Operations, Circulation Of Texan Curtailed By Board Of Regents

By PAUL BURKA
Daily Texan Staff

The realities of power politics invaded the realm of student publications last week as the University of Texas Board of Regents placed circulation and operational restrictions on The Daily Texan, student newspaper at the University.

The Regents adopted unanimously a resolution which eliminated all non-subscription circulation of The Texan, and which limited the power of the student-dominated Board of Directors of Texas Student Publications, Inc.

The Regents said the resolution was adopted for financial reasons to "assure that The Texan produces a marketable product," but the newspaper charged editorially that political motivations were a primary consideration.

Editor Charmayne Marsh suggested that Texan criticism of Gov. John Connally and the Fifty-Ninth Legislature now in session in Austin had prompted the resolution, which was introduced by Regent Frank Erwin.

Connally Appointee
Erwin, an Austin attorney, is a Connally appointee and is national Democratic committeeman from Texas, as well as a close personal friend of the governor's.

Among the editorials Miss Marsh suggested might have offended Erwin and Connally were an award-winning series of investigations of former Regent John Redditt's charge that Connally and Erwin had "played politics" with the Board of Regents.

The Texan also editorialized (Continued on Page 3)
against Connally's proposed "super-board" for higher education in Texas, and displayed an editorial cartoon picturing Connally as a puppeteer and legislators as puppets.

Claims 'No Politics'

Erwin said the resolution had no political motivation, and has offered to meet with the Board of Directors of TSP to discuss the matter.

Members of the publications board have protested not only the circulation limitation, but have asked the Regents to restore TSP's former power to supervise operations of The Texan.

While ultimate control over student publications has always rested with the Regents, TSP has operated virtually as a separate corporation for decades. Connally himself was a former chairman of the publications board when he was President of the Students' Association at the University.

Wait Approval

But the Regents' resolution subjected all actions of the TSP Board to approval by the Board of Regents. No action of TSP may take effect immediately, despite certain powers the publications board is given to determine what articles may be printed in The Texan.

Under the new procedure, actions of the publications board may await Regential approval for as many as 50 days. The Regents, like TSP, meet only once each month.

A student board member—the board of directors is composed of five students and four faculty members—said the Regents "have made TSP into a rubber stamp for the Board of Regents."

Stop Free Papers

In addition to placing TSP and The Texan under close Regental supervision, the resolution also eliminated the traditional practice of distributing complimentary copies of The Texan.

One of the results of this circulation restriction will be that legislators and other state officials will no longer receive free subscriptions.

Texan staff members personally delivered copies to the Capitol last week, until TSP General Manager Loyd Edmonds ordered that fewer copies be printed, in order for TSP to comply with the spirit of the Regents' decision.

Resolution Drafted

Texan staff members still deliver to the Senate, after collecting papers on campus.

A resolution has been drafted by the Chief of the Texan's Capitol Staff for presentation in the Senate supporting The Texan's editorial and circulatory freedom, and asking for Regental reconsideration. The measure is expected to go to committee this week.

Edmonds estimated that free copies, including complimentary awards to staff members and exchanges with other newspapers, cost approximately $1000 per year, or less than one-third of one percent of TSP's current annual budget of more than $300,000. The Texan is the wealthiest university newspaper in the nation.