

# REVIEW *and* OUTLOOK

Editorial Opinion of The Ring-tum Phi

Thursday, October 23, 1975

## Making mountains out of molehills

Matters came to a head once again this week over what role black students are to play in the University. The Student Association for Black Unity came before the Executive Committee to complain that its recommendations to the Student Activities Board had not been given due consideration.

After patiently listening to arguments, rebuttals, refutations, counter-arguments and the like for nearly three hours, the EC ended the discussion by simply telling SABU that it should appear before the Committee in future years to request funds for activities it cares to sponsor, rather than attempting to finance such projects through the Activities Board.

That the Executive Committee passed no resolutions and in short did virtually nothing (except promote a clearing of the air) is significant. We feel that there is little the EC wisely should do to insure that events endorsed by SABU be given preferential treatment by the Activities Board. Like any other group, SABU should be able to present its proposals to the Board, and to push for their adoption, but sanctions mandated by the EC should be avoided. Having to accede to the requests of SABU by law, the SAB would be hamstrung even more, since it already has little choice about its main events: Homecoming, Fancy Dress and Springs.

For the Executive Committee to impose definite rules on the SAB and its choice of cultural events proposed by SABU would be tantamount to admitting that overt discrimination does exist and is sanctioned through the process of choosing entertainment, scheduling, and so forth.

That is the crux of the matter. Although the sentiment was never expressed in such a blunt manner, what really concerns the members of SABU is that it believes its proposal was killed because of prejudices held by SAB members, rather than other considerations such as cost of the event and scheduling difficulties. But we fail to see where the cause of racial equality is being served by the tactics used by SABU to make known its displeasure.

The members of SABU took the right action by airing their grievances before the EC. We believe, however, that the members of SABU erred in magnifying the issue to a distorted size and jumping to conclusions about the SAB's reasons for not scheduling a concert during the coming Black Culture Program.

The SAB made a mistake by not promptly informing SABU of its intention not to schedule a concert in January. We also feel that, although they were perhaps negligent in disclosing their plans specifically before SABU officers, they were nevertheless justified in their choice of alternative entertainment to a concert. In other words, from the arguments presented before the EC, it cannot be inferred that racial prejudice motivated the Activities Board in its actions.

Most thoughtful students recognize the plight of the black student on this campus. More than any other group he has unique problems in coping with life in Lexington. But this in itself does not justify the giving of preference, disproportionate to the influence SABU has on campus, in matters of entertainment. Other groups, notably the independent students, are currently given less deference.

The solution to future conflicts of this nature is to request of SABU that it henceforth come before the EC to ask for funding for events it feels are worthy of consideration, events which benefit a wide range of students. By coming before the EC in September during the budget hearings, SABU will be on a par with the other standing committees, service groups and special interest organizations. The EC's budget hearings are a matter of public record, and therefore no misunderstandings, at least of the kind typified by this current situation, should arise. All actions taken on SABU's proposals will be taken with its full knowledge, and it will not have cause to suspect any surreptitious maneuvering in the decisions reached.