



**Rush
1983**

Front Lawn

Wilson concerned about fraternities

Cites problems with Rush

By PETER WRIGHT
Staff Reporter

Washington and Lee President John D. Wilson expressed his concern about fraternity life at the university to the Interfraternity Council and over 50 other W&L students last Thursday night.

President Wilson emphasized five problems with fraternities at W&L.

These problems included the bad physical welfare of houses, security for "open parties," lack of leaders living in the house, a social calendar that intrudes on academics, and a Rush system that is in Wilson's words "unsatisfactory."

"You've inherited a social structure and a physical structure that were made for a different time," Wilson explained to the students. Wilson added that the "(fraternity) house is in fact, a small party pavilion."

With numerous complaints from the Lexington community concerning noise and trash, Wilson said, "all of us should be more cordial to our neighbors."

Although Wilson described the "open party" atmosphere at W&L as "the most refreshing

part of fraternity life," problems with security are evident. Considering the recent problems with rape and assaults near fraternities, Wilson said that he simply did not know what to do. His only suggestion was to "close down the open parties just a little bit."

Wilson also said that feelings

in the fraternity houses. "It doesn't make sense for a fraternity to be abandoned" of its "leadership element."

Wilson added that the current condition of the fraternity houses at W&L serve to deter students from living in the houses for more than a year.

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among the faculty at W&L are "not positive" in regard to Wednesday night parties. "You can and should take a look at how you run your social calendars so that there won't be such a transparent intrusion," Wilson told the audience. "Let the academics...have a fighting chance."

Wilson also objected to the fraternity system's pattern of having mostly sophomores live

Wilson said if the houses could become "physically strong" once again, students could, in turn, restore the fraternities to the extent that one wouldn't mind living in one for two or three years.

In regard to Rush, "a serious problem" according to Wilson, many items were discussed at the meeting.



President John D. Wilson

"It's a lousy orientation for the freshmen," Wilson stated. Although Wilson did admit that he was not very familiar with the Rush system at W&L, he suggested that fraternities should give freshmen the opportunity to become more familiar with each of the houses on campus and also with the academics at the school.

Wilson said fraternities are "running at odds in having Rush in a concentrated format

that runs right into the first four weeks of academics."

The president also described Rush as being deceptive to freshmen. With many fraternity Rush parties providing the freshmen with such enticing items as oysters, live bands and girls' Wilson said fraternities are competing for these "innocents" on false grounds. "Find out what they're like. Find out their values," Wilson suggested.

School might intervene

Frats said to need social guidance

By ANDY HOPPE
Staff Reporter

The chairman of the Alumni Board of Directors' Committee on Fraternity Affairs, the board which has called for a review of fraternities at Washington and Lee, said in an interview Tuesday that the committee members got the impression that the fraternities at Washington and Lee University want more university guidance of social activities.

"We agreed that the university has got to step in and establish social guidelines," said William C. Norman Jr.

The 10-member committee met with fraternity officers on Sept. 22.

"I want to emphasize that we believe that a reasonable solution can be worked out that would involve alumni participation," Norman said.

Norman said that the committee was not anti-fraternity. All the members of the committee had been fraternity members when they attended Washington and Lee, Norman added.

Buddy Atkins, associate alumni secretary, echoed Norman's statement. The impression the committee that met with the students got was that the students want more help and guidance from the university, Atkins said.

Atkins said that the alumni had decided that the fraternities "had hit rock bottom" about five years ago. The alumni believe that the situation had improved recently, but they want the improvement to continue, Atkins said.

Norman said the fraternities have done a better job of cleaning up the paper cups that usually litter the fraternity grounds after a party. Lexington citizens had complained to alumni officials in 1982 about the paper cup situation Norman said.

The physical condition of many of the fraternity houses has not gotten any better though, Norman said. Norman said that the committee has been looking into ways to improve conditions.

"Of course, we would not expect a student who will be here for only four years to take on a major renovation project without some alumni support," said Norman.

The committee and the fraternity officers also concurred that fraternities that are located in residential areas should be more aware of the fact that they have neighbors, Norman said. Norman added that the fraternity officers said they would pay more attention to their neighbors' rights.

Norman said that the committee members also believe

that the fraternity officers should live in the houses in order to provide more supervision to the social life.

Both the fraternity officers and the committee members agreed that faculty advisors to the fraternities should play a more active role in the fraternities' affairs, Norman said. In the past, not all faculty advisors had been active, he said.

Norman said that Rush was also discussed at the meeting, but no consensus on the matter was reached.

There was a consensus that a pavilion on the back campus for social activities would be desirable if the legal and financial problems associated with such a project could be worked out, Norman said. A pavilion might ease the strain on the fraternities to host midweek parties, he said.

"We were extremely impressed with the maturity of the gentlemen who met with us," said Norman. "They showed a high degree of responsibility and great concern for the problem."

Front Lawn is a monthly supplement to the Ring-tum Phi. Each month Front Lawn examines in depth an issue of interest to the W&L community. Address all correspondence to the Ring-tum Phi.

