

4 Senators, 4 Stands On Youngblood Ouster

By KATHY MORAN

LANISING
The failure of the State Senate to oust Sen. Charles Youngblood (D-Detroit) from its ranks because of his conviction on a bribery charge was apparently due to the fact that his appellate rights haven't been exhausted.

Senate Republicans attempted to expel Youngblood last week but failed in a strict party line vote of 16 to 11 with Democrats solidly supporting their colleague. Twenty-six votes were needed.

Sen. William Faust (D-Westland) reasoned that Youngblood should be allowed to wait out his appeals while Sen. Carl Pursell (R-Plymouth) said the Senate had an obligation to remove the Democrat.

Sen. Daniel Cooper (D-Oak Park) was unavailable for comment. He was absent for the vote Thursday morning. Senate records show he got to the session at 2 p.m. Sen. David Plawewski (D-Dearborn Heights) was present but abstained.

A subcommittee of three Democratic and three Republican colleagues investigated Youngblood's conviction but deadlocked over his removal. Sen. Robert Davis (R-Gaylord) who chaired the subcommittee, said that the Senate's credibility was at stake and called for a vote on Youngblood's removal.

Faust said that an attorney for the subcommittee advised senators attending a Democratic caucus that "constitutionally, Senator Youngblood is not convicted until his appellate rights are denied."

It was this legal opinion that influenced his vote to retain Youngblood, Faust said. "The Republicans used the attorney general's opinion, but we felt there was a conflict because it was the attorney general who was prosecutor in the case," he said.

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Nine Schoolcraft College initiates have been sworn in as members of Phi Theta Kappa, a national honorary society for two-year colleges. It is the highest academic award a student can attain.

New members are selected by a faculty committee which considers only those who have completed two semesters full-time and maintained a minimum 3.0 grade point average.

New members are: Warren T. Brown, Garden City; Ann E. Corbin, Westland; Joseph Davis, Livonia; Lawrence G. DeVito, Livonia; Kay L. Grismer, Livonia; Roland Jakimowicz, Livonia; Renee Landreville, Northville; Susan McFalls and Jan P. Thiemann of Livonia.

Jean Pike, sponsor of the Schoolcraft Phi Theta Kappa chapter, commented that past activities of the society have included tutorial services, reading for the blind, and assisting at registration.



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"I could have abstained just as easily, but I felt that until the appellate process was exhausted, he should stay. I would frankly prefer that he didn't vote," Faust added.

"If he loses his appeals, then, of course, I would vote to remove him," Faust said, adding that any official, Democrat or Republican, should be allowed to wait out his appeals.

Pursell disagreed, saying that Youngblood was given the opportunity to resign and since he didn't, the Senate was obligated to remove him.

The attorney general's opinion stated Youngblood had been convicted and that "it was appropriate for the Legislature, particularly the Senate which has a responsibility to remove a senator, to remove Sen. Youngblood."

"Constitutionally, it was very clear we should do so," Pursell said.

The removal was particularly important in light of public concern about elected officials, Pursell said, adding that it was important to the integrity of the legislative body.

"We felt it was appropriate that he resign" Pursell said.

"He indicated he did not want to do so and we had no other alternative," Pursell had recommended that Youngblood's salary be kept in an escrow account until his appellate rights were exhausted, but his recommendation wasn't heeded. This is a procedure used when policemen are under investigation and their salary is released if they are found innocent.

Pursell said his mail has run "100 per cent" in favor of Youngblood's removal.

After the vote to expel him failed, Youngblood voted with Republicans on an energy bill, angering many of his Democratic colleagues, Pursell noted.

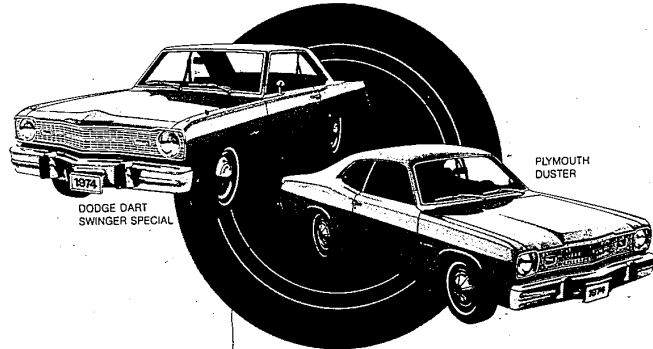
Democratic leaders apparently feel Youngblood will be defeated if he attempts to run for re-election in the fall and "the political process will take him out of office," Pursell added.

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