

RAM NEWSGRAM . . .

Investigation Needed

CHARGE TO THE RAM COUNCIL: An immediate investigation of the Ram Newsgram, its editorial policy, its news content and its purpose.

Throughout the year, The RAM Newsgram has been published with the following statement in its masthead:

"A WEEKLY publication of the Residence Association for Men of the University of Nebraska. The opinions expressed by contributing writers do not necessarily reflect the views of the Residence Association for Men or of the Management of Selleck Quadrangle."

However, it is quite evident that the time has come for the RAM Newsgram staff to begin answering to some type of editorial or publications committee. Once a newspaper, be it a metropolitan daily, the Daily Nebraskan or a junior high publication, begins to substitute hearsay for fact in either its news columns or editorials, the publication no longer can pretend to be anything but a printed rumor mill.

AND, ONCE a newspaper falls into this category, its personnel should immediately re-evaluate its purpose and policy.

What has prompted our charge for an immediate investigation?

IN THE February 12 Newsgram, an editorial entitled "To Kill a Dinosaur" appeared. In the editorial the writer attempted to point out that representatives of the fraternity system had once again shown that the "demise of hell weeks" is not fast approaching.

To prove his point, the writer singled out a particular fraternity and its members' actions and comments in order to present a radical attack on fraternity hell weeks.

HE BEGAN his account of an encounter with "hell week participants" by saying:

"During the past week, one or more pledges of Sigma Nu fraternity were

chased into Selleck Quadrangle by a particularly sadistic group of actives and forced to take refuge in the rooms. Seldom in peacetime will you see anyone so terrified. The torture which awaited them seemed to consist mainly of various unpalatable foods, but it was bad enough to cause them to threaten various, track and field records of escaping."

HOWEVER, THE writer FAILED to adhere to the journalists' creed — the objective reporting of the facts.

Did the Newsgram writer realize that the fraternity WAS NOT in the middle of hell week? Did the Newsgram writer know that the pledge was being chased by the active because the active was trying to steal the pledge away from his pledge class which was leaving on its pledge sneak? Was the Newsgram writer told that "various unpalatable foods" were awaiting the pledge? And, how sadistic was the group of actives?

IF THE on-the-scene-observer would have analyzed the situation more carefully, he might have realized that the "peacetime terror" was nothing more than an example of the excitement and fun connected with pledge sneaks.

However, the subject of your misinterpretation is secondary to the fact that you have misrepresented the facts . . .

YOURS COULD be an important function — that of serving as the voice of the independents on campus. You have many people to applaud, many events and activities to cover and you are representing a large percentage of University students.

Perhaps if your publication would always keep in mind the principles of objectivity, your newspaper would become an even more respected means of communication among your readers.

MAYBE WITH more direction, maybe with an effective editorial policy set up by the RAM Council, your paper will serve a purpose.

From the

GAP Vine

—by george a. peterson

"Fraternities Must Adapt To Changing Conditions"

This headline in last Wednesday's Rag appeared as one of the lead stories. It spoke rather optimistically of the survival in the future of the fraternity systems.

It is unfortunate this outside observer, examining the institution from without, cannot share the same optimism, and must take exception to the article as far as it concerns the Nebraska campus.

I cannot help but feel that the lone voice of Don Ferguson, who is sincerely asking for and who is dedicated to reform within the fraternity system, is like "one crying in the wilderness," for by all appearances his admonitions are not heeded by most of the fraternity leaders who occupy powerful and influential positions.

The fraternities of this campus still follow the philosophy of "keg, combo, and collection of couples approach to social life . . ." They show no signs of wanting to adapt to changes and reform themselves from within.

Take the action of the Student Council (predominately Greek) back in December. Steve Christensen introduced the resolution for the Council to go on record as resisting action to ban discriminatory clauses from their constitutions and by-laws, and to encourage voluntary action by the fraternities themselves toward adapting more liberal constitutions and by-laws.

Who objected to consideration? None other than Chip Kuklin. It carried by the necessary two-thirds majority, thus, in effect, defeating the resolution. It was not even considered important enough for discussion.

