

University of Rhode Island

DigitalCommons@URI

Newspapers and Publications (Misc)

Newspapers and Publications

1992

Faculty wants ROTC off campus by 1992

Farah Rehman

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/gsc-pubs-files>

Recommended Citation

Rehman, Farah, "Faculty wants ROTC off campus by 1992" (1992). *Newspapers and Publications (Misc)*. Paper 1.

<https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/gsc-pubs-files/1> <https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/gsc-pubs-files/1>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Newspapers and Publications at DigitalCommons@URI. It has been accepted for inclusion in Newspapers and Publications (Misc) by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@URI. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@etal.uri.edu.

Faculty wants ROTC off campus by 1992

Senate blasts policy against homosexuals

by Farah Rehman
News Editor

After a scalding debate over the moral and legal questions involved in the conflict between URI and ROTC's policy of discriminating against homosexuals, the Faculty Senate yesterday resolved to cancel the university's contract with ROTC if their policy is not changed by May 1992.

President Edward D. Eddy said last night that he agrees the policy is unfair but said he may not sign the resolution because "more time should be allowed for a major review of this type." The measure will be given to Eddy for his approval in a few weeks.

Eddy said he has written a letter to Defense Secretary Dick Cheney requesting additional information regarding the policy.

Senator C.B. Peters said the 1992 date was set to "reflect the concern for fairness and appropriate action... It gives a good deal of leeway for DOD to take action. It's not a complicated piece of legislation."

The executive committee of the Faculty Senate had determined on Oct. 15 that ROTC's policy, which excludes homosexuals from receiving ROTC scholarship, and being commissioned into the U. S. Army violates URI's nondiscrimination policy.

URI's decision to examine the policy is in accordance with many universities across the nation that have also been challenging the policy set by the U.S. Department of Defense.

A discussion followed of whether it was morally or legally right to let a program that discriminates against a person based on sexual orientation.

"We have an objection to ROTC policy on moral grounds," Peters said.

Pointing out that this was a legal issue and not a moral one, Vice Chairman Leonard Kahn said that if this were a racial issue, "We wouldn't be sitting here saying let's here someone from the KKK defend racism."

Senator Richard Vangermeersch insisted that ROTC be allowed to present their argument called the resolution "a piece of trash and it should be crushed... I vote against any attempt of censorship."

"I'll call you an anti-homosexual," replied one senator (whom the Cigar was unable to identify) who compared the issue with the debate over black slavery. He said that the senate is willing to consider homosexuals as second-class citizens because of legal and economic reasons.

See ROTC, page 4

ROTC,

-from page 1

Jon H. Perkins, assistant professor of military science, said, "I'm here to answer questions, not to speak on behalf of ROTC."

Those who opposed the resolution to terminate ROTC's contract said that the problem is not with ROTC but with DOD.

"We should strive to change the law. ... Kicking them out does not change DOD policy," said Senator David Mason.

Saying that the problem is the policy and not who made it, affirmative action officer Harold "Cap" Smith said, "This policy flies in the face of our university policy."

Referring to the question in the ROTC scholarship application which asks of a person's sexual orientation, one senator said, "This is asking an 18- or 19-year-old if they ever had any dirty thoughts."

The three-part resolution also requests Eddy and the Board of Governors for Higher Education to pressure the government to change policy. A statement that clarifies that ROTC-DOD policy violates URI policy will be added to all URI publications.

The resolution also refers the matter to the Curricular Affairs Committee and asks them to report regularly to the Faculty Senate.

The American Civil Liberties Union is holding a national conference today in Minneapolis, Minn. to examine the ROTC-DOD's policy.

URI's ROTC program is one of the few universities in the country that offers a military science degree as well as the option of taking any military science courses as electives. There are nine students currently in the ROTC military scholarship program at URI.