

Editorials

Commentary

The sisters—another side of the Greeks

Throughout the semester the Greek system has been urged to dispense with worthless and cruel tradition and to modernize itself. This modernization must occur or the demise of the system is inevitable.

Before, the issues have centered mainly on the fraternity system and its problems with outdated pledge training. And the cry was "change yourself or be changed by others." Under this threat, and perhaps because of a new awareness on the part of fraternity members, IFC has taken the first steps toward revision.

**BUT BEFORE ANYONE** starts patting themselves on the back, or starts throwing around words like "modern" or "mature," take a look at the sisters.

Ah, yes, the sisters. No physical hazing here, no shoe-shining, no all-night work sessions, and no Hell Weeks. But no progress either.

If pledge training is the Achilles Heel of fraternities then Rush Week is the sororities' sore spot.

The system under which girls obtain members has not basically changed in 30 years, except for changes made by administration. It is an outmoded, cruel and silly system. The number of girls deceived, the degrading activities and the complaints to the Regents increase each year. The songs, crocodile tears, lies, secrecy, jealousy and avarice (which are carefully rehearsed and played out each Rush Week) defy description.

**THERE IS NOW BEFORE** the sororities on campus a proposal for a change in Rush Week. This is not a conspiracy by administration, nor

an attempt by a few to rule, but an example of meaningful change brought about within the system.

The points are valid and supported by years of experience. Yet no change is forthcoming. Panhellenic has of yet been unable to obtain full support for this change. And full support is necessary for a change of this nature.

All objections are based on fear. Personal fear. "What will my house lose, how will it hurt me?" The problem here is one of too narrow vision.

**EVERY HOUSE WILL** lose if the Regents defer rush. And the possibility is imminent. Every house will lose if small and petty greed overrules progress and change.

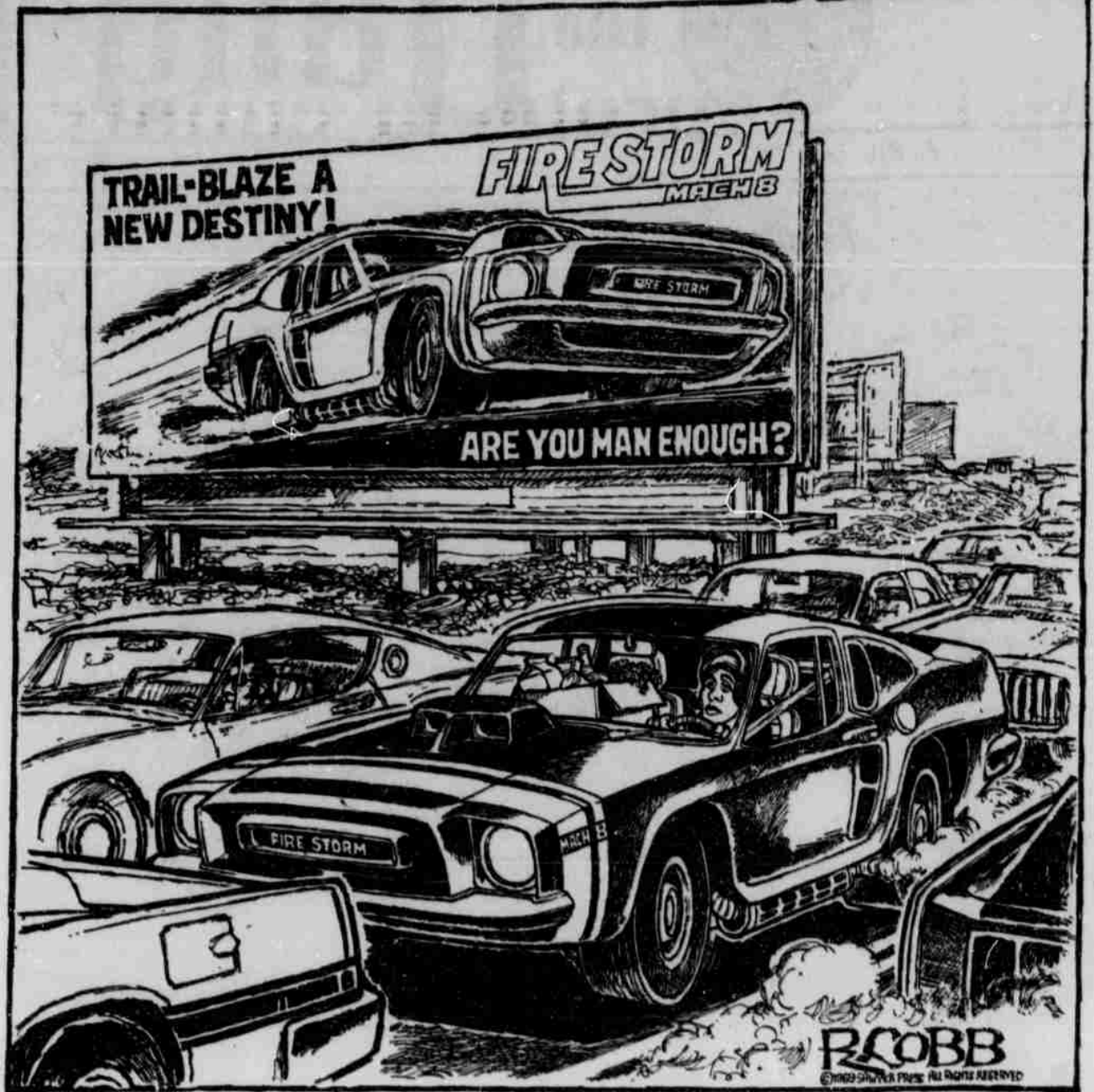
Some have suggested that change is needed, but not this change; or that change is not necessarily progress. Perhaps not. Perhaps this new system is not perfect. But what is? Status quo is never change. Status quo will never be progress.

