

## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Fraternities are one of those things in college which a fellow ought to do some thinking about for himself. They present one of those opportunities of choice which are all-important to a man's education. One of the first things to be clear about is that here at Dartmouth a man has a practical as well as a theoretical choice in the matter of joining a fraternity. I personally value that fact highly and greatly respect and admire the men who by their own strength of mind have kept that opportunity for choice open to future generations of Dartmouth men.

Having said this, I also want to be clear about my personal belief that fraternities serve an important social need in an undergraduate college. The great majority of Dartmouth men have always accepted the fact—and it is a fact—that fraternities, like all other campus activities, must **continuously** justify their existence by serving rather than hindering the work of the College. So long as individual fraternity men practice this code, there will be no conflict between College policy and fraternities at Dartmouth.

A word about the national affiliation of Dartmouth fraternities may be helpful. If you are interested, as I hope you will be, in the broad fraternity subject as well as the pros and cons of the particular question, I suggest you begin with a reading of the 1936 "Survey of Social Life in Dartmouth College—Fraternities." It's important and good reading. For my part, I do not presently regard the national affiliation of the fraternities as a current issue of College policy. This is not to say that it may not be an issue for individual men and the houses concerned. The possibility of the national affiliation of fraternities becoming an acute matter of College policy seems to me at present unlikely except in one important respect. The College has a responsibility for all educational influences connected with it and it cannot look with complacency upon any undesirable external educational influence on the campus. This College neither teaches nor practices religious or racial prejudice and I do not believe that it can for long permit certain national fraternities through their charter provisions or national policies to impose prejudice on Dartmouth men in the free selection of their fraternal associates. I want to be very clear that I am opposed to any suggestion that the chapters must or should take any man whom they do not themselves want as a member; but I am also very clear that I do not think it a healthy educational influence to have Dartmouth students forbidden from "taking in" respected Dartmouth friends because of the racial or religious prejudices of a remote national fraternity charter of policy. I personally simply want the practical assurance that the undergraduates in Dartmouth's fraternities are free to take or to reject any eligible Dartmouth student on the basis of the undergraduates' **own** preferences and prejudices rather than some one else's. If this practical assurance is not forthcoming from certain national fraternities, it is due you now to make clear that those nationals cannot continue to be regarded as bringing a desirable educational influence to the Dartmouth campus.

I welcome this further effort on the part of the Dartmouth Interfraternity Council to make the matter of choosing a fraternity or not, and of fraternity life in general, worthy of men engaged in higher education.

John Sloan Dickey