

IFC: Wildcat rush or Rush Weak?

by TOM WIESE

At the present, the Inter Fraternity Council (IFC) is considering a proposal which would cause the rush program this year to "include summer rush with unlimited wildcat pledging." This means that fraternity pledging would begin sometime between June 6 and July 1 for all houses.

Admittedly, there are some real problems with rush week. Greeks and independents alike have seen some of the more unfavorable features of rush week over the past, and supposedly a move to unlimited summer pledging by the IFC would eliminate these undesirable elements and leave in the wake a cheaper, fairer and more productive method of membership selection for the fraternities at old U of N.

I really can't argue with the fact that elimination of a large-scale rush week will be cheaper for the rushee, but then again how many potential rushees are frightened away by the \$25 necessary for his housing and food during the week of rush?

The real failure with this proposal is that rather than making rush more fair to both the rushee and the house, it places both in a better position to become cheated. For example, picture the rushee from say Zonka City, Nebraska (it could just as well be Omaha or Lincoln), who has had little or no contact with the fraternity system. He is an outstanding individual and is contacted by fraternity XX. This fraternity is desperately trying to beat every other fraternity to the "best" men, for if it fails to hustle right out June 6 it very well could lose even the opportunity to be considered by this rushee.

Well, old fraternity XX's rush chairman is a real fine fellow, and so are the other two or three members of XX that the rushee meets, and on June 15 he is asked to pledge. (Pressure couldn't enter in here, could it?) What does he do? This house is trying to fill its quota of pledges, and if our rushee turns down the offer he may never be asked again. If he accepts, he has in effect pledged a fraternity of three or four men. The advantage falls heavily with the house who gets there firstest with the mostest. You're only kidding yourself if you think it doesn't.

But, what about a fairness to the house? Well, think this over for a minute. Who decides whether this man is offered a pledge pin? If you don't get this guy right now the YY's may get him. So — the rush chairman decides (with possibly the help of two or three others.) So now you have the marriage of man and fraternity, and in effect you don't even know each other's last names.

It sure will be interesting for the fraternity brothers to return in the fall to see what their pledge class looks like. I imagine the pledges will look remarkably like the rush chairman. But the rushee may be surprised — the house is quite different from the people he met.

So now our rushee is an XX fraternity pledge. How happy will he be with his selection? It only takes a little common sense to come to the conclusion that he may have some second thoughts. Chances are he will stay for a while (sure — he doesn't even know what the other houses had to offer him), but my bet is that many more pledges will leave their choice under these circumstances than do with a rush week system.

Finally, it is argued in this proposal that rush will be more productive for the fraternity system with unlimited summer pledging. (Question: IFC, how successful was limited summer pledging? You discontinued it last year, remember?) The hope is that more men will participate in fraternity rush. Maybe they will. But the low number of men presently going through rush is not the problem. This is merely a symptom of more basic problems facing Greeks. It is largely a problem of image.

High school teachers, counselors and administrators are most-often non-greeks. Their advice steers many away from fraternities. The image they, and many others throughout the state, have of fraternities is not the one of fraternities today, but of the social drinking clubs with a basic training for pledgeship that may have existed when they were in college. This image we must change. We must change it through education and publicity, and we must change it by continuing to change the system, by continuing to progress.

What isn't a problem of image can be explained just this simply. We aren't offering enough of the entering freshmen what they want. The remedy again — continued change. But the change necessary is not a face-lifting of rush procedures as proposed to the IFC. The change needed is not in a deep-seated reassessment of values and goals of the fraternity system. These values and goals are beautiful. The change that is needed is in how we are seeking to reach these goals.

Suppository:

When considering this week's column, there was some question where I should place the suppository.

The problem was: should I plug the old hole in the Union for inflationary prices and rising costs of foods; or rouse the rumps of that curious breed of students — the crib rats — who while away hours bitching about those same rising costs or the new "cattleyard" motif recently installed in the crib.

The answer may seem to some a cop-out. However, I think neither deserves what Allen Ginsberg would enjoy so much, since the Union is not to blame for the rising costs, and the crib rats just don't know.

The answer is to explain and perhaps some understanding and insight will be gained by all. Let's begin with the lowly doughnut recently raised in price from five to ten cents. Moans and wails that would scare a banshee echoed around the crib that fateful morning when doughnut lovers discovered that overnight their doughnuts doubled in price without any increase in size or quality.

What they don't know is that ten years ago the raw materials for one doughnut on the open market cost the Union only three cents to buy. Today, the same amount of products to make the same kind of doughnut costs the Union 6.5 cents to buy and another two cents to produce and serve — total 8.5 cents for a nickel doughnut. See any other way out?

The doughnut has gone up. However, coffee and cokes remain the same in spite of a loss absorbed by the Union. A cup of coffee costs the Union 11 cents to serve and only costs the customer one dime — a loss of a penny on every cup.

There are two main factors causing the upward movement in food prices: the minimum wage labor laws and the state retail tax. Ten years ago a student earned

Inflation vs. rats

by Dan Ladely

a minimum wage of 85c and a fulltime employee in the Union earned \$145 a month for a 44 hour week. Today, students earn a minimum wage of \$1.60 an hour and fulltime employees receive \$260 a month for a 40 hour week. This means there has been a 90 to 95 per cent increase in labor costs which must be absorbed in the retail prices of foods.

One happy note is that the biggest cut of wages paid by the Union goes to student employees.

The retail tax is paid by the Union on the total gross and at the same time is not collected for most of the sales. The majority of sales in the Union are at ten cents which is below the breaking point in the tax — 17 cents. The Union must pay the tax on the whole rather than the individual sales and another loss is incurred.

Wholesalers who sell to the Union are raising their prices for the same reasons and it all seems to be, if you will pardon my use of an old cliché, a vicious circle. The Union's philosophy, according to Al Bennett, Union director, is to provide and maintain a service to the students and faculty of this campus in the manner satisfactory to the attitudes of this particular clientel. The Union is meant to be self-sustaining, self-liquidating and essentially non-profit. No one is out to scalp the students.

One last note to those of you who feel insulted or mad because of the "stockyard" motif and the turnstyle gates at the entrances of the service areas of the crib, place the blame for that on a large number of your fellow students and faculty members who stole their food rather than pay as most of us do.

They, too, contributed to those rising costs that give us all the old proverbial pain.



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