Traditional Island party soon

By David B. Koretz

Bring a hollow coconut, wear your best grass skirt and hop on a bus to Nashua, N.H. for FIJI's biennial Island Party. Otherwise the Tiki gods may smite you.

MIT’s Phi Gamma Delta fraternity, or FIJI as it prefers to be called, has put together an institution-wide party every other year since 1931 that is unrivaled in spirit and preparation anywhere on campus. According to Cliff Behmer '78, this year's Island Party Chairman, the revelry should be better than ever.

Traditional Island party soon will be made from scrap lumber, chicken wire and papier mache. Three “Tiki gods” and eighteen palm trees, all made from scrap lumber, chicken wire and papier mache, will be part of the decor at the National Guard Armory in Nashua.

Rock music will be belted out by Bishoom, a local band, and libations will be in the form of a punch that has a recipe handed down from one generation of Phi Gamms to another. The punch is carefully mixed from Puerto Rican rums and garnishes of tropical fruits and juice like pineapple, banana, and coconut.

So potent is this mixture that four years ago a bus driver who apparently sampled the punch during the evening found himself down from one generation of Phi Gamms. Behmer explained, adding that such events will help to improve dormitory-fraternity relations. Baker House, which competes in some intramural sports together with FIJI, has donated $100 of this year's party's expenses. Behmer said that the affair could “end up costing $3,500 to $4,000,” but that he expected the Undergraduate Association to contribute some money as well.

Besides worrying about the band (1975's group, Maze, has cut a record album and is out of price range), the half (the Fitchburg site burned down in March) and refreshments, Behmer has dozens of other details to take care of before next Saturday. The main concern at present is the chartering of buses. Behmer said that the affair ten buses have been ordered and more will be available should ticket sales show the need. Although the party is free of admission charge, FIJI is charging $3 per couple for the round-trip ride to Nashua, at a loss to the fraternity.

On the day of the party, a rented truck will be driven to New Hampshire to meet the caretaker of the Armory; students will be responsible for setting up the Tiki gods, palm trees, nets, pictures and murals. Then, after a drive back to Boston to arrange the distribution of buses, the punch will be picked up from refrigerated storage and trucked back north. After nine o'clock, however, the party coordinators will be able to rest—maybe. Two years ago, the band’s equipment truck broke down. It arrived an hour late, as did the punch truck.

The main event of the evening begins at 11 p.m. with a dance. Behmer said that the affair could “end up costing $3,500 to $4,000,” but that he expected the Undergraduate Association to contribute some money as well. Besides worrying about the band (1975's group, Maze, has cut a record album and is out of price range), the half (the Fitchburg site burned down in March) and refreshments, Behmer has dozens of other details to take care of before next Saturday. The main concern at present is the chartering of buses. Behmer said that the affair ten buses have been ordered and more will be available should ticket sales show the need. Although the party is free of admission charge, FIJI is charging $3 per couple for the round-trip ride to Nashua, at a loss to the fraternity.

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A Tiki god somberly awaits the final touches of decoration to his palm-matted bog.