EDITORIAL

Selection of a clergyman for the presidency of Bard College is perhaps an expedient way to improve Bard's reputation and help to reestablish an old tie with a fund-contributing source. But the disquieting question in our minds is how a clergyman as president will in the long run affect Bard as a progressive, independent, non-denominational college.

Rev. Frederick Q. Shafer, speaking at the Alumni Clergy Convocation at Bard last October, said, "We are not here at Annandale because some recent sociological survey has shown the clear need for an Episcopal chapel or mission at this particular point of latitude and longitude. We are here because this place belongs to us. It is ours, part of a valuable heritage, and the Church has a rightful continuing concern with every development that has happened or will happen to this college and to its students."

We feel that Bard does not, and should not, "belong" to any Church. As we see it, the probable effects of Bard's employing a clergyman for president are:

1) Closer affiliation with the Church. This might bring both financial support and Church influence. Any group or individual who offers substantial financial backing to an institution will inevitably exercise an influential voice in the policies and actions of that institution.

2) A change in the atmosphere at Bard resulting from a change in the type of student who is attracted to the college.

Choosing Dr. Kline for the presidency seems to be one of a series of educational and policy changes which have over recent years brought Bard closer and closer to being undistinguishable from other small liberal arts colleges in this country. The recent changes which we refer to include the trend away from the intimate seminar and tutorial, the dwindling importance and value of the weekly advisory conferences, the change in social regulations, and now, the threatened change in the nature of the student body.

We hope that Dr. Kline does not accept the presidency of Bard, but if he does, we hope he will be aware of the students' concern to preserve this college as a progressive, non-sectarian institution, distinguished by its bold ideas about education.

TUITION RISE

Acting-President Woodruff has revealed that there will be a $100 rise in tuition effective in the fall. This will make Bard’s fee of more than $2600 the highest in the country for a co-educational college.

Mr. Woodruff had expressed his opposition to a rise in tuition recently in a letter to parents in which he asked them to make tax-deductible contributions to the school to avoid a tuition increase. In spite of parents' responses to this letter, the acting-president found that it would still be necessary to either increase tuition or curtail the academic program, reduce the faculty, or cut faculty salaries.

Mr. Woodruff felt that those parents who are able to pay the extra tuition money would rather do so than see the academic program weakened. He stressed that no student presently enrolled will be forced to withdraw because of difficulties in meeting the increased cost.