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'Take Back the Night' protests violence against women

By Marika Holmgren

On April 25, over 150 members of the Middlebury College and town community took part in a "Take Back the Night" March in protest of domestic violence. Candles in hand, students, faculty and town members left Proctor Terrace after sunset and returned one hour later to hear four speakers address the issue of violence against women.

Coordinated by Elizabeth Toder '90, the event mirrored similar marches that have recently taken place in many cities and schools.

The march was co-sponsored by fifteen student organizations, including the six fraternities, the Women's Union, the Department of Security and the Escort Service. The four speakers did not charge a fee to speak.

The program began at 8:00 with an opening address from Toder.

"'Take Back the Night' is a visible protest against violence against women. On the most basic level, this march at night involves the fear that women feel when they walk alone," Toder said.

"Some people do not think that violence against women is a problem here, or a problem at all. As a woman I understand what it's like to walk down a dark street and be afraid," said Toder. "And I'm angry that I have to be afraid about this, because I don't think it's right that anyone should make me feel this way."

"So I want to say that this feeling is relevant to Middlebury College and our 'safe' town. In the past year

and a half, three female students have been attacked, and this is the only obvious violence that we know about," Toder said.

"This violence affects everyone. If one out of three women is raped in her lifetime, she's any man's sister, mother, girlfriend or even daughter. Women and men are victims together," concluded Toder.

The Vermont Coordinator of the National Organization of Women Mary Stevenson, gave the first address. She began by praising the college's gender report.

"I think the administration here is to be commended for having a study about the way women are treated here, and then when it turned out to be not so terrific, to publicize it. That took courage, but the first step to curing a bad problem is to shed some light on it," she said.

Stevenson proceeded to describe instances of violence against women and the attitudes that accompany this problem. Stevenson cited statistics of domestic violence, adding that "one's home can be a dark and scary place."

"We girls, women were socialized to be thoughtful, nurturing, selfless, gentle. Our brothers were socialized to be aggressive and rough. We girl-women were taught to make things come out right," Stevenson said. "We do live in a patriarchal society, with six-thousand year old roots. It's heavy being a woman after six-thousand years of patriarchy."

Stevenson concluded by saying,



Over 150 people gathered for last Wednesday night's march.

Photo by Mark Raskopf

"We will prevail. We will take back the night."

Facilitator of the Men's Education Project on Domestic Abuse Bob Staley-Mays, addressed the crowd next, citing further statistics of international domestic violence. He spoke of the enormous rate of domestic violence in such countries as Thailand, India and New Guinea. According to Staley-Mays, in many of these countries women are considered infe-

rior to men, and subjugation of women is culturally sanctioned.

"In the United States, a woman is beaten every fifteen seconds. Four women are killed every day by their batterers," he said.

Staley-Mays referred to problem of violence against women as the war waged by men against women.

"All of this is part of a war that isn't covered in the newspapers. It's not called a war," he said.

He concluded by inviting men from the audience to speak with him about his organization that counsels offenders of violence of women.

Member of the Board of Directors of the Women in Crisis Center in Bristol Tracey Monteferrario '91 stressed the need for people to speak out, to be active and vocal in this issue.

"When you hear a sexist joke, I (continued on page 20)

Task force subcommittees present reform proposals

By Erika Burk

At the Community Council meeting on Monday April 30, the four chairs of the subcommittees established in the wake of the task force report gave summaries of their discussions to date.

Jennifer Swift '92 spoke on behalf of the Student-Faculty Relations Subcommittee, Dean of Students Karl Lindholm spoke for the Restructuring the House System Subcommittee, Director of College Residential Life Frank Committee spoke for the Residential Life Subcommittee, and Director of Academic Support John Norman, for the African-American and Hispanic-American Support Subcommittee.

According to Student Government Vice President and Co-chair of the Community Council Louise Totten these discussions were only preliminary proceedings.

"These are ideas about where [the subcommittees] might be headed. Nothing is set in stone; everything is up in the air," Totten said. "The subcommittees are still working together to get everything coordinated with each other and to make more definite recommendations to the Community Council."

The Student-Faculty Relations Subcommittee is in the process of evaluating the "Taking Your Professor to Lunch" program. It also is investigating the idea of opening up the dining hall once a month to faculty and staff, creating a student-faculty lounge, and introducing mid-term evaluations during class, Swift said.