The strength of this proposal, like the strength of the new pledge contract, is not that it is a cure-all or a final answer, but that it is an attempt from within the system. A workable attempt that can start needed change now.

If a system can not change itself, if it is that helpless and static, then perhaps it deserves to be left behind in the glory of its traditions.

Houses that have rejected this proposal would do well to reconsider their stands and evaluate their motives. And then to re-think their decision in the light of the system's place in a changing society.

June Wagoner



The students are ignored in dorm rent hike

**Editor's Note:** Following is an open letter concerning the recent announcement by the Regents of a dorm rate increase. The authors are Bill Gilpin, Housing Policy committee member, and Mickey Brazeal, Schramm Hall student assistant.

According to the SAC document the Regents passed last June, "students should have a clearly defined means to participate equitably in the formation of institutional policies and procedures which affect student life."

We should. We don't. And because of this, we sometimes get screwed around. Witness the recent action on dormitory rent.

It's going to go up, from \$800 per year to \$880 per year, and that increase will include the linen service that used to cost \$14, and \$2 more per student for dorm government.

**NOW EQUITABLE** participation ought to mean at least some discussion of the rates by students. But it's a little bit hard for students to discuss the new rates because no financial information has been released yet — hopefully it will be released shortly.

Students haven't been told yet so that the Regents could decide on the increase without being subject to outside pressures. We can understand how this makes their job an easier one. But it

also decreases their responsibility to allow for student participation.

About two months ago, the Housing Policy committee was informed by M. Edward Bryan, the Director of Housing, that dormitory rates were being reevaluated. At that time, he said, an increase did not appear necessary. IDA was also informed that the rates were being re-evaluated. It happens every year.

But the housing contracts, which usually come out the week before spring vacation, were never distributed, and rumors began to circulate about a rent increase. It's been hard for students to make plans for next year, or even for the summer, without knowing how much the dorms will cost.

**STUDENTS RECOGNIZE** the complexity of budgeting roughly four million dollars for housing, but that complexity does not justify the lack of communication about the process of deciding on room and board rates. Especially when the effects on students are so great that even a minimal amount of communication could have prevented a lot of dissatisfaction.

And why did it take so long to decide? Bryan told the Housing Policy committee Friday that there are two main reasons for a rate increase: a 7 1/2 per cent increase in labor costs to meet new minimum wage requirements, and a 4 per

cent increase due to inflation. But the University has known since 1966 that it was subject to minimum wage laws, and the rates they had to meet for next year.

Also, any well informed student knows that costs are increasing 3 or 4 per cent each year due to inflationary effects. Yet the University found it impossible to anticipate these increasing costs until the last minute. Why?

Now, at \$100 a month, a dormitory has little financial advantage over an apartment. All this delay and uncertainty has created a lot of bad feeling about the new dorm rate — maybe enough bad feeling to make a lot of people move out. If this happens lower occupancy could offset the rate increase. And it could have been avoided.

**IF OCCUPANCY** goes down a lot of people who want to move out of the dorm during the year could be screwed. We could lose all freedom of choice in housing. And it could have been avoided.

The need for student participation is clear. The problems we have now could have been prevented had the University Administration fulfilled its commitment to the SAC document. The means for discussion of the rate increase are available in the Housing Policy Committee. If only the channel had been utilized.

**CON TROVER SY**  
 The Daily Nebraskan

The dangers of military in academia

Last week 29 college newspapers co-signed a national editorial on ROTC. The Daily Nebraskan would like to make it 30:

One of the unintended domestic consequences of the war in Vietnam has been the growing awareness of the dangers of intimate connections between the military and academia.

Perhaps the most blatant example of colleges and universities willingly performing functions that are rightly the exclusive concern of the military is the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC).

After many years of relatively tranquil existence on the nation's campuses, ROTC has come under fire of late from those who believe that philosophically and pedagogically, military training has no place in an academic institution.

In recent months such leading institutions as Yale, Princeton, Dartmouth, Harvard and Stanford have all taken steps toward revoking academic credit from their ROTC programs. Currently, many other colleges and universities are also re-evaluating the status of their own ROTC programs.