Cover photograph by Peter Cronin.

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Police chief happy with Rush

Thankful for students' cooperation

By MIKE ALLEN
Staff Reporter

Last month's fraternity Rush was successful from the perspective of the Lexington Police Department, and Chief Lawrence O. Sutton said he'd "like to thank the students for their cooperation."

Law enforcement officials were primarily interested in matters related to alcohol, house security, and amplified sound.

Sutton said he was pleased with the students' performance based on "comments from townspeople, on comments that I received from officers who've been through this before, and on the complaints I remember from when I first came here in May."

The chief said that no arrests were made during Rush for violations of the new Virginia law which makes drinking illegal for those under the age of 19.

"I'm not aware of any problems along that line," Sutton said. "I feel certain that 18-year-olds are drinking, but it is being controlled and protected by the fraternities."

"I would certainly be naive if I thought I could prevent every 18-year-old from drinking if they want to," he said.

"A success though, is when you prevent it from becoming a problem to them or to us. The credit for that success goes to the fraternities."

Sutton cited "mutual respect and cooperation" as the factors that resulted in positive relations between the houses and the police.



Chief L.O. Sutton

"I think we have accomplished a lot more through the means of cooperation than would have been accomplished through confrontation," he said.

The chief said, however, that he would not have hesitated to take action if circumstances had warranted it.

"If I had perceived a serious problem," he said, "I would not have waited for the ABC. I would have used my own undercover methods."

A rape and assault at a fraternity house midway through Rush focused campus-wide attention on the need for increased security at parties.

"Not having been here while students were here, that particular problem (security) had not arisen," Sutton said, "and I was not aware it was a problem."

"I will be the first to admit that I probably should have discussed it. But not having surfaced as a problem, it did have a lower priority."

The chief said that "like many things, social problems are not recognized as problems until they surface and the problem is created."

House presidents had "a very good response" to his suggestions for tightening security following the crime, Sutton said.

"There was an awareness and concern that had not been evident before...The fraternities deserve the credit for making my views known and then implementing them."

Sutton said that the recommendations he made "were geared strictly for this community on a cost-effective basis."

For example, he did not suggest the hiring of security guards, because "students know how to recognize each other better than a security guard could."

Officer Steven E. Crowder walked around out of uniform to nearly all the fraternities the Wednesday night following the rape to assure himself that "security was in fact going to be enforced, and was going to work."

(continued on page 4)

Results on '83 Rush are still unavailable

By STEVEN POCKRASS
Special to the Phi

The question of whether or not a smaller percentage of Washington and Lee freshmen participating in Fraternity Rush has resulted in a fewer number of freshmen pledges has not yet been determined, according to Dan Murphy, Associate Dean of Students in charge of Fraternity Affairs.

"I don't know if the actual number of people who pledged fraternities is up or down," said Murphy, whose office is currently processing the Interfraternity Council preference cards and should have statistics sometime this week.

Murphy said that 325 students, including about 20 transfer students and sophomores, went through Rush. The 305 freshmen who did go through account for just under 85 percent of the entering class, compared with the normal 95 percent of the past few years, although Dean Murphy is quick to point out that these are "not hard and fast statistics."

Last year, 352 people went through Rush, and the incoming class size was 363. IFC President Emery Ellinger said he feels the questions of numbers and percentages has been overworked. "Rush orientation was a lot better than it has been in the past," Ellinger said who also noted that while there is always some confusion during Rush, this year's freshmen

generally seemed less confused and more aware of what was going on.

As usual, there were some mixed reactions to Rush. If houses do want to boost membership with a Spring Rush, "...it's up to the individual fraternities," said Dean John, and for the future, "President Wilson is stressing the investigation of deferred (second semester) rush."

Reaction to this idea is mixed. Some freshmen, such as independent Andrew Tartaglione thought that Fall Rush was confusing, yet at the same time said, "It's a good way to meet people. I think they should keep it."

"Financially, frats can't hold out on a second semester rush," Ellinger said. "Obviously you may want a little more time, but by the time you get to college, you should be able to make a decision concerning the people you want to hang around with."

Some freshmen said they consider the financial aspect of fraternities a burden. Ron Curry, for example, has received a bid at Zeta Beta Tau, and would like to pledge. "It depends on money," Curry said.

Mike Weisbrock said he did not go through Rush to save money and because he has a general disinterest in fraternities.

Wilson raises valid questions

By JOHN CLEGHORN
Chief Editor

"We shouldn't fight on this."

So said Washington and Lee President John Wilson at a meeting with the Interfraternity Council and assorted fraternity members last week. While President Wilson expressed his wish to avoid a fight with fraternity members, it became apparent at the meeting Thursday that he already had one on his hands.

At the IFC meeting, President Wilson expressed the need for examination of several areas of fraternity life. Dilapidated houses, a hectic fall Rush schedule, lengthy and academically taxing Wednesday night parties, fraternity security and total-sophomore occupancy were the main areas requiring examination, President Wilson said.

