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# The Ring-tum Phi

VOLUME 89, NO. 5

WASHINGTON AND LEE UNIVERSITY

LEXINGTON, VIRGINIA

OCTOBER 12, 1989

## Wilson calls W&L's fraternities 'vitaly important'

By Brian Root  
Senior Copy Editor

The Fraternity Renaissance program, in which Washington and Lee will spend about \$10 million to renovate many of the 16 fraternity houses, is intended to preserve W&L's fraternities, not to eliminate them, said W&L President John D. Wilson in a speech at Tuesday night's Interfraternity Council meeting.

"The fraternities at W&L are, without question, the most active and vital social organizations in the

institutions," said Wilson. "This school has a lot of confidence and a lot at stake in the leadership the fraternities provide."

The only setback for the program thus far, Wilson said, are cost overruns.

"We had been hoping to keep the renovation within our original cost estimates," Wilson said. "Unfortunately, the first four houses are running about 30 percent over cost."

The current poor quality of the houses is related to what Wilson called "the general decline of the fraternity movement." Since the late

1960's, Wilson said, fraternities and fraternity houses have been seen more as just outlets for parties, and so the general quality of fraternity leadership began to decline.

"In the last few years, however, we're seeing more and more interest on the part of both students and alumni in returning the fraternities to their former quality," Wilson said.

Wilson said the trend was particularly apparent at W&L. During the 1982-83 school year, about 62 percent of W&L students were fraternity members. Now, said Wilson, the percentage of male

students has risen back to about 90 percent, and the old attitude about fraternities has begun to change.

"You students have inherited a system that's been in decline for almost 20 years," Wilson said. "Frankly, the shape of your houses reflects that, but you are the people who can change it."

Wilson assured the fraternities the school is committed to insuring the fraternities' survival, through the renovation program.

"Fraternities have been here since before the Civil War," said Wilson. "I think we can agree that fraternities are too important to just

let them slip away."

Wilson said many other colleges, such as Williams College and Amherst College, reacted to mounting liability problems with fraternities by simply eliminating them.

Other colleges, such as Dartmouth, imposed tight new restrictions on fraternities without offering to help the houses attain them, thus effectively sentencing the houses to extinction, Wilson said.

"It was almost as if they were hoping the fraternities would fail," Wilson said. "But here, the students, alumni, trustees, and even

most of the faculty have said fraternities are too important to let them go by the wayside."

The goals of the program go far beyond simply rebuilding the houses, Wilson said.

"Fraternities were once considered homes where one could select the people he could work with, party with, and grow to maturity with," said Wilson. "Now, they're seen as just a party pavilion. We're hoping to see that change."

The renovation program is set to begin this summer, when work will begin on four houses.

## Alcohol use to be examined

By Cathy Lopiccolo  
Staff Reporter

The Health Education Committee will be sponsoring a series of events next week to mark National Collegiate Alcohol Awareness Week, according to W&L senior Nancy Hickam, co-chairman of the committee.

"(We want) to get people to be aware of the effects of alcohol and how much they drink," Hickam said. "A lot of people don't realize they have a problem with alcohol or how much they depend on it."

The first event planned by the committee is a banner contest on the week's theme of "Absolut Awareness," taken from the brand of liquor, said senior Carter Montague, the committee's other chairman. The residence halls will be making the banners for competition.

"The banners are supposed to be done on this Friday and judged. The winning hall gets an ice cream party or a pizza party, and their banner will be hung somewhere on campus during next week," Hickam said.

Monday night Michael Deaver, who served as Deputy Chief of Staff under former President Ronald Reagan, will speak in Lee Chapel.

□ Please see ALCOHOL page 3



### And the winner is...

W&L's Dana Styles was selected as this year's Homecoming Queen during halftime of Saturday's

football game. She represented Phi Kappa Psi fraternity. W&L photo by W. Patrick Hinely.