Lindholm's Restructuring the House System Subcommittee used the questions proposed by the Community Council as a guideline for its

work. Lindholm said that he believes "these questions presuppose a restructuring and renovation of the fraternity system."

Lindholm first spoke about the gender composition of the houses in the future: total membership in the houses must contain no less than one third of either gender, officers must include both men and women, all membership privileges must include both men and women, and house membership is open to all members of the student community.

Lindholm then discussed rushing, pledging and induction. None of these activities can include alcohol. Rush will be open to sophomores, juniors, and seniors in the fall semester at the same time for all houses, and will last from two to four weeks.

No hazing or secrecy will be allowed, and the process must involve positive educational programs, including awareness and service programs. Representation of the advisory board must be present at induction ceremonies.

Specific policies will be developed by a House Council resembling the present Interfraternity Council and overseen by the Community Council, Lindholm said. This council will include the president and one delegate from each house, one of whom must be a woman.

"Ideally, the House Council would take much of what the Community Council deals with into its own hands, those things that the Community Council is wasting its time with. The House Council would be more qualified to deal with immediate issues,"

incoming President of the Interfraternity Council and member of the Restructuring the House System Subcommittee Richard Cochran said.

According to Lindholm, the current houses will retain their space if they meet the deadlines for compliance and membership guidelines with regard to women within one "grace" year.

To create a new house, students must present a program and membership plan to the Community Council. The Community Council will determine who receives house status. Houses may be terminated for disciplinary reasons, failure to meet membership guidelines with one year grace period, and failure to meet full occupancy for two years.

Lindholm said that each house

will have an Advisory Board of three members from the immediate permanent community. It will include both men and women, at least one faculty member, and will meet at least once a semester to review rushing, pledging, and induction procedures and to advise on all other issues. The board must be approved by the Community Council and House Council.

According to Lindholm, any approved house may select who lives in the house from among its members, providing one third of whom are of each gender. The president must also live in the house.

The Dean of Students can issue warnings and can place a house on probation with the consultation of the Community Council. The House (continued on page 4)

Student center scheduled to open June '91

By Andrew Levinson

Construction and renovation of McCullough Gymnasium for use as a student center began in mid-April, following nearly a year of delays. While the Student Center will not be completed until June 1991, it should be open for limited use next September.

According to Director of Operations George Whitemy, "every effort" is being made to have the main social space ready for limited use in September and also to have the Arthur Brown Swimming Pool open for use by October 1.

Whitemy cautioned, however, that "when we say that we'll have the social hall ready in September, I don't think its going to be ready on a daily basis but it could be used for a large event such as a concert or dance, similarly to the way it is used now."

"To have the building open and [prepared for] student traffic I don't think will be possible," he added.

The four million dollar renovation includes the addition of a large social hall, snack bar, post office, student mail boxes and meeting rooms in McCullough. New York architectural firm Hardy, Holzman and Pfeiffer designed the complex. The center was originally scheduled to be completed by this year. Construction was delayed by the State Governor's Commission on Historical Preservation which expressed concern that the new additions to McCullough would have an adverse affect on a historical building. The Historic Preservation Commission was overruled by Vermont's Environmental Control Board late last fall.

The job to construct the student center had originally been contracted

with Pizzagalli Construction in conjunction with the Art Center but, because of the delay, the contract was re-bid, Whitemy said.

According to Vice President for the Administration and Treasurer David Ginevan the actual job with Engelberth Construction will cost more than the previous contract, in part because of the decision last May to include the mail room.

However, he added that because the new time schedule for the eleven month project will involve less time working outside in winter conditions no additional costs will be incurred by the project.

"It turns out that we were able to use the same budget as before," Ginevan said.

"I think of the new space as the living room or the family room of the campus," said Director of Student

Activities Kathy Walsh. "During the day it can serve as a central meeting and social area and at night we can move the furniture and roll back the carpet and have big events. A few things won't be there but I still think it will have some pleasant qualities and there are a lot of things to draw people in there during the day."

Walsh said that the new additions to McCullough are "going to add another alternative resource for students. Because of the configuration of the space it can be used in a variety of ways." She added that the Student Center will be used for everything from school musical groups to lectures to large concerts.

While Dean of Students Karl Lindholm is excited about what he hopes is after ten years finally "a place for every student to see as his or her (continued on page 4)