

Initial Reactions to News of Clark's 1996-97 Budget

AN EXCERPT FROM VAX'S "GENERAL" FOLDER:

Date: 6-MAR-1996 21:32
From: HBRIGHT
Subj: BUDGET

Today I got a message in my mail box from President Traina himself, in fact we all got it. It informs us very politely of a 4% increase in fees for Clark. 4% may not sound like much,

but in fact it is an increase of over \$1000. The meal plan will now be \$2000 a semester, non returnable, and compulsory for first year students.

I personally believe that education should be a right and not a privilege. Health care should also be free to all people who need it. But we are in America and some things cannot be changed. On the other hand we shouldn't just blindly accept things as they are. Until the Health Center provides a service which actually functions well, why should we pay more? I have met boys who were asked if they were pregnant when they went there.

Also, why should we accept a meal plan which contradicts statements made by the university about supporting cultural diversity, when the only people now catered for are meat eating people who are forced to pay extortionate rates for salad.

The fees are already massive, why then should Clarkies pay more? You are already paying about \$200 or something ridiculous for every hour of class.

The notice on the increase is too little. Some people may even be forced to transfer, or forego coming here because they can no longer afford it. Why should intelligent people be forced to sacrifice their education?

The Clark endowment is currently around \$75 million. Will scholarships be increased to help those now sanctioned by the budget?

Frankly I'm sickened by the hypocrisy that lets President Traina built an extension bigger than a house, and then start talking about neighbourhood improvement programs.

If the fees must go up - then at least let the hypocrisy end.

Anyone interested in a boycott, campaign, or petition, or just finding out the answers to questions, please e mail me.

Date: 6-MAR-1996 21:54
From: DMIRPURI
Subj: RE: BUDGET

I must say I couldn't agree more w/ HBright. It's ridiculous, what the hell ARE we paying so much for? The President's new house? The extravagant dinners hosted for important alumni? God knows it's certainly not going to research materials for the library as Goddard doesn't subscribe to half the periodicals we need. For all the int'l students we have, do you think Clark has given any consideration to inflation rates in other countries— or even to the job mkt in the local economy?

Question is, what can we do about it? I'm more than willing to support any actions of protest, are there enough students who care in order to stop or reverse the increase?

Date: 6-MAR-1996 22:10
From: WSTGEORGE
Subj: Re: BUDGET

-> "4% may not sound like much, but in fact it is an increase of over \$1000. The meal plan will now be \$2000 a semester, non returnable, and compulsory for first year students."

I got the same message, and not to say that I support the increase, but a closer look at the message shows that it is a 3.9% OVERALL increase, and that the only thing affected will be the tuition, which will be \$900 more a year. Health fees, room and board (or so we're told) are to remain the same.

->"Also, why should we accept a meal plan which contradicts statements made by the university about supporting cultural diversity, when the only people now catered for are meat eating people who are forced to pay extortionate rates for salad."

Being a vegetarian, I totally understand. That's why I didn't even attempt a meal plan this year— or last. I'm a junior now, and I am so thankful that the university isn't making it mandatory for 3rd and 4th year students to be on a meal plan... or all of my money would go to things I can't eat. Although, I think if you can prove to the billing office that there really isn't anything on the meal plan for you to eat, that you can have the monies refunded, but I could be wrong.

->"The Clark endowment is currently around \$75 million."

You've got to be kidding!! What the hell (oops, breaking a code here, aren't I) does the university do with all of that? For goodness sakes, we're a tiny college of less than 2,400 students, and that includes graduates. You can't tell me it costs \$75 million to house, feed and teach (assuming that all of us live on campus, which we don't) us?!?! Holy cow... and Clark wonders why the student body gets restless

when we hear about their budgets...

->"Frankly I'm sickened by the hypocrisy that lets President Traina built an extension bigger than a house, and then start talking about neighbourhood improvement programs."

Yup yup yup... that thing is still going up.. Heck, just give me the old house... there's nothing left of it now anyway... It was totally unnecessary to go and build all that... A house is a house. It must be nice to have all that money at your beck and call...

->"Anyone interested in a boycott, campaign, or petition, or just finding out the answers to questions, please e mail me."

Finding out the answers to questions, yes. Like just how much money does Clark get a year for a budget? And how much does it spend on Housing and Board? And how much does it cost to pay their professors? And if they're going to charge such a ridiculous amount for Board, why can't the find something edible something that doesn't make you sick after 10 minutes, and that even vegetarians can eat besides 4 day old salad? And if they have an endowment for that much money, why do they need so much tuition, or is it all the same... Yeah, some answers would be nice. Don't get me wrong. I like Clark. I think it's a great school. But when they feel the need to keep increasing the tuition, I can't help but wonder where the heck all the money is going...

Date: 6-MAR-1996 22:39
From: JKOSLOSKI
Subj: Re: BUDGET

->"The Clark endowment is currently around \$75 million. Will scholarships be increased to help those now sanctioned by the budget?"

"You've got to be kidding!! What the hell (oops, breaking a code here, aren't I) does the university do with all of that?"

Nothing. The University does nothing with the endowment. However, it funds all it's operating costs off the interest the endowment money earns.

To put this whole endowment thing in perspective, Clark's endowment is \$70 million. The Harvard crew team's endowment is \$70 million. Clark doesn't have peanuts to work with compared to most other universities, and their students are paying just as much as we are.

Date: 6-MAR-1996 23:05
From: JLEE1
Subj: Re: BUDGET

Interestingly, our endowment is so small because the Trustees blew it all on a bad investment earlier this century. Or so I've heard...

Date: 7-MAR-1996 14:58
From: JKOSLOSKI
Subj: Re: BUDGET

Sort of. The initial investment was made before Clark was founded with the restricted purpose of founding an undergraduate college.

Instead, they founded a graduate school. All the people who gave money to fund the undergraduate college took their money back.

Date: 7-MAR-1996 17:50
From: JSPELMAN
Subj: Re: BUDGET

sort of. clark's endowment was respectable until the 1920s (or 30s?) when president atwood and most of the trustees invested the entire endowment in the worcester trolley company. selfishly, they did this because they privately owned a lot of stock in the trolley company. unfortunately, they didn't think the automobile would become as popular as it did.

- For a complete interpretation of Traina's Budget Letter, turn to page 17
- For a variety of different proposals (about a variety of different ills), each clearly delineated and addressed to the appropriate parties, turn to pages 18 and 19
- For some (more?) explanations of Clark's endowment, turn to page 20