## SAB rules revised; accounts closed

By Brooke Jarabek  
Staff Reporter

The Executive Committee has revised the financial procedures of the Student Activities Board after the SAB amassed a \$26,000 deficit for fiscal year 1988-1989.

To do this, the EC broke the SAB budget into two parts instead of giving the SAB one lump sum as it had in the past. The Fancy Dress Ball fund has been separated from the SAB general fund. The general fund of \$40,000 was further separated into funds for Fall (\$15,000), Winter (\$15,000), and Spring (\$10,000).

The EC also eliminated all SAB charge accounts. All SAB purchases must now go through the Business Office. The SAB will have to get a check from the Business Office for a predetermined amount of money and then cash it in order to purchase ice, cups and any other supplies.

"This will prevent charges from

coming in late and prevent not giving an accurate account of where money has been spent," according to EC President Willard Dumas. He said the new procedure will give the EC a more accurate account of expenditures as well as "requiring SAB to plan and organize better."

"The SAB considered it a personal attack when [the EC] cut their budget, but the budgets of all the other campus organizations were also cut," Dumas said.

The number of organizations to which the EC gives funds has increased from about 5 or 6 two years ago to about 25 this year, said Dumas. The student activities fee that each student pays yearly to provide funds for these student groups has increased by only \$5 in that time.

Dumas said the EC will seek the approval of the Board of Trustees to increase the yearly student activity fee by at least \$10. "If we don't raise the fee," he said, "we'll be in the same position next year."

John Cuny, W&L's Assistant



Willard Dumas

...sets money rules for SAB

Treasurer, attributes SAB's large deficit last year to Fancy Dress. Cuny said "FD is the event that needs to be controlled more than any other." SAB's \$26,000 deficit of last year compares to a \$5,000 deficit from the previous year. The total deficit for all student organiza-

□ Please see Budget page 3

## Smith: debt paid for image

By Cecily Tynan  
Staff Reporter

Although bills are still being paid for last year's Fancy Dress, the improved 'image' of the Student Activities Board is worth it, according to 1989 Fancy Dress Chairman Liz Smith.

"We knew image of it - how the students perceived SAB - was the most important thing to get back on track and then you can correct the money problems when people are willing to pay the money," said Smith.

Last year was an interim period for the student organization, according to Smith, and was "definitely" worth the resulting budgetary problems.

"We knew it was going to take a year, maybe two, to get the students psyched to go to an SAB function," said Smith.

The financial headaches of last year's Fancy Dress stemmed from the Thursday night B.B. King concert, which incurred a substantial loss.

"We had a huge name for

Thursday night and you just can't support that," said Smith.

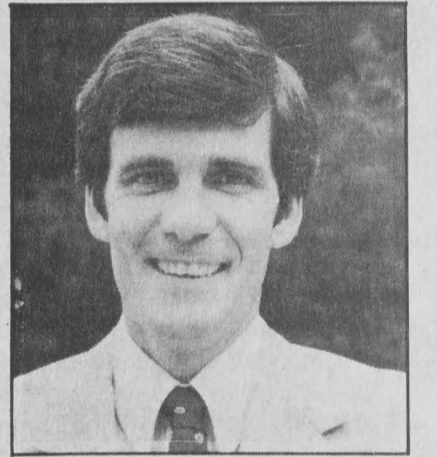
No records exist, however, of exactly how much money was lost since the receipts for Thursday night's ticket sales and tickets for Friday's ball were never separated.

Smith said the Friday night Fancy Dress Ball initially made money for the SAB. This was true originally, according to a budget report sent to the Executive Committee immediately after Fancy Dress. That report showed receipts approximately \$2,000 over costs. That figure, however, failed to consider bills yet to come in, said Smith.

Incoming Fancy Dress bills continue to create pressures for this year's SAB. The latest bill - more than \$800 from Rose's - arrived just this past Tuesday, according to this year's SAB Treasurer Katie Duwel.

"Even to this day, we don't know what was actually spent because we don't know what bills are yet to come in," said Duwel.