What is really precious, is the line of thinking expressed by Don Burt, council president, after the meeting. He said that he did not feel the prob-

lem would come to Nebraska for at least several years, and perhaps never. "To consider this motion now, even before the problem begins, would serve no useful purpose," Burt commented.

This, to me, is gross procrastination. It is like waiting until Russia has launched a nuclear attack before starting to dig your fall out shelter.

Remember that card section abortion during the televised Nebraska-Missouri football game when two Corn Cob pledges were abducted so the card section could be sabotaged? At the time, the big sub rosa scare was on and served as the scapegoat for the poorly executed plan. Actually, according to very reliable sources, this was the work of a social fraternity and not a sub rosa group.

That phenomenon—Hell Week—has been officially terminated, but by all indications it unofficially is still as strong as ever as evidenced by one pledge class caught playing with firecrackers late at night last weekend.

Getting back to that front page story.

From my interpretation many of the optimistic views and opinions expressed in the story were obtained at the National Interfraternity conference in Pittsburgh. Doesn't this seem a biasing factor? Doesn't it seem most logical that men attending the conference would tend to be pro-fraternity? Also there is no time given to adverse views and recent fraternity failures.

Williams College and the University of Wisconsin are two such failures I have in mind. After 129 years after the first fraternity was founded at Williams College, last spring the board of trustees adopted committee recommendations to abolish fraternities as living units.

As for the University of Wisconsin, according to

the November 14 issue of the Rag, the Wisconsin "faculty members passed a resolution this week stating that all fraternities and sororities must demonstrate autonomy from their national organizations in selecting members." If not, they were to be subject to university policing.

These certainly aren't examples of voluntary reform and an inter-recognition and desire to adapt to changing conditions. If Nebraska's chapters don't start making a more determined effort the same could easily happen here.

Another part of the story that was questionable in my mind was the reference to the Syracuse plan where "residence halls" have brought in "lecturers, one-act plays, recitals, and other forms of cultural programs . . ." Is "residence halls" in this cast used the same as "fraternity"? If not, then what it says is that fraternities are modeling their programs after those initiated by other types of living units, supposedly to meet strong competition, thus insuring the survival of the fraternities.

In challenging the figures which "indicated that undergraduate membership in fraternities over the past five years has increased from 1,578,870 to over 2,600,000," I point to the rising college enrollment. I ask if the increase is in proportion to the increased enrollments?

By now, if you Greeks have stayed with me this long, you are no doubt forming such descriptive adjectives about me as "uninformed," "prejudiced," and "just plain stupid." However, this is your image to this particular "outsider" and unless you start listening and acting as Don Ferguson has suggested, I feel I can safely predict that the fraternity system on this campus will continue to . . . FADE . . . Fade . . . fade . . .

Guard Replies To Attack

It is too bad indeed that some individuals on this campus, cannot think in any terms other than personality conflicts. Recently, one such "individual" felt the urge to comment on a recent article. It is too bad that that one individual is so constructive that she must lower herself to the level of the immature and attack personality instead of the issues.

In addition to this immature action on the part of one who gives the impression of purity in act and deed, she demonstrated through her wordy literary incompetence, that she has an inability to read correctly and think about what she has read—attempting to see it in the context and manner in which it was presented.

This young lovely, who shattered her own image as being an outstanding contributor to the activity world, should have spent her time defending the good points of her "pets." Oh yes, she tried. For example, to point out how she can't read correctly, she referred to Ahmad Jamal — too bad he was here last year and not this year. It is also too bad that she isn't aware of the success last year of those other groups which did appear. And, we might add, the Union didn't lose their shirt.

She noted that First Glance was non-profit. This is truly great to hear—especially since no one even asked about it. The question was—what do they do with the funds from the Student Directory?

OH YES—then she attacks FRATERNITY. According to the Greek definition of fraternity, all "sororities" except one—the one she belongs to—call themselves "Fraternity Organizations for Women." We apologize to her for excluding her from the group of Fraternity which includes a considerable number of Greek Women. Then again, maybe it is too bad that they can't belong to a "sorority."

Fraternity, Miss C, has been under attack—and if you will read the paper once in a while other than when you write, you would discover that it has not been unmolested. The columns and articles of the recent days have been very critical of the system—one which must adapt and become a part of the institution—or get lost.

