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Reflects On College Governance

I have followed with more than distant interest the recent campus events. My reaction to the crisis in the Student Government Association is mixed. On the one hand, I find Mars Hill has entered the mainstream of higher education with the raising of serious questions by students about appropriate forms of governance. Campus faculty are also raising similar questions about governance but in a less dramatic fashion. It is encouraging to see students and faculty seeking to assume some voice in decisions which shape the institution most influential in the immediate lives. On the other hand, because I know well the participants, I regret that such turmoil involves personal pain, frustration and broken relationships of trust. I would hope that these critical encounters become the building blocks of personal and institutional growth and maturation. I personally believe that they both can and will.

Since I choose, and I think not without foundation, to take a somewhat positive view of the long range effects of recent events, I would like to share some observations about the dimensions of the controversy with hope that they might prove useful in the followup period of assessment and redesign.

Through reading what relevant documents I could obtain from the cambus (the HILLTOP was one of the most thorough.) and introducing between-the-lines inferences based largely on familiarity with the campus, I identify two major contentions underlying the confrontations. Student leaders, some at least, believe that SGA has "no real voice in the governance of Mars Hill College," (i.e. representation in major policy decision making) and believe that student input is not taken with appropriate seriousness by the college administration and faculty even when it is offerd. While the two contentions are similar and related, they are not identical. Student or faculty participation in the major decision making processes could be obtained without serious attention given either by the administration. Such practices are presently called "tokenism." For this reason, I find it unfortunate that the debate has been couched largely in terms of participation in governance only. The far more serious charge is that students and possibly faculty feel themselves to be less than first class members of the campus community; that students in particular understand those of us in the faculty and administration to view them as incapable of informed judgment on critical campus matters or view us as unwilling to cultivate such development on their part. The very fact of the charge, regardless of its accuracy, brings into serious question our recorded commitment to the stated college purpose of seeking the development of independent learners and maturing problem solvers. I personally place substantial value on these curricular goals of independence and must concur that our actions have tended to indicate a lack of serious support of them. Or possibly it is more accurately stated that our actions reflect a lack of depth in understanding the many and complex dimensions of life which must be cultivated if genuine development toward maturity and independence is to occur among students. turn to page 6

Philosophical Profundities Of Dammit

BY Billy Stair

Last Monday morning I arrived at the Cafeteria much earlthan usual. Seeing that none of my friends had arrived, I decided to eat with Dammit. Though one could not call Dammit an extrovert, talking With him is sometimes quite an experience. In the course of a day Dammit overhears a surprising number of conversations. fact, he related one of these conversations to me Monday Morning; a conversa-

tion involving Susie Sorority, who was in the standing cafeteria line waiting for her usual Sunday dinner of fried chicken and cottage cheese. She was talking to her friend, Alphie Omicron, about the big party that I Phelta Thi had thrown the night before.

"Oh Alphie, you have been should there! It was the biggest party this school's ever seen!"

"Really?" replied Alphie, only mildly interested. was there?" "Oh Alphie, everybody was there! Well, at least all the fun people were there."

"Did everybody have fun?" said Al phie, noticing that line hadn't moved.

'Oh yes, Alphie everybody was so drunk!"

''Yeah I know. did everybody But fun?" Alphie persisted, wondering if he would be able to get a breast when he got his tray.

Well, I guess so," Susie mumbled. 'Tim Coolman was so drunk he took off his clothes and directed traffic on Patton Avenue."

"That's interesting," Alphie said.

'Oh, that was no thing!!!!" replied Susie, becoming more excited. "Anita Tension was dancing on the tables with a sparkler in her bel ly button!"

'You call that fun?" blurted Alphie hoping to drown out his growling stomach

"It sure was! That is, until the curtains caught fire and the hotel chargedus with a hundred and thirty dollars in damages."

"Don't you ever worry about getting caught by the school?" Alphie man aged to say while yawning at the same

''Oh never!' How the college could ever find out?" answered Susie confidently.

"Do you do anything besides have parties in I Phelta Thi?" said Alphie, hoping to change the subject.

'Of course we do, silly. We have pledge season twice a year, competition for the spirit trophy, and sometimes we sit together at the ball games."

"I was thinking more of service projects," said Alphie

"Oh, I didn't understand," replied Susie, stalling for time to think.

'Yeah, if I'm not mistaken one of the girls has a pen pal in Afghanistan."

"I'm certainly glad to hear that you're not entirely socially oriented;" remarked Alphie, picking up his silverware.

"Oh Alphie, just talking has made me realize that everything I am at Mars Hill I owe to I Phelta Thi!"

"Gimme a breast," said Alphie.



This sixth issue of the 1972-73 Hilltop was put together by: editor sam easterby managing editor. tim haden production manager mike orr business manager tom beyer advertising deborah barlow news editor frank farrell feature editors mary diercks, bonnie clark sports editor thad strom photographer joe franklin staff . . . karen williams, maura short mike conner, marilyn reid jean bartley. advisor jack willia.

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