The unorganized handling of money was the biggest problem



Michael Walsh

Walsh becomes the fifth athletic director in W&L's history. He replaces William McHenry, who resigned over the summer.

Walsh comes to W&L from Dartmouth College, where he served as head baseball coach and assistant athletic director since 1981.

Said Walsh, "I'm very excited, and my family is very excited about coming to Lexington."

Said W&L president John Wilson, "We are delighted that Mr. Walsh and his family have accepted our offer to join the Washington and Lee community. We look forward to his leadership, gained through his years of experience as a coach and an administrator."

"He comes from an Ivy League

school with the balance of academics and athletics in the proper perspective. He understands our situation and will be able to provide us with fresh views that someone from outside the community can bring."

His specific duties at Dartmouth centered around event management, budgeting, marketing and NCAA compliance. Walsh, 41, was also part of a management team that instituted a five-year plan for improving the quality of Dartmouth's competitive sports program. Within four years, the plan produced Dartmouth's best won-lost record in 27 years.

□ Please see WALSH page 4

## Hitz will chair Fancy Dress

Accepts higher position after last week's resignation

By Brooke Jarabek  
Staff Reporter

The Executive Committee appointed Alex Hitz as the new Fancy Dress chairman less than a week after Hitz resigned as Fancy Dress vice chairman. Will Jones, who had not applied for a position on the Fancy Dress committee in the first interviews, was named the new vice chairman.

Hitz resigned from his position as vice chair after Richard Spence was appointed chairman. Spence also resigned from his position saying the SAB was willing to cooperate with him only if he played by their rules. He could not accept their rules and quit because, he said,

his hands "were tied from the start."

Hitz, who had applied for the position of chairman while Spence had applied for the position of auditor, resigned because he believed he was more qualified to be Fancy Dress Chairman than Spence, although Spence had similar organizational experiences in high school. Hitz also said he would accept a position other than chairman only if he could work with the chairman.

EC President Willard Dumas said Hitz was the only applicant for the position because "the job has gotten so big it scares students away."

After Spence resigned, declaring the SAB would not cooperate with

him, Dumas said "the picture was painted throughout the student body that a lot of people on the SAB and a lot of people in school have set notions as to how the job of chairman is to be run and what is expected."

He added students may think "those people aren't willing to bend those expectations, so a lot of students don't want to come into a position" where the supporting people refuse to change their ideas.

Dumas said the EC is attempting to change the chairman's job description and encourage the three officers to share the burden because the responsibility is too big for one person to handle alone.



### Rock on

The Connells played the Pavilion Friday night of Homecoming. Staff photo by Cary Baber.

## Lexington tries a new tax dance

The personal property tax in the city of Lexington is 5.5 percent. To put it in more graphic terms, if a Washington and Lee student were made to pay this tax on a brand-new BMW 325i convertible, the bill would come to \$1,950.

Lexington is, as its leaders like to say, "financially stressed." Because the city is restricted from expanding, Lexington has few ways to expand its tax income. Thus was born the notion to tax student cars. After all, don't students park their cars here nine months out of each year? Don't they use city streets and take advantage of city services? So they should pay the same tax as year-round residents, right? Wrong.

The reason is simple. It's not legal. The issue hinges on the distinction between in-state and out-of-state students. For out-of-state students who pay property taxes back home, there seems to be no question. Section 58.1-3511 of the state code says, "Any person domiciled in another state whose motor vehicle is principally parked in this Commonwealth during the tax year shall not be subject to a personal property tax on such vehicle upon showing of sufficient evidence that such person has paid a personal property tax on the vehicle in the state in which he is domiciled." The statute goes on to say that a "similar tax" in the car owner's home state will make him exempt.

In the next paragraph, the law says someone who has paid a personal property tax in Virginia and a "similar tax" in his home state "may apply to such city or county for a refund of such tax payment."

