Beyond bricks and mortar

By BILL McGregor

Wiess College President

All of the residential colleges are engaged in campaigns to improve and expand the college system. The success of each year's college governments is judged largely on how smoothly they manage to carry out the already existing college functions, but rather on the number of new programs implemented, the amount of freedom gained from the administration, and the value of permanent physical improvements.

New Programs Good

To a large degree, and probably to the degree to which it is presently being done, this is good, but changes can come too fast, additions can be made too often.

At this time I do not feel that this is the case, although, due to our present rapid pace, we are in a vulnerable position for it to occur. The possibility exists that colleges are so wrapped up in the multitude of concrete changes, and so impressed by visible improvements that more important and often more difficult problems are being ignored.

Potential In Variety

I am of the opinion that Rice should be graduating tolerant, well-rounded individuals. Many of the experiences necessary for such well-roundedness cannot be found in the classroom, but only in daily association with people of all kinds.

The ingredients (varied people), Rice definitely has, but this potential asset has commonly been treated as a detriment that is best approached by mentioning as little as possible.

When the only thought that some individuals of two groups, such as athletes and confirmed (also usually confined) scholars, give to the other group in four years' stay at Rice is, "We'd be better off without them," we have a problem. But by the mere presence of these two groups, opportunity for progress exists.

Personal Task

Progress in such an abstract area cannot be easily measured; nor can plans be laid or programs instituted for such progress. However, significant strides in a positive direction can be made by personal, individual effort, and by recognizing a condition that does exist.

Alleviation of this situation is not something a college government can actively undertake and expect to complete, nor is it something that individuals will be hailed for accomplishing, but it is something for which individuals in capacities of leadership can make examples of themselves, and it is something that can genuinely improve the college system and at the same time enhance the meaning of the word "university."

Members Are Power

In any area of success or failure of the colleges the members are solely responsible. The initiative of a college government supplies the impetus. Only through the drive of the college governments will the administration approve the broadening of the colleges' scope.

But, ultimately, the success of past college programs will have strong bearing on present and future administrative decisions, and this success will always depend largely on the individual college members. The success in overcoming the aforementioned problem is even more in the hands of individuals, for here the college government can provide no step by step (Continued on Page 5)
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...program, no plan, no organized leadership.

Wait a Minute

I am pleased with the present dynamic state of the colleges at Rice. The many new plans and programs are well thought out and vitally needed. However, amid our fast pace of development, we should remember two things.

First the reasons for each and every one of our present plans and projects must be the good of the individuals involved and not just “change for the sake of change.”

Second, although we are making many worthwhile advances, other, possibly more important problems, still await our attention and cannot go neglected indefinitely.