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SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry Student Body

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"The Hughes Bill" proposed in the State Legislature which would put the College of Forestry under direct jurisdiction of Syracuse University has aroused a storm of controversy, protests and praise. The extraordinary situation that has developed is regrettable on many accounts. The relationship between Syracuse University and the College of Forestry can only be aggravated no matter what happens to the Hughes Bill. Cognizant of the unfortunate development, we wish to try for some clarification of the issues involved. It is with the hope that a fuller and clearer knowledge of the developments will bring some degree of understanding and empathy between our schools. Therefore, we feel that we must take issue with the editorial staff of the DAILY ORANGE. Our aim is for clarification, and our plea is for accuracy.

Yesterday's editorial in the DAILY ORANGE states that the protests of the College of Forestry are "based on supposition". The protests of the College of Forestry are based on logical analysis of the facts as stated in the bill, and realization of the detrimental effects it will have on the structure of the College if it is passed. It is the editorial of the DAILY ORANGE that is based on supposition - and a poor supposition at that, for the majority of "facts" extended as a basis for the stand taken by the DAILY ORANGE are ambiguities, half-truths, irrelevancies and unsubstantial information.

First of all, let us quote the most significant change that the bill dictates. (Sec. 4, Art. 1 & 2)

1. Subject to appropriations by the State therefor, Syracuse University as the representative of the Education department, shall administer the New York State College of Forestry at Syracuse University as to the establishment of courses of study, the creation of departments and positions, the determination of the number and salaries of members of the faculty and other employees thereof, and employment thereof, the maintenance of discipline, and as to all other matters pertaining to its educational policies, activities and operations, including research work.

2. Students who are bona fide residents of the State of New York for one year preceding the date of admission shall be entitled to free tuition in such College. The tuition fees charged to other students and all other fees and charges in such school shall be fixed by Syracuse University.

We wonder if the editor has actually read the bill and analyzed it thoroughly. Let us further analyze the editor's comments. The editor accuses us of supposing, but it is plain that there are no safeguards against any radical change, for the University would have complete control. The D.O. states that we "suppose" that tuition might be raised, then states later
"out-of-staters may pay more (tuition)" the D.O. states that we "suppose" that standards for admittance and graduation might be lowered, yet in every resolution approved by the faculty, administration and students there is no such statement.

The D.O. states that the University maintains that salaries, facilities and curriculum would remain status quo. Where does the University grant this assurance? Why hasn't the College of Forestry or the State University been notified of this assurance if it exists? We emphasize the fact that at no time before, during or after the introduction of the bill, has Syracuse University consulted with the College of Forestry or the State University on any issue pertaining to the bill.

The bill proposed by the State University in 1953 (there was no bill in 1954 as the D.O. stated) was designed to standardize the governing bodies of its colleges. It proposed a 9-man advisory council to replace the 13-man Board of Trustees now in effect. The 9 men were to be chosen from the 13 on the Board, of which Chancellor Tolley is member ex-officio. This is the essence of the bill.

The D.O. states that if "these" bills had been passed, the University would have had to sell services to the College and the students on a dollar basis. That is exactly what the University does now and has been doing for the past 45 years. The State University pays $22.33 for every course credit hour taken at Syracuse U. The student pays for his room and board. Last year when the Syracuse U. tuition was $750 a year, the Syracuse University student received all S.U. benefits as outlined in the D.O. for "only" $25 a semester. When tuition was increased to $800 and the S.U. activities fee to $50 a semester, Syracuse University could not satisfactorily justify the increase for the State University officials. Hence, the activities fee was not raised for the College of Forestry student.

The D.O. contends that tuition for state students will not be raised, where in actuality, state students pay no tuition by law. Yet, the recent tendency of Syracuse University to raise tuition indicates that out-of-state tuition and other fees will go up, as S.U. will have complete control over the levying of fees.

When one speaks in terms of money, one must realize the completely different aims of a state institution such as the College of Forestry, and a privately endowed university such as Syracuse. The State University provides a high quality education with a minimum of cost to the student. Many who could not afford the cost of institutions of higher learning are able to receive an advanced education in this way. Research and educational advancement are carried on without regard to financial gain. A privately endowed university must rely on financial support obtained through fees and gifts. Research work and educational advancement can be carried on only within the scope and influence of a limited budget. The two objectives cannot be rigidly adhered to under the same administrative structure.

Further, the D.O. states that "the curriculum (of the College of Forestry) cannot be changed unless it originates within the faculty." All those familiar with last year's dispute in the Industrial Design department, where practically every faculty member resigned because of a dictated curriculum change, will realize the ineffectiveness of this statement.
The D.O. states"...the University certainly wants to maintain the high standards of the Forestry College and continue to graduate outstanding men in forestry, just as the faculty and the students do." Yet the bill will transfer the educational control from forestry educators to general educators. Each is experienced in his own field. The administration of the College of Forestry has maintained high standards for 43 years and is the better qualified to administer to forestry affairs.

A further quote states "Courses like botany should not be integrated since foresters need a specialized course geared to their needs. But the University administration has enough intelligence not to propose changes which would be detrimental to the College of Forestry standing." The University may have the intelligence not to propose detrimental changes, but the College of Forestry not only has this intelligence, but also a wealth of experience.

The D.O. states repeatedly that the Hughes Bill will clarify the position of the forester at Syracuse. The status of the forester is clear, and has been clear ever since the foundation of the College of Forestry in 1911, regardless of what has been stated elsewhere. The College was founded as the New York State College of Forestry at Syracuse University (not of Syracuse University as some would have you believe). This was long before the legislation placed all State supported higher education in the State University in 1956. Even then, the College became the State University of New York, College of Forestry at Syracuse University. An alumnus of the Class of '23 has stated his assurance that in his schooldays, as now, foresters considered themselves loyal students of the New York State College of Forestry and, of course, fully appreciated the benefits received from Syracuse University. The bill will not clarify the status of the forestry student; it will change it.

The forester has always received a diploma from the College of Forestry—his status is as it was. Syracuse University is reimbursed for services that it "sells" to the College. The intangible benefits, which have recently created such a furor, have been extended to the forester since the foundation of the College and its relations with Syracuse University. These intangibles have never been abused by anyone associated with the Forestry College, but on the contrary have been greatly appreciated. Yet, it is not one-sided. As the College gains from its association with Syracuse University, the University gains additional prestige from its friendly and close relationship with the State University of New York, College of Forestry at Syracuse University, the largest forestry college in the world, and regarded by many as the best.

If the editor of the SYRACUSE DAILY ORANGE had done a bit of research into the matter, our side would have been more closely considered before a stand was taken—especially when such a rash statement as the bill will "not harm the College of Forestry" was made. Students, faculty, administration, staff and alumni have drafted their resolutions. These were not hasty decisions, but involved close scrutiny of the bill and its contents. The editors of the D.O. are not affected by the bill; they are not as close to the issue as we are. Yet, an editor of a newspaper who commits himself on an issue should gather the facts and piece together logical assumptions before such a commitment is made, and not be influenced by slanted and highly opinionated articles, and apathy on his part.

Isn't it ironical that directly below the editorial column of the D.O. is the quote from Byron: "With or without offence to friends or foes, I sketch your world exactly as it goes."