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Students at Forum Split on Question of Co-Ed Milner

Peter Smith
Managing Editor

Guilford students gathered for 90 minutes in the cafeteria Thursday night to debate the question of converting the Milner Residence Hall to a co-educational living facility, but were unable to reach consensus as a variety of students expressed concerns over the issue.

"I thought the meeting went pretty well, but I really do not know what we will decide about making Milner co-ed," said Richard Ford, associate dean of students for housing. "The sentiment tonight seemed to be split right down the middle."

The meeting, which was sponsored by the Quality of Residential Life Task Force, lasted for 90 minutes and featured a presentation by Richard Ford concerning the current and proposed housing allocations by gender of Guilford's 1130 main campus students.

The debate is mainly centered around the college's current limited ability to meet the requests of approximately 424 Guilford on-campus residents who wish to live in co-ed living facilities.

Currently, 52.4 percent of Guilford on-campus students request co-ed living facilities, 37.5 percent request single-sex "traditional" facilities, and 10 percent request single-sex "quiet" facilities, according to the most recent housing contract forms completed by Guilford students.

Guilford currently has the capacity to provide only 380 co-ed spaces despite the recent request by 424 students for the co-ed option. In addition, Guilford has the facilities to provide 450 single-sex spaces when only 384 students request the single-sex option.

By providing 75 additional spaces in Milner, it is believed that current student needs will be better addressed as the number of co-ed spaces will be increased to meet the campus demand.

Milner was considered as a first option over other residence facilities at Guilford because it is the largest and most recently renovated hall on campus.

But although changing Milner to a co-ed facility could help meet student demand, the proposal has met stiff opposition from various members of Milner. They argue



Forum panelists (left to right) Troy Clossen, Helen Mulhern, George Segebad, Scott Thornhill and Laura DeBlois/photo by Eric Tomberlin

that changing Milner's current single-sex status would displace 75 males who have chosen Milner for its unique status as an all-male traditional hall. Likewise, by allowing 75 females to reside in the once traditional all-male facility, certain Milner residences believe the "special residential hall community" or "fraternity of men" would be damaged or destroyed.

Furthermore, 70 percent of Milner's current residents do not want Milner to go co-ed, according to Troy Clossen, the hall director of Milner, who helped conduct a survey of Milner residents earlier this year.

"A strong majority of current Milner residents oppose Milner going co-ed," said

Clossen, a junior from Fort Worth, Texas. Personally, I am opposed to Milner going co-ed because of the time and effort I have spent since I was a freshman in helping make Milner staff and the hall special. We are really making progress now."

Said David Ameen, a Milner RA, "The decision to make Milner co-ed was brought up three years ago because of the amount of damages and other problems with the residence hall. We have worked to change those problems now. Milner has made significant improvements since then, so I do not really think the issue of converting

see MILNER on page 4 >

Carter Talks on War in the Middle East

Eric Longley
Staff Writer

With the United Nations' January 15 deadline quickly approaching, Campus Minister Max Carter is troubled.

In Carter's view, war "does not work." He is a pacifist, steeped in a religious tradition of non-violence. "Quakers have not resisted even personal harm," he said.

On account of the Mideast situation, Carter has taken part in many activities since the school year began to address questions of war and peace. He sponsored a forum in October dealing with the Gulf crisis. He was "very impressed with the quality of the questions" which students asked at the forum. These questions showed the students to be "informed and thoughtful" about the crisis.

Two other forums held at about the same time dealt with conscientious objection.

More recently, Carter spoke about conscientious objection at Milner Hall in front of about 40 students.

"It was a real pleasant surprise," Carter said, "to find a very supportive and receptive group full of impassioned concern."

Carter has placed posters in Founder's Hall offering counseling to students considering conscientious objector status. He has advised 17 or 18 students about their possible status as conscientious objectors. In the week before Christmas break, he talked to one or two students every day. These students held "quite a range" of views. All of them had moral, not political, scruples about serving in the Persian Gulf. Some were Christians who said they "wanted to take seriously Christ's teachings." Others were non-religious but had ethical doubts about war.

As for activities this semester, the Office of Campus Ministry is sponsoring a

Conscientious Objector's Support Group, whose first meeting will be next Thursday. J. Neil Armstrong, the chairman of a local draft board, will discuss what draft boards would look for in applicants for conscientious objector status. Carter thinks Armstrong's visit will provide a wonderful opportunity for would-be objectors.

Carter does not think it likely that there will be a draft. The military, he said, does not want a draft because of the morale problems that might be caused by unwilling conscripts. Carter says a draft might be possible in the event of "a shooting war that's highly protracted" and which results in high casualties. In addition, a draft might be instituted if the United States ends up maintaining a huge military presence in the Middle East.

The volunteer military, said Carter, is

see CARTER on page 4 >

INSIDE

- Threat of War in the Middle East is Gaining Dangerous Momentum.....2
- Student Shows Exhibit of Pictures of West5
- Life in Hell8
- Laura Seel Returns From Hiatus8
- Year-Round Basketball? 11