Class Indicts Power Structure Following Resignation

BY JOHN DURHAM
Thrasher Editorial Staff

The resignation of Dr. Calvin M. Class as Master of Jones College, publicly announced after dinner at Jones on November 23, has been followed by diverse actions by the administration and students, including the appointment of Dr. Frank E. Vandiver as Acting Master of Jones and the issuing of resolutions by Jones, Wiss, and Will Rice.

Dr. Class’ resignation, which was precipitated, according to his prepared statement, by “a growing conflict of philosophy between the President (Pitzer) and myself with respect to the practices and policies to be followed in the best interest of Jones College,” will take effect at the end of this semester.

Dr. Vandiver will serve as Master of Jones for the second semester before he assumes duties as Master of the new Brown College in September, 1965.

The statement which Jones College issued on the day following Dr. Class’ resignation expressed regret at his resignation and included recognition of his “intellectual leadership and far-sighted awareness of opportunities for College growth.”

The Jones resolution also expressed concern about “the apparent changes in policy affecting the relative positions of the College Master and the Dean of Women” and “the status of the college system on the University campus.”

In an interview with the Thrasher this week, Dr. Class clarified some of the reasons for his resignation, which were first outlined in his prepared statement.

Dr. Class made reference to two memoranda issued by President Pitzer regarding the responsibilities and interrelationships of the Dean of Students, the Dean of Women, college masters, and college governments. The first of these memoranda was issued on April 11, 1963, and the second on September 15 of this year.

The Jones master said that he felt the 1963 notice fairly well defined the de facto situation of the masters, deans, and college governments as it had evolved since the inception of the college system in 1957. The statement of this year, according to Dr. Class, attempts to redefine the roles of various officials and tends to significantly increase the involvement of the Dean of Women in the internal affairs of the College.

This increased involvement of an officer of the administration, Dr. Class thinks, can only lessen the autonomy of the College and make difficult a unified expression of the concept of the college as it has been created by seven past college governments in close cooperation with the faculty associates and the Master. “Such involvement has created an increasingly tense situation within the college,” Dr. Class said.

Dr. Class also pointed out what he considered to be a peculiar inconsistency between the September memoranda, which stated that the primary responsibility of the College Master is to “stimulate intellectual and cultural activities” in the college, and a statement about the masters in the Rice University Report (sent to parents of all students) of November, 1964.

The article in the Report, which announced the appointment of Dr. Vandiver as Master of Brown College, said: “The main task of counseling the students, however, falls on the shoulders of the Master and his family who live adjacent to the colleges.”

About the colleges, the article stated: “Students from every academic field live together in largely autonomous, self-governing groups and gain realistic experience in solving the problems of community living.”

Dr. Class said, “These statements, from the Rice University Report, are in accordance with the concept of the college system which I have held over the past seven years.”