

The reputation and stature of the program's speakers are, in turn, a powerful drawing card for both students and seminar leaders.

"Perspectives constantly amazes me," said one Yale junior, a seminar leader. "Paros somehow convinces some of the best-known political personalities and most gifted speakers to address area high school students. I have no idea how he does it."

Neither does anyone else, Paros included. But Perspectives is still growing. Each year, Paros himself decides on topics for the Perspectives sessions, and he generally ends up with issues that concern him as much as his students. "Sometimes," Paros said, "it almost seems like I'm setting up an ideal program for myself as well as for the Perspectives audience." Next, Paros chooses potential speakers and sets out to persuade them to attend.

His salesmanship has paid handsome dividends. But during the actual sessions, he carefully limits his own participation to that of verbal referee. Paros introduces both speakers and explains the rules of the dialogue: generally one opening statement per speaker, then a rebuttal of the opponent's remarks or position, and finally the open period of questions from the floor.

But all of this bears the unmistakable mark of one man. Perspectives' originator is also its director, and Larry Paros is without question the *sine qua non* of the program. This has its obvious blessings - in terms of Paros' creative energy and abilities-but also its dangers.

The man behind Perspectives is thirty-three years old. Married and the father of two children, Paros is a 1955 graduate of the University of Massachusetts; in 1958 he received an M.A. degree in international relations from Yale. To date, Paros has completed all the work for his Yale doctorate in international relations except for his dissertation, now in progress.

He began teaching in 1955, in mathematics, but soon felt that he wanted "to escape Euclid for a while," and he switched to history. Since 1963 Paros has been chairman of the history department at New Haven's Wilbur Cross High School.

Paros has built Perspectives almost single-handedly and from scratch. No one -- not even his critics -- slights him on that count. But Perspectives deals in controversy. And whenever one man is the architect of a controversial program, there is always the chance that, unless he is scrupulously conscientious, his own persuasions and convictions may creep in unannounced. There is always the chance, that is, that he may unconsciously stack the deck in his favor. Paros knows this. In the planning stages of each program, he works hard to give the right kind of balance to each session. Ideology, speaking ability, and position on the political spectrum -- all these must be paired. Once on stage, Paros is an inscrutable master of ceremonies.

*Senator Wayne Morse addresses a Saturday Perspectives meeting. "The students," notes Paros, "have to mesh their preconceived images and stereotypes of national figures with the flesh-and-blood person standing behind the lectern."*