

# On Changing The Charter — Part Two

If integration will have the most immediate effect among the major decisions Rice has made this year, tuition surely has the greatest long-range implications.

In the tuition question is wrapped up the whole debate over the university's future direction. It is no secret that big decisions have been made since the summer of 1961; tuition seems closely associated with two major policies that have arisen under President Pitzer. These policies are the establishment of a large-scale graduate program and vigorous development of the sciences.

But what effect will tuition have on the humanities? Apparently, an extensive scholarship system would accompany the tuition program; students from low-income families would find it relatively easy to get financial aid, and students from high-income families would scarcely need it. But what of the middle-class student—specifically, the middle-class humanities student? He is the base of the University's humanities program, yet he is the type of student most attracted to the Ivy League. And he is the forgotten man in the scholarship arrangements.

This is the weakest link in the tuition program. The Harvard-Rice debate aside, the fact remains that most humanities students here do expect Rice to be comparable (if not equivalent) to Eastern Universities. In the past, the continuing rediscovery that Rice is not the Ivy League has had little bearing on the caliber of humanities students who come here, just because it is so much cheaper to come here. They may apply to Eastern schools, and a good many are accepted; but when the time comes to calculate the costs, they decide on Rice. But add tuition to the picture, raise the expenses to a level like the East, and what will happen?

Good students are a prerequisite for any successful academic program. Whatever happens, good science and engineering students will continue to apply; Rice's program in these areas is solidly established. Tuition, however, will put the Rice humanities in direct competition with Eastern schools—a state of affairs for which almost anyone will admit Rice is not yet ready. In this sense, tuition poses a potentially deadly threat to the humanities at Rice.

But tuition has another dimension—one which affects science and engineering majors as well as humanities students. This is the graduate program. Any graduate program requires money; much more money than Rice can now afford. The reason is simple: a great many more facilities are needed, and financial assistance must be given to prospective graduate students. Few graduates now pay their own way; a tuition-free university finds itself not only receiving no money from them, but actually having to pay it out. If Rice is to jump into the national race for graduate students, it will have to have some sort of financial lure. The money for a graduate program must come from tuition; but the graduates themselves will not pay it. They will receive its benefits, while the undergraduates foot the bill.

If all this was somehow beneficial to the undergraduates, they should, and would, have no complaint. But is a graduate program the right thing for Rice? What will it really do to the school? When famous men are offered department chairmanships with the agreement that they will not have to teach undergraduates, how are

the undergraduates going to benefit? Few of them find the "trickle theory" applicable to their academic work, yet this seems to be the way we are heading.

Is Rice's proper role that of a strongly-graduate oriented school with a few undergraduates thrown in for spice, or is it that of a small liberal arts school emphasizing undergraduate teaching? Rice can excel if it tailors its ambitions to its abilities; it can attract good young men on the way up and put them to work teaching undergraduates. Any school will have trouble keeping many top-flight men in this part of the country—the best men are naturally drawn to the largest academic centers on the East and West Coasts. Rice should be content with a big turnover and a steady influx of good men; they can get three vigorous young professors for the salary which that one famous department chairman would demand; and the undergraduate would profit incomparably more.

There can be no doubt of the good intentions of those men who have chosen to stress the graduate program; but as undergraduates we find it hard to agree with or endorse these things.

The argument has been advanced that a graduate program is necessary to attract nationally-known professors, and nationally-known professors are needed before good young professors will come to teach undergraduates. But is the undergraduate program, particularly in the humanities, now on a firm enough footing to sustain the transition? This is the crux of the question. In the process of devoting the University's resources to graduate facilities and famous scholars, what will become of the undergraduate program? What will become of the young professors who want to teach and the bright undergraduates who discover that tuition puts Rice in the same financial category with self-evidently better schools?

The time for undergraduates to speak up is now. We do not pretend to have answered the complex question of tuition, but only to have raised some relevant points. Each undergraduate, but especially those in the humanities, has a tremendous stake in the course of events. It should be quite clear that for each undergraduate here today, the fate of his University is being decided now. The sort of school that twenty years from now he will call his alma mater will not be the sort of school he now knows. And it may not be the sort of school he wants. Whether his ideas are followed or not, it is his responsibility to speak up. If there is any single question that ought to be raised at Monday's Forum, it is: What will be the real impact of tuition at Rice?

## Flash

The second-to-last paragraph of last week's editorial contained a typographical error which completely reversed its meaning.

Correctly, the paragraph should read:

"If the South really sees itself defending localism, and is not just using "state's rights" as a smokescreen to cover up a hatred of the Negro, then the region can only prove its sincerity and good faith by abandoning segregation voluntarily where those arguments are irrelevant, while working conscientiously toward an equitable solution in other areas."