

# Dobie Fears Loss Of Academic Freedom, Wary of Danger In Shrinking Boundaries

By DOUG JOHNSON

J. Frank Dobie, renowned cowboy-writer-historian, was the center of attention at the fifth anniversary celebration of Hanszen College last weekend.

A buffet-dance Saturday night for Hanszen members and a few alumni initiated the weekend's events.

**THE HIGH POINT** of the program was Sunday dinner, at which students, alumni (including three ex-presidents of the college), faculty members, and George R. Brown and Melvin D. Ley of the Rice Board of Governors were present.

Following the meal, Dr. Dobie presented some random thoughts on literature and more-or-less-related subjects.

**"THERE MAY** not be any literature of the Southwest," he said. He considers some narratives worthwhile, but he added, "Before we get good literature, we'll have to have a transition of heroes away from politicians, generals, and millionaires. Another Hamlet wouldn't be as widely acclaimed as Colonel Glenn."

Dr. Dobie drifted into the subject of academic freedom: "Truth, like the coyote, has no bounds; yet today its boundaries are shrinking . . . Texas boasts of individualism, but that individualism is physical. Even in pioneer days, variation in dress resulted in that dress getting 'shot up' . . . A respect for intellects is at a lower ebb today

than in the time of Jefferson."

**HE CONSIDERS** censors ignorant and fanatical. They only want their prejudices accepted. Censorship, once used solely against communism, is now also used against skepticism.

He agreed with Samuel Johnson: "Patriotism is the last refuge of scoundrels." When asked later how one could educate such "clods," he commented, "Geological processes are slow."

**IN HIS MONDAY** night speech

Dr. Dobie said, "I decided to talk about myself." He followed with some reflections on his childhood, his experiences, and his pleasures.

His audience, though generally separated from him by years, recognized a deeply-felt love for life. "I'm a skeptic about some things, but believe in a lot of things." He confessed his attraction to a Mexican philosophy which says, "It's wonderful to do nothing, and then rest."