Lexington City Manager Joseph King, in a letter to *The Ring-tum Phi*, said, in his opinion, that meant students could be made to pay the difference between Lexington's tax rate and that of the student's home state.

That assessment, we believe, is faulty. Every state, as well as the federal government, provides for refunds of excess tax payments. Accidents happen. Every year, many people pay taxes for which they are not obligated. If such cases, they can apply for a refund of the unnecessary payment.

That appears to be the case here. If a student were to pay an unnecessary tax to the city of Lexington, the law provides him with a means to get a refund, not the city with a means to tax students twice for the same property.

Although the law does not seem to address in-state students, we believe the doctrine of fairness obligates the city to exempt in-state students from the personal property tax as well. Is it fair to subject in-state students to what amounts to two personal property taxes? Lexington's rate is the highest in the state, so every in-state student would pay at least a fraction of that 5.5 percent. Also, is it fair to tax in-state students while those students who have, by accident of birth, escaped Virginia residency are exempted?

King said Lexington is waiting for the city attorney to deliver an opinion on the matter. There is no need to wait. The law is clear. Lexington will have to look elsewhere.

## Lee remembered

One century and nineteen years ago this morning, Gen. Robert E. Lee, then the president of this college, died. He was remembered earlier today in a memorial service in the chapel that bears his name.

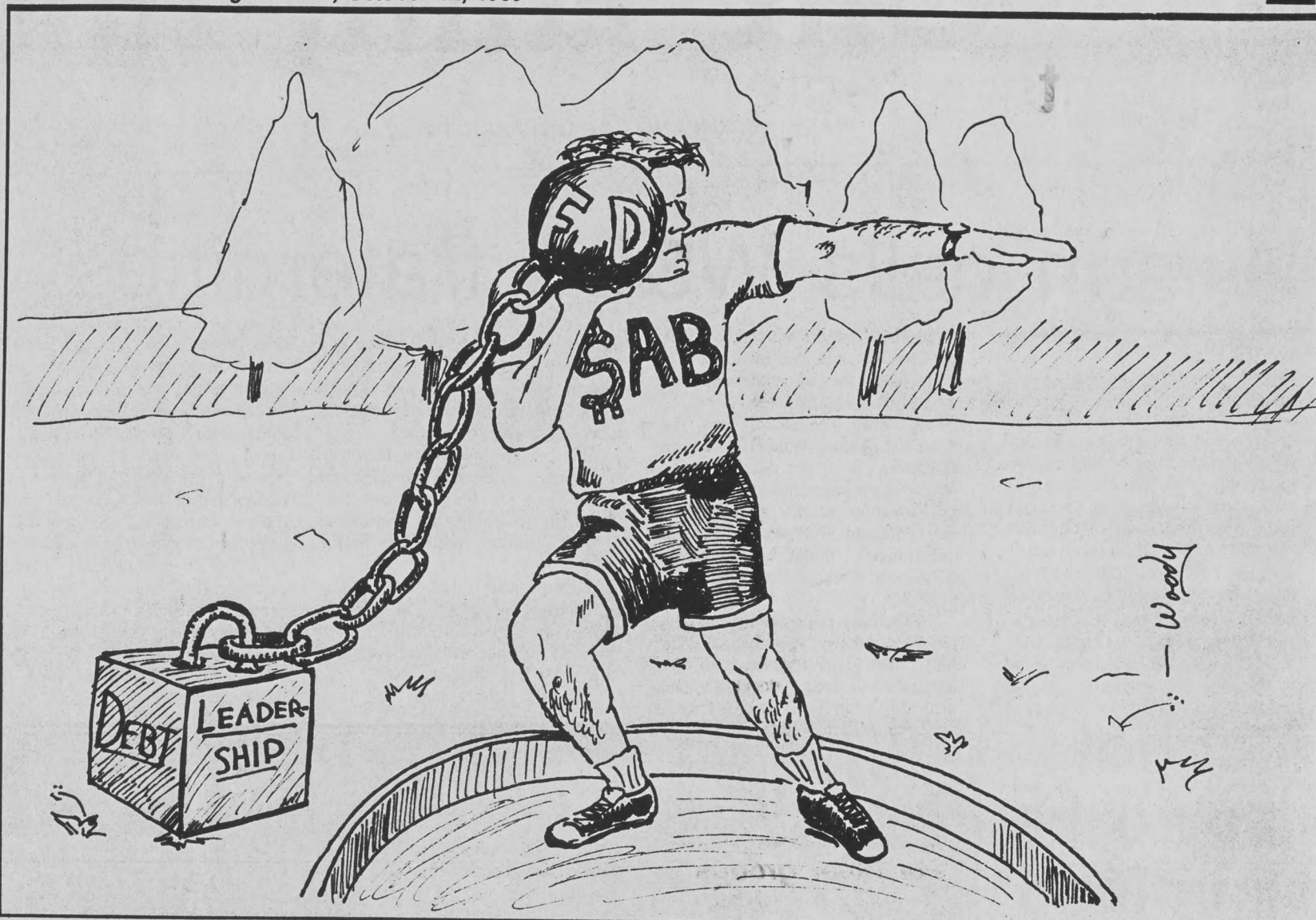
During President George Bush's visit to Charlottesville last month, the then-president of the University of Virginia, Robert O'Neill, pointed out that Thomas Jefferson is mentioned at least every two hours on the UVA campus. "There are worse habits," he observed.

