

Daily Nebraskan

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EDITORIAL

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HELL WEEK

Consistent With Fraternity Goals

"We, the member Fraternities of the Interfraternity Council of the University of Nebraska recognize our responsibility as a leader of the fraternity world to set forth a new training creed. We recognize the need for a program that trains pledges to carry out effectively their responsibilities when they become actives, one that is consistent with modern thinking. This program must recognize the difference between today's highly independent youth and those of thirty years ago while retaining the ideals of gracious living, character development, and scholastic achievement.

"We therefore recognize that mental and physical degradation, personal servitude, and such programs that hazard the health, well-being, and scholarship of an individual are inconsistent with the aforementioned ideals . . ."

Fraternity pledge training is once again in the public eye. During the past week, several chapters on this campus have been engaging their pledge classes in Hell or Help week, in most cases the same. Last week, Alpha Gamma Rho managed to get particular attention.

We do not plan to dwell on the AGR incident for other than a few short comments. First, we feel the act was completely ridiculous. Secondly, we feel it is in direct violation of Interfraternity Council legislation and certainly not conduct becoming a University student or organization.

AGR and too many other fraternities on this campus are still relying on the pledge training tactics that were used 30 years ago. Too many Fraternity men set back and say, "well, I went through it, he can too." Too many Fraternity men encourage their own chapters to violate University, Interfraternity Council and even their own national fraternity rulings which outlaw and condemn hell weeks or activities which are degrading and inconsistent with the ideals of the fraternity.

One would think that a fraternity would learn after being prosecuted once before for its pledge training. AGR was cited and fined \$300 two years ago for violation of IFC legislation.

But the question is not whether boys will be boys and kill rabbits to prove it. The question here is, what has been done to eliminate Hell weeks on this campus? What has been done to promote the necessary change in pledge training that must be made?

We would like to quote from an anonymous letter received by the Nebraskan. It points out quite well what the situation is within the chapters on this campus.

"I am not a quitter. I finished their 'hell week' and then told them where they could go. I slithered on my belly; I ate their eggs; I bared my buttocks for their paddles; I let them organize me, de-apathize me, chastise me, but after four days of agony, when the rest of my so-called brothers were ready to become actives I stated that it was no longer my desire to join their select group . . .

"If they think that I would like to be on the other end of the paddle, they are wrong. I would not even want to be the grocer who sells them the eggs that slide down the gullets of their pledges. If they glory in making a group of men crawl and scream and vomit, then they do it—not me . . .

"Unity, fraternity, social ability—bosh—

the objectives of the fraternity have become either 'be subservient to the active' or 'be superior to the pledge.'

" . . . The advance information that I had (about fraternity Hell Weeks and pledge training) talked about scavenger hunts and games and a work project of some kind. Well, we had all that . . . but that game only took an hour. The rest of the time we would be jumping when they said jump, sitting when they sit and eating when they said eat. Our games were exercises, and our work project was our minds and our bodies. Everyday we would clean the house, only to watch them explode the next night with more fun and filth . . .

"Hell week ended with cleaning, but no matter how much soap and water we scrubbed into those walls the stagnant odor nearly turned your stomach when you entered the house. Everything ended with that final cleaning—including me. That is when I told them goodbye.

" . . . I think it took guts for a man who had just subjected himself to four sleepless days and nights of physical and mental maltreatment to refuse a cold beer and leave the house that had been a part home to him for four months . . . I have no desire to play the role of Simon Legree to the new pledge.

" . . . I am glad that I quit, and my purpose in writing this letter is to explain that I am not a quitter in the cowardly sense, but to explain that I just did not sign up for the next course—a course in fraternity exploitation of the body of a man—a temple of God."

This situation is not unique only to its writer. It is, in full or in part, fairly prominent across the campus. Parts of it can even be tied into the sorority system's infamous Hell Night or fun and games week.

Some people thought that legislation passed four years ago was strictly public relations. Some people thought and still think that Hell Week is tradition and must not be altered at any cost. Some people feel that amusement for the active chapter should take precedence over character development.

We are aware that fraternity is going through a change. A period of evolution. We are told that expansion of the system, and rededication to our ideals and principles is of necessity.

We are also aware that the Fraternity picture on this campus has rapidly changed. But one aspect has completely been neglected. Freshmen training. Can the fraternity develop character, personality, individual leadership and citizenship without fun and games? Without personal servitude? Without regard for individual human dignity? Without killing rabbits?

We think so. We urge the IFC to discuss Pledge training. We hope they will investigate their pledge training creed which was passed only a few short years ago. Yes, the fraternity must change and is changing. Fraternity does have a significant position on the campus community. Fraternity does have high ideals and purpose.

But it has flaws and problems. We hope that this incident with AGR, which could have happened or could still happen to a dozen chapters, was not necessary to provoke an investigation into how to develop men. It is not only a black mark on the system, but one on the University.

