

The Aquinas

CRSA

The newly revised Conference On Resident Student Affairs recently held their first meeting. After discussing the Conference with some of the replaced counselors and the new counselors, present student representatives, a number of resident prefects and the Dean of Men, the AQUINAS offers some observations on the Conference.

To begin with, it should be made clear that the Conference is an advisory body to the Dean of Men. This is so by constitution and structure. Every committee within the University (ranging all the way up to the University Senate) is advisory to someone. The Board of Trustees is the only legal policy-making committee within the University. To put the CRSA on the same level as the Board of Trustees does not seem logical. The CRSA does, after all, only deal with a definite minority within the University—the resident undergraduate.

During the meeting an attempt by one of the student representatives to block the seating of new counselors failed miserably. This incident serves to illustrate two important points.

First of all, in view of its advisory nature, there should be no difference drawn as to who sits on the Conference. Both the previous group of counselors and the present four are responsible and interested Jesuits. There are two so-called "liberals" and two so-called "conservatives" on the new CRSA. They are "so-called" only because none of them will always opt for something merely because it's liberal or conservative in nature.

Change is good. It has to be one of the basic tenets of education. A change in the make-up of the CRSA should not be looked on as a bad thing. New Blood is usually stimulating. The only negative side of the new appointments is that Frs. Gannon and Suppe were not showing any signs of getting rusty or stale. They were the main forces behind any type of

resolutions passed by CRSA last semester. It didn't seem necessary to remove Frs. Gannon and Suppe, but the wiseness of the change can not be judged until the new counselors have been given a chance.

It is entirely the Dean of Men's prerogative to change some or all of the members whenever he chooses, just as it is his prerogative to ever he chooses, just as it is his prerogative to accept or ignore that body's suggestions. As he stated in an AQUINAS interview, he would have changed the counselors in January had not the resident students shown a lack of respect for the CRSA by their apathetic response. It is they who are to blame if the selection of new counselors, as well as new student representatives and prefects, was delayed until now.

Secondly, this incident focuses attention on the disorganized, unprepared state of the student representatives. If any group was responsible for bogging down the first meeting it was they. The meeting never got past old business. If the students had united on the seating issue they could have acted. They did not. Instead they all, without exception, failed to support the proposed move.

Much good has come out of the CRSA and even more can still be realized in the future. It is hoped that the students will accept the fact that there are new counselors on the Board and at least give them a chance. Since there are new students sitting on the Conference they should not be judged before they have a chance to prove themselves in the context of the Conference. That is the privilege that should be accorded the new counselors, to be judged in the context in which they are now functioning.

Since the Conference helps to determine much of future of the dorms and the resident students some accords much be reached so that progress can be affected. The student representatives should look at the reality of the situation so that they can get down to business.

March Musing

March has been a good month for the University.

It roared in with a pride of Royal Lions devouring the MAC championship. The thrust was continued by the publication of the Winter edition of ESPRIT. And this month was capped off by the Spring performance of the University Players in "Anything Goes."

The Basketball Championship is much-deserved recognition for Coach Volpe and his teams who have consistently played high-calibre ball for the last three seasons. This season, however, they did bring home the laurels and deserve much praise. The team is young and the gate has never been better. Future prospects in basketball loom as brilliant.

The Winter issue of ESPRIT, although delayed by a number of unfortunate circumstances, is a welcomed breath of personal creativity. At a time when the University seems to be stressing her scientific accomplishments (which are admittedly impressive) the appearance of an artistic endeavor such as ESPRIT is surprisingly fresh. Surprisingly because although ESPRIT is consistently ranked among the top

five literary magazines in the the country, it is produced at a school which is no where near fifth in the nation in Fine Arts. In fact, the University does not even have such a department.

