

Changes Eyed Among Nation's Greeks

ST. LOUIS (CPS)—While fraternity discrimination continues to occupy most of the headlines, more basic questions concerning the purposes and future of the Greek system are being raised on different campuses across the country.

A plan to change rushing procedures at Washington University here has refocused attention to this point. The administration has told fraternities they will no longer be able to conduct rush at the beginning of each semester because of a new freshman orientation program.

Although seemingly a minor problem—rush is conducted at many different times of the year on different campuses—the action has contributed to “a great deal of fear and anxiety among fraternities about their future here,” according to one observer. Many Greeks feel this is part of a general plan to eliminate them. One administration map for the campus in 1980 apparently shows classroom buildings where the fraternity houses are now.

Washington University's chancellor, Thomas Eliot, is seeking to raise academic standards (a large fund drive is imminent); he allegedly believes the campus academic climate can be improved by strengthening the dormitory system at the expense of fraternities.

An anti-intellectual character is being charged to fraternities in other places. A faculty committee at Amherst College came out with a report last fall which said in part:

“Few of the fraternities have any consistent, frequent institutional forms beyond the ‘faculty cocktail party’ for bringing together work and social life. Even fewer still have significant programs of independent activities for exercising the creative, literary, artistic, or intellectual abilities of their members.

At least one fraternity is seen by some of its members as a happy refuge from the intellectual and moral expectations of the College and general society. Too often the exercise of responsibility is confined to house-

keeping, perpetuating the institution through rushing, arranging for parties, and defending the fraternity against attack in the student newspaper . . .”

Dean of Men William G. Long of the University of North Carolina has mixed feelings about fraternities, doesn't know whether they will survive, and acknowledges that the faculty is becoming negatively disposed towards them.

And in a now well-known statement, University of California sociologist John F. Scott predicted last fall that sororities face extinction. He contended that they are too rigidly structured to cope

with today's highly competitive campus society.

Chancellor Eliot, however, was not at all dogmatic in a meeting with fraternity leaders at Washington. He said that the administration remained open-minded concerning Greeks, acknowledging, at the same time, that members of the faculty were more hostile.

The chancellor expressed concern over the rivalry between Greeks and independents on the campus, terming it potentially unhealthy. He said that the system would have to harmonize its activities more with the rest of the campus.

At least one fraternity man agreed. Writing in the student newspaper, Dennis Brophy indicated he thought the system was being presented with an opportunity for self-analysis.

“For years individual administrators and faculty members have done little to make us feel wanted,” he wrote. “But have we really done all we could to make ourselves a part of the larger community? Have we really encouraged each other to take advantage of all the opportunities on campus to grow as persons—or have we been busy justifying ourselves by licking Easter Seals

during Hell Week and compiling GPA's?”

“We say there is more to school than academics . . . But isn't there more to fraternities than high pressure selling of an ‘image’ to freshmen who often don't know what they want, or how to get it? Isn't there something more to a fraternity than the Sweetheart's Song and a pledge pin?”

“If there is, then why don't we spend more time looking for a better approach and a defined set of goals, rather than getting ulcers trying to save a sacred cow that, quite frankly, is starting to stink up the place?”

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Olympia: Panowicz Jewelers
Pasco: Glasow's Jewelry
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Renton: Porcello Jewelers
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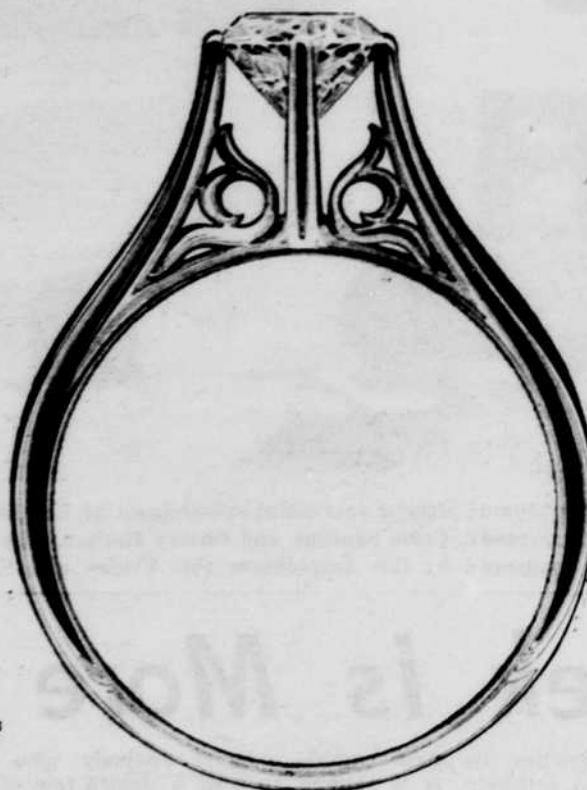
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