So, what you should have gotten from the article was this—that too many organizations have lost sight of goals. They lack leadership which is willing to become unpopular in order to really lead—not be a wishy-washy-middle-of-the-roader who will compromise and take the defensive.

IF YOU REALLY believe that the organizations of which you have been a part are worth two hoots (or three), you should have made an effort to tell the campus.

Maybe you do do some good—but how many people ever know it unless they hear about it. Your actions would be covered in full on the front page of the Nebraskan—editor Jensen isn't anti-anyone in the news-columns, yet.

And, if you or any other organization is not fulfilling any purpose; if all you do is meet and spin your wheels giving an endless number of workers' extra points; if you become defensive instead of combating opposition with strong offensive, positive programs; then that organization deserves the well-known boot!

The major problem with organizations on this campus is that they are unwilling to take pride in what "little" they do accomplish. Many "leaders" become timid when confronted. If they believe in what they are doing, why don't they talk about it? Why do they always have to be apologetic and dabble in personality conflicts? Criticism is justified anytime that there is room for improvement—And Show us the perfect Organization!

Yes Vicky, there is a Santa Claus—someday he may even make you positive instead of negative. —don ferguson

File It Under . . .

NEW BUSINESS

by don burt

Okay, gang, now that we've gyred and gimble and sprayed our pellets of wrath among the troops, hoping, perhaps, to find the target at least once, let's begin to think positively! Let's not think in terms of "isn't" and "can't", but rather in terms of "is" and "can."

Last Spring a Lincoln newspaper opined that, "The legislators, the University and teachers colleges and, most important, the people of Nebraska can benefit greatly by the best possible understanding between the Legislature and the educational institutions."

In that editorial comment can be found the basis of the Student Council Senators Program. The Senators Program has been organized by students, and has been designed to allow for the participation of as many students as possible. The first phase of the Program will concentrate on encouraging living units to invite a Senator for dinner. Student Council supplying all interested living units with brief biographical information on the various Senators, as well as helpful suggestions for contacting Senators and holding discussion sessions with them.

Phase two consists of a series of small noon luncheons with Senators and students from their districts, while phase three will feature a series of speaking engagements by Senators at meetings of student organizations.

Now come the all-im-

portant questions: What good will it do? Why even bother to bring a Senator down here? The answers to these questions can be found by examining the unique opportunity that we have as students.

A business enterprise is judged, to a great extent, by the product it turns out. At the University of Nebraska, today, we are the product! Education is the business of our University, and we, as students, represent the success of that business. The only way a business can grow is to sell its product and likewise, an excellent way to insure the growth and development of our University is to sell its product to those who hold the "purchasing power".

Why not meet with a Senator? Why not tell him how much your education means to you, or better yet, how much it will mean to your brothers and sisters, or your children? You don't have to know the details of the University budget — you don't have to know what percentage of the salary increases will go for teaching. This information is useful, but not necessary.

All you have to know is why the University of Nebraska is important to you — all you have to have is an interest in Nebraska government and a hell of a lot of pride in your school. You can sell yourself to a Senator. You can show him the kind of mature adult that is being fashioned out of the "blood, sweat, and tears" of a four-year academic adventure. Don't try to "snow" him — you don't have to! All you have to do is be yourself — a student at the University of Nebraska who is here for a good education, and who is concerned about the state in which he lives. That should be enough to make a Senator certain that this "higher education" stuff is well worth the price.

Five hundred students have said they are interested in doing something. Why not five thousand — or ten thousand? Why doesn't every single student take it upon himself to contact a Senator and bring him to the campus? Here's our chance to start repaying the debt that each of us owes to the University.

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QUENTINS

Problem Of The Week

QUESTION: It is known that there is one counterfeit coin in a collection of similar coins. What is the least number of weight trials necessary to identify the counterfeit?

Bring or send answers to this week's problem to 210 Burnett. The solution will be printed next week along with another problem.

SOLUTION: The answer to last week's problem:

There are 3 permutations aside from the original arrangement.



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Business Manager: John Teller
Assistant Business Manager: Jay Groth
Circulation Manager: Mike MacLean
Editor: John Teller
Editorial Board: John Teller, Jay Groth, Mike MacLean, John Teller, Jay Groth, Mike MacLean