

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL
1940-1941

The Community Council which I represent feels that it has been very circumspect about holding Community Meetings, and this is the first time during our term of office that we have called you together and asked your cooperation in conducting some necessary business. Because we have been so abstemious, necessary business has accumulated and we have a great deal to accomplish tonight, both here in Community meeting and later in house meetings. The program divides itself neatly into two parts: first we will hear the annual reports of the chairmen of various committees which comprise the Community government, and second we will adjourn to house meetings to make nominations to the Community Council, and to the Recreation Council. Elections to these offices will be held in the store one week from the day on which the nominations are made and posted. Nominations to the Educational Policies Committee will be made as soon the faculty ~~can~~^{will} meet to consider their nominations; and candidates for the Cooperative Store Board will be announced within the next week by that committee. We hope, therefore, that as you hear the reports tonight you will be making mental nominations to the committees here represented as well as evaluating our performance.

—————> *Introduce Char*

I have ~~first~~^{now} to report on the performance of the Community Council. This gives me an excellent opportunity to bore you with a detailed recital of what the Council has said and done about the use of college property, messiness in student houses, chains across the driveways and, of course, the dirty milk bottle. This is not the place for that, however.

Nor is it the place to read from the bulletin on the structure and function of the Community Council. What I am really interested in getting across to you tonight is something of what we have been doing to make the Council a more effective and a more stimulating committee.

A year ago when we started out we were besieged with proposals for the reorganization of the Council. There was general dissatisfaction with it. Its members felt that it was becoming mired in detail and, worst of all, the Community Council in practise did not correspond to the Community Council in theory or in the bulletin. I don't know whether this dissatisfaction arose from the general atmosphere of evaluation or was just a case of democratic soul-searching induced by Hitler - at any rate it was obvious that something had to be done. We decided then, at the beginning of our incumbency, to defer reorganization until we could prove that the present system, operating at maximum efficiency, really had features which were glaringly obsolete or inefficient.

Ideally the Council should be a policy-making committee: a clearing house to which all the committees of the Community government report, and by which a certain amount of consistency is imparted to their activities. This is the objective which we set for ourselves last March. I cannot say that we have attained it; no single Council is able to, but we have made some progress in this direction. Our first step was to act on the recommendations of the Council preceding us to include in our minutes weekly reports from the Recreation Council and the E.P.O., and to use our representatives on these committees to help us cooperate with

them in such projects as the Fall freshment meetings, the guiding service, and the dance week ends. We had more or less regular reports from such committees as the Health Committee, the Community Chest Committee and from such temporary committees as we have set up to perform certain specific tasks. Our purpose in requesting these reports has been to make the Community Council the coordinator and nerve centre of the Community government - to make it actually a policy-making Committee.

Obviously, the more time the Council spends on matters of general policy, the less time it will have to devote to such mundane matters as walking on the grass, repairs of college property, and, of course, the dirty milk bottle. The Council, therefore, has organized the secretaries of the student houses into a Secretary Council whose job it is to take charge of the upkeep and improvement of the houses and the gardens, if any, and to act as a sub-committee to the Council in promoting community awareness and education regarding College property.

So far, so good. We have made a start toward building a more efficient and more responsible Community Council, but clearly the Council can not operate in a vacuum, its performance depends entirely upon you and upon the people you select as your house chairmen. Without cooperation and interest from its constituency and ideas and leadership from its members, the Council may be organized as efficiently as is humanly possible and remain ineffective. Either alone is not enough. An energetic and responsible chairman can do nothing if her house is phlegmatic, and our community government will never be answer your needs unless the house chairmen fulfill their very great responsibility

as channels for the exchange of ideas and plans between you and the Community Council.

We have done our best during the past year to make the Council a place where ideas can be efficiently considered; ^{and acted upon} all that remains for us is to ask you to elect responsible house-chairmen and then to use them.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Berna

February 26, 1941