The Stanford decision is especially significant because it was premised on philosophic rather than

pragmatic grounds. As a member of the committee which prepared the report explained, "We began with a definition of the university and found an essential conflict between this and the concept of ROTC."

**ACADEMIA'S TRADITIONAL** function is to inspire critical thinking about man and his society aloof from partisan or superficial considerations. But it is impossible for colleges and universities even to pretend to perform this unique role if they are also subsidizing the brutal militarism of the outside world.

Some have argued that academic institutions, especially those which are publicly sponsored, have an obligation to be politically neutral and that this neutrality requires the continued support of ROTC programs on campus.

At a time when the military is an integral element in an expansionist foreign policy opposed by a sizeable segment of the population both inside and outside academia, it is clear that the ROTC program is as partisan in its own way as Students for a Democratic Society.

Clearly, continued academic support for ROTC would be political partisanship.

Hans Morganthau wrote recently that one of the key lessons of the Vietnam War was the danger of too intimate a relationship between the campus and the government. For already, he noted, large segments of the academic community have been transformed "into a mere extension of the government bureaucracy, defending the implementing policies regardless of their objective merits."

ROTC is not only antithetical to the ultimate purposes of higher education, but contrary to basic pedagogical principles as well.

While the development of critical thinking is an integral part of a liberal education, the teaching methods employed in ROTC programs tend to emphasize rote learning and deference to authority. This is far from surprising as critical thinking has never been a highly prized military virtue. Consequently, the ROTC program is geared to produce intellectually stunted martinet.

An example of the type of educational thinking behind the ROTC program at many universities is provided by a solemn pronouncement made last year by an ROTC officer at the University of Minnesota. In a frighteningly serious echo of Catch 22 he declared, "Marching is the basic leadership program for every officer."

**EQUALLY ALIEN** TO the ends of a liberal education is the unquestioning submissiveness endemic in the rigidly hierarchical structure of military education. It is hard to develop any spontaneity — much less dialogue — within the classroom when the professor is not just a teacher, but a superior officer as well.

For those congenitally unimpressed by philosophical arguments predicated on the goals of higher education, there are some equally potent pragmatic reasons why ROTC is in no way a valid academic offering.

A faculty curriculum committee at the University of Michigan stated the case clearly when it charged that ROTC course materials used in Ann Arbor were "conjectural, non-analytical, cheaply moralistic and often blatantly propagandistic."

**THE BULK OF** the ROTC program consists of technical courses often less rigorous than similar courses offered in the math, science and engineering programs of most colleges and universities.

Typical of these ROTC programs not duplicated elsewhere is an Air Force ROTC course entitled, "The history of the role of the Air Force in U.S. military history." Designed primarily to inculcate institutional loyalty, rather than to develop critical thinking, courses like this are clearly not history.

They are not even valid military history since inter-service rivalry results in an inflation of the role of the Air Force.

The intellectual vacuity of many ROTC courses is directly related to the rather limited educational backgrounds of the preponderance of ROTC faculty.

Despite education which normally does not exceed a bachelor's degree, ROTC instructors are

Editorial Signatories

The Colorado Daily, Daily Californian (Berkeley), The Daily Bruin (UCLA), El Gaucho (Santa Barbara), Daily Illini, The Purdue Exponent, Kentucky Kernel, Tulane Hulsbaloo, The Diamondback (University of Maryland), Boston University News, Amherst Daily, The Michigan Daily, The State News (Michigan State), The Minnesota Daily, The Reflector (Mississippi State), Student Life (Washington University, St. Louis), Gateway (University of Nebraska, Omaha), The Duke Chronicle, The Targum (Ruigers), The New Mexico Lobo, The Colonial News (Harpur College, N.Y.), The Spectrum (State University of New York), The Statesman (Stony Brook), The Antioch Record, The Post (Ohio), The Daily Pennsylvanian, Cavalier Daily (Virginia), University of Washington Daily, The Daily Cardinal (Wisconsin).

accorded a status comparable to professors in more rigorous disciplines. And due to the high degree of autonomy of the ROTC program, colleges and universities have little direct control over the hiring, firing or promotion of these ROTC instructors.

But objections such as these spring primarily from the form rather than the underlying substance of ROTC. On a substantive level, it is difficult to avoid the blunt assertion that training soldiers whose ultimate aim is to kill is totally hostile to the principles of academia.

It was the simplistic "my country right or wrong" patriotism of the First World War which spawned the original ROTC program. But one of the clearest lessons of the Vietnam tragedy is that such unquestioning support of government policy is not only morally bankrupt, but counter to the long-range interests of the nation as well as the campus.

In order to reassert the sanctity of academia as a morally and educationally autonomous institution, it is necessary to end the universities' role as the unquestioning servant of government and military. The abolition of ROTC as a sanctioned course offering would be a major step in this direction.