The same is perhaps often said of Lee here: Why must we praise him constantly? Weren't their two founders? And didn't anyone else do anything for W&L?

The answer, of course, is yes. But there is a reason why we remember Lee so fondly and so often. Perhaps Maj. John W. Daniel explained it best, when he spoke at the unveiling ceremony for the statue that rests in Lee Chapel:

*Here for five years the General devoted himself to the cause of education, and here under him that cause nobly flourished. Here he demonstrated that comprehensive grasp of every subject connected with his sphere; and the keen apprehension of the demands of this progressive age, and of a land entering as it were upon a new birth. His associates in the faculty loved him as a father, and all who saw or knew his work with common voice proclaimed the conviction expressed by one of the most distinguished of his associates, that he was "the best College President that this country has ever produced."*

Lee, General, educator, gentleman. Remember him. There are worse habits.



## Students accuse EC of budget bias

### MY VIEW

By Gary McCullough and Aelica Ingenthron

What is the purpose of a student-run Executive Committee? If there is any point in having such a committee at a liberal arts school, then it seems logical that such a committee would promote the same kind of atmosphere that is conducive to a liberal arts education — an education which, under ideal circumstances, promotes an open exchange of ideas for the benefit of none other than those who have the courage to exchange them. So, considering the importance of such a committee, if there is any doubt as to whether the committee is performing to the best of its capabilities, then such a doubt must be addressed immediately. For, if the committee fails to do this then it betrays not only itself, but the students it represents and the institution which brings them together.

One of the problems which can occur within such a committee is the presence of bias. For if bias is present, the committee is not objective; and if the committee is not objective, then it is not a committee which represents the student body — but one which represents only the ideas of its members. Keep in mind, that just because a committee has an elected body does not make it immune to the problem of bias.

Such was the situation which I encountered at last week's meeting of the Executive Committee. I attended the meeting in order to appeal the committee's decision not to allocate any funds to Amnesty International. The reasoning given was that it was a "political organization". But what is a "political

organization"? The impression which I gathered from their comments was that a political organization is anything which "personally offends" any one of the EC's members. Rest assured that if I were a member of the EC and had the right to make my decision in the same manner, then the Liberty Hall Volunteers sure as hell wouldn't have received \$900 which they were allocated for the year. After all, I would have made my decision purely on that which I found offensive. And what could be more offensive than a group of southern college students marching around in Confederate uniforms? Didn't the Minority Student Association boycott

Fancy Dress two years ago on the basis that the same theme had racist connotations?

