Compulsory commons necessary to allow financial equilibrium

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costs as being substantially lower than off-campus housing and roughly average or below average when compared with the costs of comparable universities.

Heffke added that an increase has been credited over the last five years by increasing further use of seminars and various cost-saving techniques. There is no longer any substantial gain to be made in these areas, he said.

One issue which was not initially on the agenda but was discussed anyway was the current dissatisfaction with dormitories. In this matter, the members of the administrative present noted that there were two distinct issues: that of voluntary as opposed to compulsory commons, and that of the quality of commons and the associated services.

Wadleigh noted that the dean's office, the faculty committee on student environment, and a group of students reached the decision several years ago that the presence of a relatively small dining facility in each living group contributes to the overall educational process. The only way to make this financially feasible, however, is to require all residents of houses with dining halls to take commons. All actions concerning dining services in recent years has been based upon this policy.

Bishoff spoke at some length concerning the quality of commons. He said that no conscious effort had been made to cut costs but lowering food quality.

Letters...

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opportunities for all. Black students know that our well-educated is being woefully inefficient in pursuit of these goals. Spurious statements from these adults suggesting that Black centers represent a retreat from democratic ideals just do not ring true to them.

It is important to state clearly what it is true: that dormitory arrangements are, traditionally, largely elective or the one exception, freshman dormitory assignments, are determined by need.

There is no indication that the agnostic practice of assigning Jewish roommates to incoming Jewish freshmen has changed in the last quarter century. Nor is there any evidence that religious affiliation from seeking, as friends, common housing.

In addition, it should be emphasized that faculty and administrators alike have long considered it academically beneficial to set up dormitory corridors as language centers. These provide an elective opportunity for upper-class language majors to improve their language skills and to permit a more informal exchange on the history and culture of the country under study. Familiar? Why is this program acceptable when faculty sponsored, and an "unseemly demand" when suggested by Black students? It had never been suggested that such centers isolate the participating students, to their detriment, or that such centers do violence to the democratic complexion of the university.

The university should be able to accomplish those goals toward which we have made but the barest beginnings, then we must be willing to permit them to try their own ways and stop pretending that those ways are as different from traditional practices or threatening to some fantasy of democratic life. It is time, indeed, to trust full enterprise in the university society, assured that poor enterprise will fail of its own weight. Black and white students alike will learn to construct better enterprises year by year, examining their own previous error or progress, as every generation of students has done.

Very truly yours,

Mrs. Jacob (Marilyn) Gottler
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