Wilson spoke in his characteristically calm and articulate manner at the meeting, explaining that, as a new president to the university, it is his duty to raise these issues for scrutiny and not to impose rash, undeliberated changes on the 17 fraternities on campus.

But before he had finished speaking and answering questions, Wilson had been pushed to the wall on several issues by students who felt strongly about their fraternity and the system as a whole.

News Analysis

While it is a touchy question and one that is defended fervently by many who enjoy the benefits of fraternity life, President Wilson must be allowed the opportunity to simply raise the questions. And, in turn, the fraternities must give ample time and study to the questions which affect 800 men at Washington and Lee.

Throughout the spring of 1983 and through the early weeks of this school year, rumors have been floating about our new president concerning coeducation and now, fraternities.

What does he know about W&L? students asked. This is not Virginia Tech, who does he think he is?

No, this is not Virginia Tech. And it had not become apparent yet that President Wilson is seeking to conform W&L to his ideas of what a university should be.

Instead, he recognizes W&L for the unique and traditional school it is. What President Wilson does offer the university is a new, fresh viewpoint which can serve as an impetus for improvement.

Each of the issues President Wilson has raised is an arguably valid point. The fraternity system can hardly say it is not worthy of some improvement. And obviously the fraternities will not be willing to accede to President Wilson each of his terms of change verbatim. The key for this to be a beneficial review for both the fraternities and the administration lies in the ability of the two to find a middle ground.

No, as President Wilson said, "We shouldn't fight on this."

"I'm here to invite you to help us solve (these problems)," President Wilson said last week, "because it's of interest to us all."

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Poll finds freshmen were prepared for Rush

In a poll taken by the Ring-tum Phi, most freshmen said they felt pretty well prepared for Rush. The majority of the freshmen interviewed thought the university program preparing the students for Rush, in conjunction with the Rush book prepared by the Interfraternity Council, gave them a basic idea of what would happen.



I enjoyed Rush and the parties immensely

-Neil Rankin



...I just went around with the crowd

-James Farquhar



It was tough allotting all that time right away

-Peter Walther

Freshman Mike Wiesbrook voiced the opinion of the minority of the students in saying, "No, I did not participate in Rush.... I have no intention of joining a frat." Most students polled were not so inclined.

Neil Rankin felt that the school "told you enough" about Rush. He was more enthusiastic about the Rush parties. "Yeah, I enjoyed Rush and the parties immensely," he said.

Dave Doub felt that he was pretty well prepared and that "the Rush book helped." The fact that his brother graduated from W&L last year "did not hurt," he said.

James Farquhar said, "I did not know what was going on.... I just went around with the crowd." Overall, he said, "it was quite an experience... a lot of fun."

Freshman James New felt that there might have been too much happening. "I was busy adjusting to college and also adjusting to Rush. In the end though, he said he "enjoyed it very much."

Peter Walther said he felt the system was hectic. "It was tough allotting all that time right away. I was pretty well informed though." As with the other freshmen polled, he answered the question "Did you

enjoy Rush?" with an emphatic "Yes!"

Police

(continued from page 3)

Crowder, who was off duty at the time but had the chief's permission for his mission, said he was "very impressed" and "well-satisfied" by what he saw at the houses.

"I had really good cooperation and very positive results from the students," he said.

At all of the houses but one, Crowder was approached and asked for his identity upon arrival.

"At one house, though, I could have gone in and picked up anything and walked off with it," the officer said.

Security problems at that fraternity have since been "resolved" according to Sutton.

Another concern of the police department was fraternities' use of their "amplified sound" permits.

"There is no such thing as a 'noise permit,'" the chief pointed out.

Sutton said that "overall," the use of fraternity stereo privileges has been "very good."

"There have been a few cases of abuse that have resulted in warnings, but no summonses have been written."

"Some of the fraternities are getting careless, though," the chief said, "because they are applying for the amplified sound permit and then not bothering to pick it up."

"If they don't pick them up, they don't have them." This has involved more than eight certificates in the last few weeks.

The permits were available for the three Wednesdays of Rush, but Chief Sutton says that at university direction, they are now issued for Friday and Saturday nights only. At this point, the chief is the only one who can sign the permits.

"They end at midnight," Sutton stressed. "The law specifically says 11 o'clock. The eleven to midnight grace period is extended to allow the party to wind down without suddenly cutting everything off. That extra hour is extended in the spirit of cooperation."

Fraternities seldom adhere strictly to that schedule. "They've been pushing it," the chief said, "but not too hard."

One night during Rush, Sutton went around after midnight and ended ten parties for noise considerations.

"I found the greatest amount of cooperation in all but one fraternity," the chief recalled. "I think the time just slipped up on them. They were very cooperative about shutting it down."

At one fraternity which Sutton declined to specify, he "contacted the president of the house and told him that his permit had expired and he would have to cut it off."

Sutton says the president "tried, I felt, to lay his responsibility for not controlling his house on the police."

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