On A New Court

By BOB CLARKE

The structure for the proposed Inter-College Court is at the present time being considered by the Senate for initial approval before being presented to the student body for final adoption in early December. I feel that it is important that the purpose and intent behind such a significant change as this be clearly explained.

Student government at Rice has a tradition built upon competent student self-discipline. The foundation of this tradition is the Honor Council which for 46 years has placed the responsibility for honest examination conduct squarely in the hands of the students.

Since the beginning of the college system, and especially within the last two years, the college judicial bodies have assumed responsibility for the conduct of their respective members, and have been given virtually unrestrained authority to act on violations of required standards. The Administration asks only that the decisions of these groups be submitted to them for final approval.

This is a good system — one that has been frequently admired by representatives of other colleges and universities; yet it is obviously incomplete in one important area. At the present time there exist no means by which campus student organizations may be disciplined by the students. The principal reason, then, for designing the Inter-College Court is to satisfy this very real shortcoming.

By making a court composed of the chief judicial officer of each college, we feel that we are gaining the services of those persons with the greatest respect and capability in that phase of student government. Further, this method will give the court direct contact with the colleges.

We anticipate that the cases involving organizations will be quite infrequent, and therefore the chief justices will not often be called away from their first (Continued on Page 6)
duty, which is to their college.

As an additional function, the Court is so constituted that it can, upon the consent of the college judiciaries, hear those cases involving students from more than one college. This will facilitate the gathering of information, will result in uniformity and fairness in the presentation of the cases, and should expedite the entire process.

Cases of this kind, like those involving organizations, will likely be very few, yet under the structure of the Inter-College Court the mechanism will exist for dealing with them should they arise.

The third major purpose of the Court is to provide a means by which the judicial officers may come together as a body to express their desires, limitations, and hoped-for direction of student judicial efforts on this campus.

This can prove to be of invaluable benefit as the chief justices evaluate their campus judicial operations from time to time, and make suggestions for improvement or expansion.

Copies of this proposal as it is finally approved by the Senate will be made available soon, and the Senate Judicial Committee plans to visit each of the colleges before the December election to answer any questions which may exist after reading the proposal itself.

This is a very significant step in establishing the sort of student government on this campus which is effective and which deals directly with the welfare of the student body.

Supervision of their own organizations is certainly an area in which Rice students have a legitimate interest, and the establishment of the Inter-College Court will complete the circuit of student judicial responsibility and provide us with an overall structure of which we can be proud.