The point of this is not to attack the Liberty Hall Volunteers, but to attack the principle by which the EC denied Amnesty International, a committee which is designed to promote human rights, their fair share of the EC's central funding. I, personally, would have rather seen that \$900 go toward saving prisoners of conscience. However, my opinion does not count — not because my opinion is not important, but apparently because I am not a member of the EC. Even the W&L student handbook classifies Amnesty International separately from the political

organizations. One might assume that bias is entering into my interpretation of the EC's decision-making process.

However, I am basing my argument solely on what I was told at the meeting, which can be summed up well by EC Rep. David Anthony, who said, "I personally find your organization offensive." Well, all I have to say to that person is that I find YOUR organization quite offensive. But who cares what either of us think? — the point is that the student body has to live with what he thinks, not with what I think. Even the United States government has a system of checks and balances. Think about that!



## LETTERS

### W&L coed has two comments

Just two things I wanted to say that have been on my mind. The first deals with the Minority Students Association boycotting '88 Fancy Dress. During that era women were also oppressed; they could not vote or be taken seriously in any job. Yet I did not notice any women being offended by the theme. It was just that — a theme!

Secondly, responding to last week's cartoon depicting a W&L guy dressed up as a W&L girl for Homecoming Queen: I don't understand why W&L women winning Homecoming Queen should create a fuss. It should be that way. A Hollins/Sweetbriar, etc. girl winning W&L Homecoming Queen is like an Australian girl winning Miss America because "she speaks English and visits America a lot."

Sincerely,  
Rachelle Nock, '91

### FD applicant addresses EC

I am writing this letter as a formal complaint to the Executive Committee for what I consider to be unfair and disrespectful behavior on the part of both individuals on the EC and the EC as a whole. I do want it to be

known that this letter is not a result of my denial to the position of Fancy Dress vice-chairman for I feel that those appointed to the positions were highly qualified and much more qualified than I.

My complaint is in two parts. My first complaint is to the EC as a whole for their improper handling of the interview procedure. I came to realize, during my interview, that most of the members of the committee had not even read my written application for the position of Fancy Dress vice-chairman prior to my personal interview in front of the EC. And I would imagine, following so disastrous an interview, that there were many that probably did not even read my application with any particular care. This is a practice which defeats the entire purpose of the written application.

As well, this procedure shows great disrespect to the applicant and, quite frankly, an incredible amount of gall on the part of the members of the EC to assume any position of authority in the decision-making process, given the unpreparedness of the committee members and the inequity with which the applicant was treated. For this procedure does not take into account the confidence and eloquence so well expressed on paper but lost in the transition to speech in front of a panel of thirteen members by a nervous applicant to a position that does not require such eloquence in speech.

My second complaint is to an individual on the EC, second-year law Rep. Mark Cobb. It is directed at a question asked of me by Mr. Cobb after my formal dismissal from the interview by Mr. Dumas. It was a question that, so phrased and so timed, could do nothing but to further the detriment of my interview.

I should hope that every subject who falls prey to an interview by the EC is not treated

with the same degree of disrespect as I have been. And if so, I hope that this letter should find forum in the next EC meeting so that there could be some attempts made to ameliorate the substandard guidelines of the present interview procedure. I should add that this has been an experience that would make me somewhat more than hesitant to make application to the EC for any positions in the future.

Regretfully,  
Clay Thomas '92

### Student asks: 'is SAB lying?'

Last week I paused over two words that appeared in Richard Spence's editorial on his SAB experience. The words were "creative bookkeeping" quoted from Alexander Hitz. What does this mean? According to Spence, they represent "fraud, mismanagement, and ... lies."

If what Spence asserts is true, have members of the SAB breached the Honor System? To my knowledge, the White Book does not address the question of how one maintains his finances.

Is it any wonder that the Hill has been curtailing student responsibility with examples like the SAB?

Let's hope that the SAB has answers for the accusations made by Richard Spence.

Jeff Woodland, '91

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