is scheduled for publication this summer.
APPALACHIAN REGION –

An ACSD Regional Retreat was held this past fall at Liberty Baptist College on November 11 through the 13th. The theme of the retreat was "Developing Student Leadership" with sessions on: Developing Self-Worth, Priority Setting and Time Management, Developing Leadership through Effective Discipline, Crisis Counseling, R. A. Selection, R. A. Orientation, and other sessions related to leadership development.

MIDWEST REGION –

The Midwest Regional meeting was held this past fall at Mid-America Nazarene College with some seventy-five in attendance. The theme of the regional was, "Reality Therapy" and how this topic relates to the Christian College. The two key speakers were Don Scott and Jerry Weaver. A variety of other workshops and seminars were also held during the regional.

HONORED MEMBER –

Eunice Heinricks, Dean of Women at Grace College of the Bible, Omaha, Nebraska, was honored by the Alumni Association of Grace College on May 1, 1982, as the Alumna of the Year.

NOTE –

Please let the editor know of any personnel changes or special events in your region.