

OUTLOOK and REVIEW

Ripping off the students

Whether intended or not, the city of Lexington is, in the minds of many persons at Washington and Lee, ripping off the average student.

Consider the following:

... Automobile tags. Students with motor vehicles registered out of state are required to have a city or county license tag. The student is apparently considered a resident of the area and is charged as such, as are all Virginia residents. Though the city tag fee may and probably could be challenged as a rip-off solely in itself, this is not the main point. The classification of the student as an apparent resident and not just a transient has caused problems in other areas, specifically:

... Registering to vote. If you are assumed a resident of the area in registering a motor vehicle, then why has there been such a hassle in recent years when a student has approached the local voter registration board in an attempt to assert his privilege of voting? Reportedly, residency has been at the root of the problem—is a W&L student a resident and therefore eligible to vote? The city seems to think so in regard to license tag fees; why not the same for registration to vote locally and perhaps give the student a voice in the local government? Perhaps a little student representation could help give the student an even break in the city.

... A one percent tax on food. Lexington is fast becoming known as somewhat of a tourist trap by some particularly because of this tax, which certainly hurts tourists—and financially more than it does the citizens of Lexington. For residents, there is little problem. The tax, particularly when applied to prepared food such as that in a restaurant, or a snack bar, or a Co-op for that matter, poses a constant burden on those who do not live entirely off their own cooking. Students, for instance.

One percent may seem trivial, granted, but it adds up fast. Combined with the state tax, Lexington's penny tax on the dollar aids in bringing the cost of a 15 cent ice cream cone to 16 cents.

Besides affecting the pocketbook in a subtle way, the tax is a downright nuisance. The endless search for the extra penny or two, or the equally endless wait for your change, is a pain most can do without. And of course, do the W&L students, who are affected most by the tax, reap the benefits from it?

... Parking meters in front of fraternity houses. What legitimate excuse is there for meters in front of, say, the Sigma Chi house? It is doubtful that the meters are used to any degree by patrons of the Lexington "business district," particularly when one considers the amount of available space downtown.

There are of course, other grips which could be discussed in this column, perhaps even to the point of alleging a conspiracy by the towns people against the university. But many of these border on the line separating legitimate complaint from complete paranoia, and many are seen by students on an individual basis.

Whatever the case, when one considers the economic impact of the Washington and Lee student upon this community, both economically and intellectually, it seems as if somebody is on the short end of the stick.

This view may be biased, granted, but it is the biased view of students whose patiences and pocketbooks have both been taxed by the city. The student is getting ripped off, perhaps in a figurative sense, possibly in a literal sense. —P.J.L.

Responding to student needs

A proposal asking for equal representation (6-6) of students and faculty on the Courses and Degrees Committee will be brought before the University Council today and the genral faculty on Monday.

Currently, the board has one student and eight members of the faculty and administration. The committee is involved primarily with policy in regards to couses at Washington and Lee.

Why even up the representation? First, the move will make the committee more responsive to student needs. Six students on the committee can give a better representation of students wants and needs than can one.

Second, the move will enhance the role of the committee as middle ground between students and faculty. It would be a true link between the Curriculum Committee, comprised of students, on the lower end of the ladder, and the faculty committee at the top. The faculty would still have final say in any curriculum matters.

We emphatically endorse the proposal, as did the Executive Committee (which did so in a unanimous vote). The move will not decrease the faculty's ultimate power in course decisions, and it will aid in expanding the marketplace of ideas in curriculum matters high up the ladder, so that all sides of the issue can be presented in the now one-sided environment of executive decisions. —P.J.L.



"Who had the English muffins?"

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir:

This letter is addressed to the Student Activities Board and the Contact Committee.

This past Wednesday night, a program of unquestionable merit was brought by your board to the W&L campus. The program dealing with the assassination of President John Kennedy was of great interest to the student body.

However, did your committees not realize that September 26 (Wednesday night) was the first night of the Jewish New Year. This holiday is among the most religious occasions observed by the Jewish Community and, therefore, had you known about the holiday, I feel your committees are guilty of not considering the interests of the Jewish students on campus.

Should your committees not have known about the Jewish holiday, I suggest you get a new calendar and keep more abreast of activities that will keep students in the W&L community from being able to participate in activities they pay for from the student tax.

Herby Rubenstein '74

The Ring-tum Phi invites letters from our readers on any topic of concern to students. Letters should be submitted to the Ring-tum Phi office in the first floor of Reid Hall or to P. O. Box 899, no later than 6 p.m. Monday. The Ring-tum Phi reserves the right to edit letters for libel and length. All letters should be signed, though names will be withheld on request.

THE RING-TUM PHI

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