Student role: action through concern

By BILL BROYLES

Mr. Broyles is running unopposed for the presidency of the Rice Student Association. Following are some of his views on the role of student government at Rice. - Ed.

Within ten years, if all goes according to plan, a university in every sense of the word except professional schools will stand where less than five years ago was a small institute.

This change will be brought about by a series of quantitative increases in enrollment, faculty, and facilities as well as a shift in emphasis to a stronger humanities program and an enlarged graduate school.

The student will not only see more teachers, more students and more buildings; he will feel a different atmosphere of education and living.

There are great advantages in this growth and change of atmosphere: more faculty will mean more learning for underclassmen; the student will have more varied courses; more students should evoke more varied campus culture; more facilities will lead to better resources for study.

Attitude To Change

In each of these areas, from the future of the college system to the changing face of underclassmen, the student has a definite interest; for the grand design and broad conceptions of Rice's growth will ultimately determine on the manner to which he lives in the university.

It is my opinion that students should apply the same critical attitude they are encouraged to cultivate toward their part in the university and toward the community in which they live. If the quality of their education, the rules they live under, what they can and cannot do in both an intellectual and a social sense do not seem satisfactory under such an analysis, then they should make this dissatisfaction known through the institutions of student government which can focus this concern on those areas which seem to be the origin of the problems.

Not Superfluous

The goals which the ten year plan envision seem both necessary and good, yet it is incumbent on the student that he make known that participation in this change should be recognized, that he does not wish the potential for innovation and improvement in education lost in growth, that he wants the college system developed toward more autonomy and not buried in a burgeoning number of social and cultural institutions which bear little resemblance to their English or American models.

There has been progress made, but there is need of much more. There are forces at work which are changing both the nature of the university and its place within the government-industrial-community atmosphere in which it exists.

There are also forces at work which lead the student to rebel against such a change, to rebel against a university where he, the student, seems superfluous.

Present Own Interests

Neither of these trends has been fully realized at Rice, and with responsible leadership on the part of both students and administration they can be avoided in the interests of a university ordered, in the context of these forces, toward the historic goal of such an institution-toward education.

Again, however, the student must take a very real responsibility to see that his interests are continually presented, and not invoked simply as reactions to particular occurrences of university policy. Such a reasoned presentation will take both foresight and concern, as well as good will.

Promises Effectiveness

Simply look around you, and decide whether the education you receive is, given the resources, the best possible; ask yourself if the college system has been achieved in anything more than name, and if it could be further improved.

If you will do this, and take action to see that student organizations become what they must be to represent the students, then I can assure you that not only will the Student Senate do its traditional things, but that it can and will become a more effective voice of the students in improving education, in defining the student's place in the university, and in helping the colleges reach the maturity of their potential.