The University Players production of "Anything Goes" ranks among the best performances ever by that company. The AQUINAS reviewer described the play as ". . .marvelous. . .the players took a very difficult show and made it look easy. . .a delightful evening of theatre." The individual performances were excellent and the dedication of the entire company was Aeneic. Again the high quality evokes surprise, since the University lacks any type of a drama department. Surely a fifty member cast, most of them University students, evidences an interest and demand for some sort of drama department to be inaugurated here at the University.

It is upon the observation of such incidents as these that one can begin to grasp the potential of this University. Unfortunately these incidents are not as frequent as one would like, but whenever they appear they must be encouraged.

JOE McDONALD

Black & White

The switchboard at Brandeis University was recently seized by a group of Black students. They demanded certain changes, and they held the building in which the switchboard was housed until those demands were met. During the period of occupation, which lasted about a week, tension was high and nerves were raw on the Waltham, Mass. campus, long a bastion of liberalism. In order to break the tension one night, a Brandeis co-ed, sitting in a lounge with a group of liberal friends, began making small-talk. She mentioned a movie she had just seen—"A Space Odyssey." No one paid too much attention to her until she made references to a "black monolith." That caused them all to perk their ears, and one of her friends, having caught just the last phrase, called her a white racist and left the table.

The story is true and so is the following. A Black militant student, citing "clear" examples of white racist attitudes, told his audience a story about the English Department Chairman at Cal. State. It seems this man replied to a demand for a course in Afro-American Literature by saying that as far as he could see there was no Afro-American Literature worth speaking of.

The racial issue is important, but not so important that it should inhibit anyone's relaxation, and of course Black Studies are important, but they are not so important that they may obscure the truth of the fact that there is no Afro-American Literature worth speaking of. Perhaps I should repeat this last fact because there is a certain charm in its assertion that somehow helps to clear the air and encourages others to speak the truth. *However important Black Studies are, there is no Afro-American Literature worth speaking of.*

I certainly respect the Black people of America for finally realizing that most Blacks are as worthy as most whites. That realization has upset some formerly firm cultural patterns in America, and America is undoubtedly better for their upset. But a Black man can have personal and racial pride without denying that Banjo Joe, Little Black Sambo, and Amos and Andy have made great contributions to America's culture, and without claiming that Aretha Franklin's contribution is greater (or for that matter, without claiming that Aretha Franklin is a good singer). Furthermore, a Black man can exhibit happy awareness of his cultural and racial roots without pretending that he prefers chitlins to filet mignon.

It is perhaps true that a people, having lost its identity under the pressure of a 200 year old racial hegemony, must necessarily resort to exaggeration in order to reestablish that identity. That does not mean, however, that those of us who have had comfort and security for so long and have therefore had the kind of environment that breeds tasteful discrimination, should bow to this exaggeration or should see it as anything more than a necessary stage in the development of a race hitherto suppressed. In other words, Black militants screaming non-negotiable slogans are natural; Whites assuming the same militancy for the same reason are little better than ridiculous. A White student who takes over a building demanding that his Black fellows have their own college department of Black Studies over which Whites will have no share of control and in which Whites will not be allowed to participate is a fool. If he is so interested in the problems of Blacks that he would risk expulsion for their sake then he ought at least to demand of those whom he is helping the right to learn Black history in the department for which he is fighting. Suppressed peoples were never able to rise to prosperity through the help of fools, and the Blacks of America are apparently fully cognizant of this. They seem largely to resent the proposed help of White radicals. They perhaps realize the comic incongruity of a group of Whites demanding a menu of soul food. They are perhaps as sure as I am that no White middle class student, radical or otherwise, can participate in the exaggerated search for Blackness without lying to himself. A man like Mark Rudd, who was bright enough to get into Columbia University, is obviously a hypocrite if he doesn't wince at Stokeley Carmichael's grammatical constructions. A White man today who does not admit to having enjoyed "Amos and Andy" is lying, and his lie is a condescension to the Black people of America. Condescension is probably worse than persecution, and it is certainly a new way of saying the ever popular "nigger."

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