

GSU bridge painting prompts 'malicious deed'

There comes a time when a person has had enough, and a previously silent majority must speak out for and demand their rights from a vociferous and hostile minority.

This is such a time.

Gay-Lesbian Celebration Week, while emphasizing the positive aspects of the gay lifestyle and educating the public at large, has also unfortunately had the unforeseen side effects of provoking a knee-jerk gut reaction from the ignorant and the narrow-minded, and in general polarizing the inherently turbulent relationship between the gay community and those who worship on an altar of khaki.

The particular incident in mind occurred Wednesday night as the Gay Student Union (GSU) painted Beta Bridge.

We began painting around midnight, and within half an hour were submitted to the obscenities and vulgarities of the closed-minded — or should I say closeted-minded. Preceded by a liberal dousing of our group with a fire extinguisher we believe was "liberated" from Lambeth Commons, derogatory statements started a barrage of obscenities from Delta Upsilon which ultimately led to firecrackers being thrown at bridge-painters from the roof of the DU house.

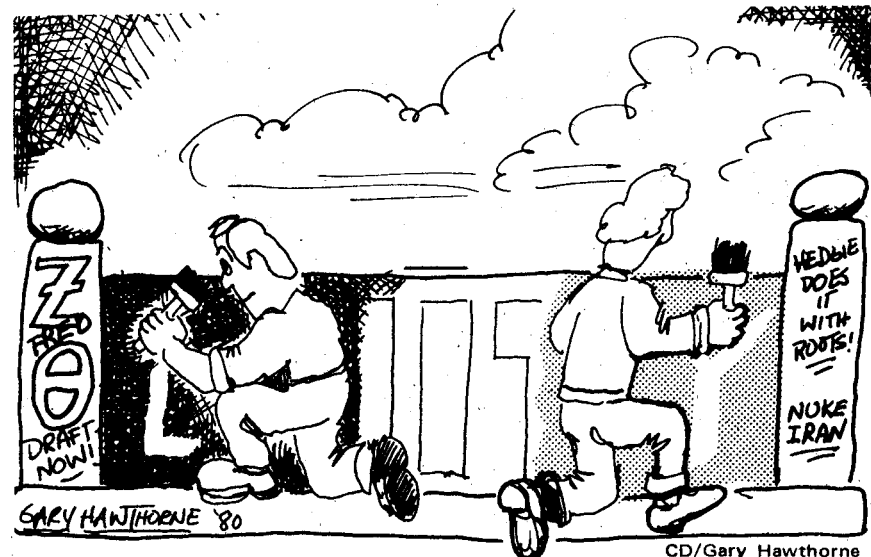
Leaving amidst a continuing harangue from DU, we decided to circle the block and admire our handiwork from the automotive point

of view. We found that the fraternity members' alteration of Beta Bridge was already in progress.

Members of the bridge party caucused, and some results of the caucus are already evident, with more results to appear in the next few days as certain measures are taken. Suffice it to say, at this point our party regrouped at the bridge and found our "We come from old Virginia, Where all is bright and gay" transformed to "We come from old virgins, We're all tight and hetero," with a proprietary claim and an admonishment to "stay in the clotheth" added for good measure. And the verbal harangue continued as we watched Delta Upsilon put the finishing touches on this malicious deed.

We know not what motivations lurked behind this, though our conjectures have ranged from spite to considering it their attempt to bolster their own masculinity through the diminishment of others to needing to prove to their brothers that they're not Sam, but instead showing their kinship to Son of Sam. Motive is, however, a moot point — the fact is, this harassment occurred, regardless of whatever inner demons compelled them, and should not have.

One cannot help wondering, though, what actions would be taken in the following scenarios: if a frat ruined some more traditional function's notice, e.g. the Beaux Arts Ball bridge of days gone by, or if the GSU similarly altered a freshly-painted



CD/Gary Hawthorne

bridge concerning some fraternity function, during, say, Rush or Easters. We hope all three would be identical.

It was and still is very hard to believe that such intolerance and ignorance exist in the year 1980. Tonight we have been confronted with such ignorance face to face.

But it was a confrontation without a victor — the GSU is out the \$50 expense incurred, the efforts of those painting have been wasted and Delta Upsilon has shown itself to revel in the destructive ignorance and malevolence all rational human beings consider anachronistic.

Such an action is an impediment to all constructive attempts to liberate men and women from self-guilt and

self-remorse, and hinders the realization of humanity's potential, enshrouding men and women with irrelevant problems that some paranoid entities regard as threats to their own personal well-being and see the need to impose their own prevalent moral standards on people who neither need nor want them.

We can only hope the Ku Klux Khaki will eventually find the wisdom and tolerance needed to someday respect the rights of other people with divergent opinions.

Name withheld by request

[The author, who chooses to remain anonymous, is a former president of the University's Gay Student Union.]