

STUDENT GOVERNMENT

Pike SPEAKS

By Mark Grimes

Student Government Association President, Larry Pike, gave the annual presidential address to a group of approximately fifty interested students Tuesday evening in Belk Auditorium. His speech voiced eloquently S.G.A. and student concerns for Mars Hill College 1974. Pike discussed student issues such as sex discrimination, housing (off-campus and on-campus), alcoholic beverage policies, inter-residence hall visitation and finally, S.G.A. and student relationships.

First expressed by Pike is that the SGA "has never honestly attempted to serve this student body as the viable, powerful, influential organization it can be." In place of service there has been "empty rhetoric, no commitments" and a neglect of student needs. One urgent issue Pike promised to work for is "the elimination of discrimination in any form on the basis of sex. Pointing out that the area of greatest concern to students now is the removal of curfew restrictions placed on female residents, Pike elaborated that the curfew requirement isn't the single justification for seeking equality in the student body. He feels that elimination of sex discrimination in order with the purposes of this institution.

According to Pike, "there have been no sincere and/or conscientious efforts pursued by the institution as a total community to eliminate discrimination on the basis of sex."

The legal precedent for adopting non-discriminatory policies

has been laid since the passing of Title IX of the Educational Amendments Act on

June 23, 1972. Pike stated, "it has become apparent within the last year that we would be forced by law to eliminate all of our sexually discriminatory practices unless we voluntarily began efforts to correct our illegal policies." Student Affairs Council has been called to initiate a remedial program to eliminate all policies, regulations and activities of this college that discriminate in any form on the basis of sex.

He does not pretend to know what course "remedial" action will run, but it will be a slow process of study, consideration and implementation. The Student Government Association would actively support all fair and reasonable efforts of the Student Affairs Council to eliminate sex discrimination. Pike, finishing his comments on this topic, and, showing the seriousness of his intentions, declares "the SGA insists that the institution move toward the goal of sexual equality." He further advised that if the Student Affairs Council ceases to be fair and reasonable...the President's Cabinet (SGA Cabinet) will recommend to the senate that the SGA terminate its participation in the institution's efforts to eliminate discrimination on the basis of sex. It will also seek redress of this grievance by and through the appropriate judicial remedy.

Another student concern Pike spoke of is the problem of overcrowded housing conditions on campus. While first expressing pride about Mars Hill's increased enrollment (when other colleges' nationwide enrollments are generally down) he later

says he "must strongly criticize and condemn any admissions practice that accepts more students than the institution can

normally and comfortably house. "He says that returning students and new residents combined to require over 1,200 beds in the residence halls when the normal residence hall capacity yielded only slightly more than 1,100 beds. It is inconceivable that assigning more than thirty men to the Myers attic or placing over ten women in the Infirmary ward can possibly facilitate a proper and desirable educational atmosphere.

The SGA, in an effort to alleviate the housing crunch, adopted Monday night, a proposal which will modify present on-campus housing requirements. Realizing that desirable experiences acquired from group living during a student's freshman and sophomore years may be reasonably achieved and required residence requirements beyond that time may be meaningless. The Senate resolved that, "henceforth, junior and senior men and women, regardless of marital status, military experience, or age, be allowed the option of selecting on-campus or off-campus living experiences." With this in mind, expressed Pike, "it is hoped that the administration will concur in this proposal."

In Pike's address, he states "proposals are being prepared that call for a regular inter-residence hall visitation policy and for the possession and/or use of alcoholic beverages on the Mars Hill College campus. Pike pledges, "as long as I am President of this student body... continued efforts will be made to secure these privileges for Mars Hill students."

Pike acknowledged a past lack of SGA and student body rapport. Concerning his own conduct in office, he concludes, "I could provide effective

leadership if I did not conduct my office as I did last year." He pledges: "We will not remain aloof from the student body this year as we have in the past."

To amend divisions in SGA and student body dialogue, Pike proposes "to schedule dorm meetings at which he and other governmental officers can hold discussion sessions.

At the heart of Pike's address is his hope that MHC "become and remain a progressive institution, providing the best possible educational and social environment for its students."

SENATE SUMMARY

by Mark Grimes

During the first Senate meeting of 1974, held Monday in Belk Auditorium, major legislation was passed concerning student life. The first order of business was a proposal to reorganize the Fall Calendar of events. Whereas last year Fall Break was scheduled in October, the senate resolved to have two breaks--one from October 23 to 28 and the other from November 27 to December 2. The reason for this change is to allow students to go home for the traditional American holiday of Thanksgiving in November. Before this bill goes in effect, it must be examined and adopted by the Student Affairs Council.

The next bill passed was a proposal to eliminate discrimination on the basis of sex at MHC. Last spring, a similar bill was passed by the senate but was not adopted by the Student Affairs Council. That bill proposed change on the basis of a legal precedent; however, the present bill seeks non-discriminatory policies on the assumption

that a Christian institution "should feel impelled to do no less than treat all persons equally." The SGA feels the issue of "discrimination on the basis of sex to be the most critical issue presently facing this community." Former Mars Hill student and student defense attorney, Jim Ramsey, feels it "is the SGA's responsibility to come out forcefully on an issue as vital as sex discrimination."

The Bill was passed unanimously by the senate and will now be sent to the Student Affairs Council for further examination. To follow through with its intentions the Senate passes a resolution which states that the President's cabinet feels that it the Student Affairs Council fails to act fairly and reasonably and in an orderly manner to eliminate discrimination on the basis of sex, that the SGA will then take further action by seeking redress through an appropriate judicial source.

The last bill passed was a resolution to allow junior and senior students the option of selecting off-campus housing. It also passed unanimously and will now be sent to the Student Affairs Council for examination.

