STREAMLINING OF STUDENT GOVERNMENT: PROGRESS

Two recommendations on streamlining the activities of the Undergraduate Association were presented to Instcomm last Wednesday by the Student Government Investigating Committee and were approved by that body. The gist of the recommendation is on the preceding page and we see no point in repeating it here.

Suffice it to say that reduction of so-called "rote-work" will leave the Institute Committees with more time, patience and resource to deal with important matters of education, activities, campus and off-campus living problems, and representatives of the undergraduate body before the public.

The third recommendation of the present system involving the combination of the Elections Committee and the Walter Memorial Committee into a Secretariat will be presented for approval next week by the IGUC, and we urge Institute to adopt this measure as wholeheartedly as it approved the two recommendations of last Wednesday.

OPEN HOUSE RULES: A NEW DEVELOPMENT

We were very glad to note from a report in the Harvard Crimson that more guests are now allowed in the Junior Common Room at Kirkland House until 11 o'clock on Saturday evenings, and we congratulate the residents on their achievement. This leaves only Eliot House without an open house program of this type.

The report goes on to say that House members and their dates may use the Common Room for dancing, card-playing or checkers, as long as they fulfill three regulations, to wit:

1. Both chandeliers must be fully lighted.
2. No alcoholic beverages, including beer, may be drank.
3. Good order, manners, and morals must be upheld.

We hope Kirkland House residents will be orderly while the women. Miss Hall will be open at will.

WHAT PRICE MORALITY?

The creation of a state censure commission has been proposed by State Representative Gabriel P. Piemonte and has received initial approval from the legislative committee on state administration. Such a commission would review all books and magazines before they could be sold in Massachusetts. The sale of unapproved publications would be punished by fines up to $1,000 or up to one year in jail.

The probable aim of the bill is to prevent immoral literature from getting into the hands of those state citizens willing to purchase it. Assuming that a citizen is not free to polon his own mind if he wants to, we can only praise the State Representative's proposal: if his bill is passed by the Legislature, a great deal of trashy books and magazines now on the bookstalls throughout the Commonwealth would disappear. All the same we question its feasibility, since those with time and money could secure such literature in a neighboring state; in addition, any enforcement machine would tend to become rather complex.

All that, however, is beside the point. What is more important is the fact that regardless of whether a certain book or magazine is harmful or not will remain with a board of men; one appointed by the Attorney General, and the other by the Commissioner of Public Safety, and whoever sets up the criteria of harmfulness, two men will be in a position to interpret them at will.

The arm of censorship is a two-edged weapon has been shown us by Nazi Germany and by the countries behind the Iron Curtain. While commending with undisguised sincerity the regulation of moral and religious teaching of the people of Massachusetts as indicated in Mr. Piemonte's bill, we cannot but spot with misgivings the possibility of the weapon being mishandled. It would take an Attorney General and a Commissioner of Public Safety of superhuman wisdom and magnanimity to prevent this. It is after all better to see harmful literature on the bookstalls than to have a censorship board which may overreach itself.