Dean Places Kelly On Probation For Failing To Answer Summons

By JIM ZUMWALT
Thrasher Editorial Staff

Thrasher Editor Hugh Rice Kelly was placed on disciplinary probation by Dean of Students S. W. Higginbotham Saturday morning and through this action lost his eligibility to serve as editor.

In a letter sent to Kelly Saturday morning the Dean stated the action was taken for his “flouting of the authority of the University by refusing to answer a summons to my office after ample notification . . . and by further refusing to talk on the telephone with me.”

Dean Higginbotham reportedly wanted to speak to Kelly about the omission of the name of the Thrasher’s faculty sponsor Dr. Walter W. Isle from the staff box of last Thursday’s paper.

Kelly Summoned

Dr. Higginbotham’s first summons to Kelly was left with Mr. Pomerat at the desk of the RMC at 9:45 Friday morning. Kelly received the Dean’s message before noon, but made no effort to contact him.

The following morning the Dean tried again to get in touch with Kelly. Calling Kelly’s home the Dean was told first that Kelly was not in and later that he was asleep.

According to SA President Bill Timme, who was in the Dean’s office during part of the telephoning, the Dean did warn a member of Kelly’s family that if Kelly continued to refuse to talk to him, he would no longer be editor of the Thrasher.

“I Know It’s The Dean

Timme reported that later the Dean told him that he had overheard Kelly say to his brother, who had been sent to get him, “I know it’s the Dean, but I won’t talk to him.”

To verify the situation Dr. Higginbotham had Kelly’s brother, Bill Kelly, tell Timme over the phone that Hugh Rice refused to speak to the Dean. The Dean then put Kelly on probation.

Scardino Printing Co., which prints the Thrasher, was called and Mrs. Scardino was instructed to accept no copy from the Thrasher until a new editor had been appointed. The Dean also instructed Don Jones, SA treasurer, and Mike Derkacz, last semester’s business manager, that Kelly was not to have access to any Thrasher funds.

Kelly Apologizes

Sunday afternoon a letter from Kelly apologizing for his rudeness in not speaking to Dr. Higginbotham was taken to the Dean’s home by a delegation of students. According to Bill Broyles the Dean accepted the letters and said, “Thank you very much, gentlemen, but this does not change anything.”

University President K. S. Pitzer has given his support to the Dean’s action. Friday night he told the Thrasher “As nearly as I can tell the Dean handled the situation appropriately. As far as I’m concerned, Thrasher editorial actions have nothing to do with the issue . . . I’ve made it perfectly clear with the Dean that the Thrasher is free with its editorial policy.”

Kelly’s period of probation is scheduled to end June 3, immediately before graduation and therefore will not affect his chance of graduating.