

The Hilltop

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A Question Of Expedience

The question of money is always a rather touchy one, especially on this campus. Perhaps it is its scarcity that makes the difference. After all, Mars Hill is a private college heavily dependent on private means of financial support. Every penny must be watched, and that is a business too tricky to be always open to public scrutiny. We on the editorial staff of the Hilltop realize that this is true to a certain extent; however, since we the students pay a great chunk of the college's bills, we the students feel that we have the right to know more than we do. The old stereotype of the naive collegian who has no comprehension of money matters won't work any more. One would have to be blind not to notice the inefficient way many finances are handled; and even more so, when one sees up close how expedience and personal relationships intervene in the management of funds, he must wonder if the situation could often be worse than it appears.

It is practically next to impossible, however, to find the concrete evidence to back up one's suspicions. We at the Hilltop have already been faced with one such example of mismanagement, but the mystery which surrounds it (and which often surrounds financial matters) makes objective evaluation difficult. The incident involved a "planning commitment" made to the College Union for their budget this year. Note: there was no formal agreement signed, apparently because it was deemed unnecessary. In the "commitment" the College Union was to receive \$2000 from the Alumni Office to help pay for Homecoming events, this money to come from receipts at the alumni banquet. However, the alumni banquet netted only about \$600, and furthermore the Alumni Office never got the message about the "planning commitment". At any rate, the College Union was left \$2000 short in its budget and the Hilltop was planning to run an article explaining why entertainment would have to be curtailed spring semester. But then came Homecoming, and a band that didn't show. \$3000 was saved, and all was well at the College Union.

Though one would be less than objective to infer that there was anything clandestine about this incident, the way in which matters were handled leaves something to be desired for the student worrying where his tuition goes. But we have only skimmed the surface of this important problem. Surely this incident is not all that unique. Questions about efficiency in financial dealings need to be answered; it looks as if it is up to the students and their student government representatives to ask them.

Letters in response to the editorials are always welcome and should be addressed to "Feedback", Post Office Box 1148-c.

Cafeteria Routine Tests Appetite Endurance

Something really must be done; the situation that confronts each student every time he/she enters the cafeteria grows grimmer each day. We have, with patience, waited from almost the start of the semester for the cafeteria situation to improve. If anything, it has worsened in the last few weeks. As things wind down towards Christmas and the end of the semester, we can't help but wonder what the cafeteria will have in store for us. We realize that running a college cafeteria is a horrendous job, but the magnitude of the job is not so overwhelming that proper food preparation, variety in dishes, etc. could not be carried out.

Our complaints, we feel, are just: pork which is not well-done when served can cause trichonosis; cottage cheese and congealed salads spoil when not kept in correct temperature conditions; silverware that still contains remnants of past meals is unsanitary and unwholesome (one student complained that she tries to pick out the silverware where at least the germs weren't still moving); tables that are seldom cleaned (especially in the upstairs area) are neither appetizing or sanitary. These are unnecessary, dangerous occurrences that could be halted with better planning.

Too, we see legitimacy in asking for a wider variety of foods. There should be no overriding need to serve fish as the third meat choice every night. Also, there are more than three starches in this culinary world of ours besides mashed potatoes, rice, and noodles. Vegetables that are watered down with no seasoning leave little pleasant aftertaste in one's mouth. Cooked vegetables are assumed to be hot when served. However, all too often, the vegetables (and sometimes the starches) are cold when one picks them up from the cafeteria line. As we see it, there is no real excuse for this. Variety in the selec-

tion of bread would be nice, only on Sunday or if spaghetti is served, is a different type of bread served. Salads that contain brown lettuce in them because they are "leftovers" from the day before are unappetizing and tasteless. Perhaps, however, the most noticeable drop in food quality is in the dessert section of the cafeteria line. Pastries are dry. Puddings are served and re-served and served again until all the excess is devoured. (We counted one pudding being served three days in a row trying to get rid of the "stuff.")

There are other things that perplex us about the cafeteria. Meats tend to run out by 5:00 these days, and the substitutes that are put into their places leave much to be desired. The lines are extremely long, and when one finally does get to the front to pick up his/her tray and silverware, it would be nice if the trays and silverware were there--no less, clean--so that time would not have to be wasted yelling for trays and the like. (One student commented that the cafeteria should put up signs like an amusement park stating: "45 minutes from this spot until you get to the head of the line.") Why, as on Sunday, November 7, did the cafeteria have a buffet to serve only barbecue sandwiches--the typical Sunday supper. There was certainly nothing special about the meal, as buffets usually indicate. To beat that there was only one buffet line instead of the usual two. This was a ridiculous waste of students' time having to stand in one line for a typically "bla" Sunday supper.

We do not mean to be negative and unsympathetic to the job of the cafeteria management or staff. However, situations have gotten far out of hand; something should be done to not only put variety back into the cafeteria meals, but sanitary conditions as well. After all, the students are paying for the food, and they are entitled to at least those two things.

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