

SIMMONS COLLEGE

(For Interdepartmental Use)

May 1, 1963

*F. Busi
Manager's
Office
for
Res. Halls*

TO Miss Clifton cc Mrs. Cartwright
FROM W. E. Steere Miss Fairchild

SUBJECT: Memos to Mr. Park concerning dormitory conditions, dated March 27 and April 11

I have read your comments regarding conditions on the residence campus which "have slipped a great deal during the past year" and, after reading these memos, I should like to offer some comments which may be helpful in your understanding of the situation.

Ms. Philbrick did not say this M.C.

Arnold: The maintenance crew have tried every way possible, even cutting away a section of concrete wall under the kitchenette counter, to stop the leak in Mrs. Philbrick's living room. They have done this in order to avoid removing a section of the ceiling in her apartment. Failing in this, they went to Mrs. Philbrick and told her that a section of the ceiling would have to be removed. She indicated that she would prefer to have the leak until June, when she left, than have the ceiling removed at this point.

Evans: It was announced by this office in the summer of 1962 that this building would be completely re-decorated in the summer of 1963. This announcement was reiterated on January 28 and March 4 at meetings in the Dean's office and confirmed in a memorandum Miss Clifton sent to Mr. Steere on March 6, 1963.

Mesick: 1) I have checked with Miss Fairchild's records and the engineer's log and the "frequent lack of proper heat" apparently was a period of three to four days in February when after a major leak, air was being removed from the system. There seems to be no record of any lack of heat either before or after that time. 2) The buzzer system in Mesick failed in early January and was out of order for about four weeks. After expending the sum of \$500. trying to correct the problem, it was found that the students had peeled the insulation off the wires on the third floor. This was repaired and incidentally has re-occurred half a dozen times since then.

North: At a conference with Miss Clifton and Mrs. Cartwright on March 4, confirmed by a memo of March 6, it was agreed that the North Hall Resident Head's suite, particularly the living room ceiling would be repaired and re-decorated during the summer of '63.

It has been observed over a period of three years that the complaints of North Hall, particularly those pertaining to the mechanical functions (heat, power, and plumbing) have been excessive and exaggerated. There is nothing to indicate that a "complete replacement of plumbing and wiring" is necessary. Two years ago the floor in the second floor bath was torn up in order to examine the condition of the plumbing due to the allegations that it was faulty and "shot". Nothing defective was found. The frequent flooding of this bathroom and subsequent damage to the Resident Head's living room ceiling was found to be due

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to overflowing toilets plugged with sanitary napkins (as is the cause of over 99% of the overflowing toilets on campus.) In one case, the toilet was deliberately plugged with several packages of toilet tissue. As long as students persist in putting sanitary napkins in the toilets instead of disposing of them as provided for, we shall have plugged toilets. As you know, we have posted signs and notices pertaining to the disposal of sanitary napkins, but all to no avail!

An occasional blown fuse caused by using several heating devices on the same circuit does not indicate a need for wiring replacement.

There are now 68 towel boxes in North Hall. This number would be enough for normal occupancy. However, during the summer of '63, we shall make enough additional ones to permit one box for each girl.

Simmons: At the meetings in the Dean's office on January 28 and March 4, it was agreed that Simmons Hall would be completely re-decorated in the summer of '64 and that during the summer of '63 areas, particularly smokers, would be washed.

South: 1) You mentioned the need for individual mailboxes. To my knowledge, there is no dormitory on campus having individual mailboxes. However, the new buildings do have a mailbox for each room. In any case, as soon as it is convenient, boxes for a ^{substantial} number will be constructed. 2) The pigeons are a problem. The experts have agreed there is only one effective way of getting rid of pigeons, namely, trapping and re-locating (which we have done effectively at 300 the Fenway). Attempts to do this on campus have been thwarted by (a) Resident Heads and students feeding the pigeons (b) student interference with the trapping procedure by (1) springing the trap (2) removing the trap (3) releasing the trapped pigeons. We blocked off the roost directly over the South entrance and this has helped. Other perches are not readily adaptable to blocking off. Unless some degree of freedom to legally trap the pigeons is afforded, the problem will continue.

Turner: In a meeting on March 4 in the Dean's office Turner House was discussed. The first floor will be almost entirely taken in re-locating the Child Study Center, with provision for a student entrance and living room. The new living room, of course, will be re-decorated as will some of the bedrooms.

Dish Room: In a meeting in the Dean's office on March 4, it was announced that the President had granted permission to have outside firms study the Dining Hall, Kitchen, and Storage situation. These studies are in the process of being made and I expect to have one of the studies complete by the early part of next week. If and when a suitable solution is found, work will proceed.

General: 1) The floors in the corridors of the dormitories have never in the past been washed and waxed more frequently than they have this year. (2) Bartol Hall this year has been washed and waxed twice a week instead of once as in past years. (3) While the floor in Alumnae Hall is not new, I feel that it has looked

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better on the whole this year than in the past. One of the problems in keeping this floor looking presentable is that the students ignore the NO SMOKING signs placed there during activities. (4) Evans' maid: My understanding is that the regular maid is not well physically and will not be there next year, but that since Christmas time, there has been an additional part-time maid there. For the most part, on Mondays, there is only one maid in each building anyway, so that Evans is no exception. (5) The littering of the grounds around campus has been an increasing problem, much of it due to students and their friends.

This year there has been a marked increase in the number of beer cans, liquor bottles, and certain unmentionable items found littering the campus. (6) Criticism has been made of the ice problem which was greater than usual this year. However, no mention has been made of the fact that for the first time this year, the snow was, for the most part, cleared from the walks during the night and done by breakfast time. The policy will continue, to have the snow cleared before the girls ^{arrive}. (7) While there were isolated instances of emergencies between 11 p.m. and 6 a.m. the frequency does not seem to warrant a maintenance man on this shift. Our superintendent, Mr. Arsenault, lives only 10 minutes from campus and is "on call". However, frequent calls for trivial problems make it very difficult to get a person to accept "on call" status. Annual preventive maintenance work which was reported to me as having been performed last summer, was in fact not done, which would account in part for some of the minor inconveniences. Interference from certain individuals kept us from obtaining a competent engineer and retaining good firemen. I feel certain that this situation has been taken care of.

It might be pointed out that until January 1961 there was never any heat anywhere on campus from 11 p.m. or 12 midnight to 5.30 a.m. It was at that time that 24 hr. heating was inaugurated.

As in the past, please feel free to discuss any of these problems.

Weston