

NEWS

FROM WATERLOO LUTHERAN UNIVERSITY

WATERLOO UNIVERSITY COLLEGE - WATERLOO LUTHERAN SEMINARY

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Keuper 1

UNIVERSITIES NEED FREEDOM TO

OPERATE, SAYS WUC PROFESSOR

Do students regard much of what a university has to offer as "intellectual chewing gum"? Do they aspire to nothing more than social ease or skill in salesmanship or a high salary in engineering?

Too many students of this kind are beating a path to university doors, according to Professor Harold F. Keuper, assistant professor of geography at Waterloo University College, the arts faculty of Waterloo Lutheran University.

Professor Keuper spoke today (Thursday, September 5) to the annual meeting of the senate of the Lutheran Student Movement in Canada, at Lakehead College, Port Arthur, Ontario. His subject: "What is a university?"

Criticisms that colleges and universities are not doing their job, and predictions of tremendous increases in university enrolments in the next 20 years, have made us confused and frightened, he said. We have no idea of how colleges and universities could fail to do their job because we do not know the exact nature of that job itself.

The university, he said, must search for truth and try to transmit this truth. The essence of university life is unending inquiry and debate, and the end product of the university is not simply education but a welding of imagination and experience.

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To achieve this the university must have complete freedom to range over the whole academic spectrum, Professor Keuper continued, adding: "This academic freedom is the basic essential without which neither the student nor the faculty can ever hope to see the university come to full fruition."

Professor Keuper then posed the question: "Why aren't the universities of North America performing the fundamental task granted them by their society?"

His answer: "Basically because we have strayed away from the concrete precepts upon which the institution is based and upon which it must operate."

"Education has always implied a struggle for a title by means of self-discipline and hard work. In North America we have carried that to the extreme. The degree, the title, is the end."

Professor Keuper said that we need to rediscover the joy that comes from learning, engaging in intellectual experiences, in new aesthetic experiments, and in new discovery and fresh accomplishments.