

Growing political and religious awareness on American campuses may hold promise of breaking the typical college student out of "a kind of suspended citizenship," a national student leader visiting UMD said today.

Robert Kiley, Minneapolis, vice president for student government, National Student association, sees increasing signs of activity in these two areas of campus life.

At UMD on a year-long swing that has already covered 32 states and 140 campuses, Kiley next fall will resume his own college work as a law student at Harvard. At Notre Dame, from which he received the B. A. degree last spring, he was president of the College of Commerce student group.

"Among too many students there is a dismal lack of awareness of issues and campus affairs as well as in politics and foreign relations," noted Kiley.

"Such unawareness gives credence to the charge that we students constitute a 'silent generation'."

Top student leadership is attempting to bring such students out of their apathy, he said.

"A lot of students would like to get into more active roles in student life and politics, I feel. But the attitude on the student, faculty and community level too often is that the student lives as a kind of 'suspended citizen' who while attending college does not engage in live issues but who must one day suddenly emerge a full-fledged citizen with

built-in interests and intelligent, positive approaches to the day's problems."

Kiley declared that unless the student exercises his interests and energies in the important formative years of college life he cannot expect suddenly to become a mature, effective citizen.

Two promising trends that may bring such students out of their disinterest, he said, are increasing awareness of the need and value of spiritual life as part of their everyday life and more active political interest as students.

"I am not talking exclusively about organized religious activity as such, although those with organized religious attitudes are beginning to substantiate their viewpoint rather than merely to pay lip service to it. Others see the need for moral concepts and value judgements based upon some code of ethics."

On many college campuses, political activity in such groups as Young Republicans and Young Democrats is increasing. "We see political debates on college campuses where they would have been unheard of a few years ago."

Exposure to foreign student leaders who display a keen and active interest in their national governments and international affairs as well as student affairs also is a stimulus to the U. S. student, he declared.

He said a UMD study of student responsibility, one of 15 NSA studies on selected U. S. campuses, will help set the pattern for increased effort in sparking student interest.