GOOD LUCK GIRLS

Panhellenic Re-Evaluation

Panhellenic is to re-evaluate its activities, organizational pattern and responsibilities to day. We feel that the campus will be interested in what some of the decisions are in regards to this organization. Panhellenic is one of the major "power" organizations on this campus. Its program and policy effect the lives of over 1000 co-eds.

It is interesting to note that the sororities have all elected new representatives. It is also interesting to note that the information sheet given to the representatives urged that they appropriately consult their houses, the old representatives and officers in the house. It is also interesting that each was asked to talk to the alumnae Panhellenic adviser from their chapter.

It is also very interesting to note that supposedly the representatives turned in their evaluation sheets Friday so that ample time could be given to preparing a panel for the Monday session.

Three cheers. This makes one ask if the material will be cut, edited, abridged or altered to give a picture of nice-nice? We are certain that the panel will know all the answers, too. It's about time that the Panhellenic Representatives stood up and opened their

mouths—that they said something worth while, that they accomplish something.

We feel that one of the major faults of Panhellenic is its system of electing, if one can call it that, their officers. Their undemocratic system of rotating leadership does not consider the fact that an undynamic person could assume leadership and easily be "rail-roaded" out of her ideas and swayed to take those of other "conductors".

While they might argue that the rotation system gives every house a chance to have officers, "we counter with the argument, "why sacrifice quality in leadership?"

One of the points listed on the Panhellenic information sheet was: "What about the committee system—are there any new ones for which you see a need?"

The question might have been, "What about the committee system—could it be more effective and get broader participation and interest if committee memberships were selected from without the body itself and from girls who have a genuine interest?"

The more people who participate in an organization; the more people

who work for an organization because of desire; and the more people who participate in an organization because they have the qualifications of leadership, knowledge and interest, the better off it will be.

Another phase of Panhellenic that we question is its method of voting. The representatives are virtually powerless. We question if this is indicative of the type of people that sit as representatives. The theory which should prevail is that the girl elected to Panhellenic is their representative and should have the authority to make a decision for that house. Running back and forth with legislation makes one more cog in the area of efficiency.

Or is the underlying reason for this voting method that the organization itself does not do anything of major importance? Are its decisions made by its alumnae or other person(s)? If this is the case, we wonder then, why even have a Panhellenic.

One of the major purposes of Panhellenic and the entire Greek system is to develop leaders.

Panhellenic might ask itself if its operational procedures are contributing to this factor.

How Do You Teach Democracy?

One view of the educational implications of Francis Gary Powers' Moscow trial is offered here by Raymond E. English, professor of political science at Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio:

"The American soldier has weak loyalties: to his family, his community, his country, his religion, and to his fellow soldier. He is ignorant of social values, social conflicts, and tensions. There is little or no knowledge or understanding, even among American university graduates, of U.S. political history and philosophy; the Federal, state, and community organizations; states' and civil rights, freedoms, safeguards, and how these allegedly operate within his own decadent system."

A. Yes, I did.

Q. Do you think now you did your country a good or bad service?

A. I would say a very bad service.

Q. Did it occur to you that a flight might provoke military conflict?

A. The people who sent me should have thought of these things. My job was to carry out orders. I do not think it was my responsibility to make such decisions.

Q. Do you regret making this flight?

A. Yes, very much."

This exchange, in which U-2 pilot Francis Gary Powers exposed his lack of political sophistication before a 1960 Russian tribunal which sentenced him to 10 years in prison for spying, was abruptly recalled last week when the 32-year-old airman was dramatically released in exchange for convicted Soviet spy Rudolph Abel.

Among other things, Americans who remembered the trial recalled that Mr. Powers (a) exposed his unawareness of any reasons which his government might have to suspect the aggressive preparations of a totalitarian dictatorship confessedly dedicated to burying his own country; (b) admitted that he knew nothing about politics, and (c) confessed that he was principally motivated by the desire to earn money on a fairly lavish scale.

Pews Is Not an Exception

Most of us, in similar circumstances would probably have behaved as unheroically as the pilot of the U-2. We are an unheroic lot, the spineless, latter-day generations of a civilization upon which the barbarians appear to be closing in. And, no doubt, even if the pilot had possessed vigorous moral and political loyalties based on real intellectual conviction, the Russians would not have brought him to trial until they had thoroughly broken his spirit.

We think so. We urge the IFC to discuss Pledge training. We hope they will investigate their pledge training creed which was passed only a few short years ago. Yes, the fraternity must change and is changing. Fraternity does have a significant position on the campus community. Fraternity does have high ideals and purpose.

But it has flaws and problems. We hope that this incident with AGR, which could have happened or could still happen to a dozen chapters, was not necessary to provoke an investigation into how to develop men. It is not only a black mark on the system, but one on the University.

We are also aware that the Fraternity picture on this campus has rapidly changed. But one aspect has completely been neglected. Freshmen training. Can the fraternity develop character, personality, individual leadership and citizenship without fun and games? Without personal servitude? Without regard for individual human dignity? Without killing rabbits?

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