

Editorial

THE FLAG CONTROVERSY

by R. W. Bonaker

In this, the final issue of THE CAPITOLIST for the year, I fully expected to write an editorial which would congratulate our seniors upon graduation. I also wanted to take time to acknowledge the efforts of our senior staff members — Lee Nell and Tom Hagan, co-editors, and contributors Gregg Crescenzo, Samantha Bower, Don Lewis, Steve Wesley, Steve Rosenzweig, Tom Black and Cheryl Boyes. But, a situation has developed in the past few weeks which merits greater attention.

On May 21, the students of Capitol Campus staged a highly successful Rock Festival. Over 25,000 people jammed the front lawn of the main building. The next day, Gov. Milton Shapp received a letter of protest about an alleged incident which took place before the concert. The author of the letter is Franklin D. Linn, Sr., a former Lower Swatara Township policeman who is now a republican aid in the Pennsylvania Legislature.

With the letter, which he also delivered to commanders of the state chapter American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars, Linn enclosed two photographs. One was supposedly taken on Saturday, May 20, the day before the Rock Festival and the other taken the day of the concert. In the May 20 picture, the American Flag was flying on the pole in front of the building and in the May 21 photo Old Glory was missing. Linn charged in the letter that a "Tiny band(s) of arrogant citizens" stormed the administration offices the day before the Festival, demanding that the flag not be flown the next day "to prevent trouble at the rock festival." Mr. Linn continued with his allegations: "Because some of those participating (in the festival) are antagonistic to having our Flag fly over their heads, they wanted it down. So, to preserve public order and to appease the short-sighted malcontents, our Flag came down."

The May 24 edition of the Middletown PRESS AND JOURNAL carried a front page story on the matter, complete with photographs. In the May 30 edition of the Harrisburg EVENING NEWS, a letter of protest, similar to the one Linn wrote, appeared. I say similar to Linn's because the exact same passage of Linn's letter — "short-sighted malcontents" was included.

Of course students and administrators here were outraged at such charges. For one thing, there is absolutely no truth to the allegation that a small band of people forced administrators to not fly the Flag during the concert. So that point falls on its face. The reason the Flag did not fly during the concert is that it has become campus policy not to fly the Flag on weekends. Consequently, the Flag has not been flown on a weekend, except on a legal holiday, in the past three years. Which brings up the next point — If it was not possible that the Flag was flying on Saturday, May 20, then a photo of the Flag could not have been taken. Through the efforts of former student government president Terry Wimmer, the photographer, Robert C. Forsyth of the PRESS AND JOURNAL, who was free-lancing at the time, signed a "confession" which stated that the first picture was taken on Friday, May 19, and not Saturday, May 20. I believe you can see the "picture" now.

Yet, more damage was to come. The name of Capitol Campus was further tarnished when state Rep. Rudolph Dininni, a republican from

Middletown, went on local television further implicating the University, while at the same time introducing a legislative bill requiring all state-related institutions of higher education to display the Flag on every day of the week. I have no objection to the bill, in fact I favor such action. But I highly condemn the pretenses under which it was introduced.

In another front-page article in the PRESS AND JOURNAL, Rep. Dininni said that "rock festival participants voiced strong protests in having the National Flag fly over their heads . . . what kind of country

are we going to produce if the so-called leaders and officials of our society are so weak and

directionless that they will, in the name of order, tolerate disorder." As it turns out, Dininni was acting on the same "mis-information" under which Mr. Linn acted. The article of the PRESS-JOURNAL displayed a photo with Linn and Dininni looking at a copy of the bill which the legislator introduced. Dininni's phrase "in the name of order, tolerate disorder," is the exact same sentence which appeared in Linn's original letter.

At this point, the situation had reached extremely serious proportions. When a public official uses such false information and makes serious charges, none of which have any validity, I call it irresponsible.

On Friday, June 9, Terry Wimmer and Mike Bauer, Capitol student representatives, met with Rep. Dininni and Mr. Linn in Dininni's legislative office to try to rectify the situation. Wimmer asked the two gentlemen to make a public retraction, as they were completely wrong in their charges. They refused. In fact, Linn sent Wimmer a statement which reaffirmed his previous opinion.

Provost Robert E. McDermott sent the PRESS-JOURNAL a letter asking the paper to clarify its stance in the situation. McDermott charged that the issue of June 7, a front-page article with pictures, gave a mis-leading impression. The PRESS-JOURNAL replied with a front-page editorial on Flag day, June 14. The Middletown paper countered that the Flag has been flown at weekend graduation ceremonies which is not a legal holiday. But the PRESS-JOURNAL is missing the point. The PRESS-JOURNAL's role in the affair by presenting a one-sided view of the facts, must also be condemned.

Wimmer then decided to start legal action against Mr. Linn for his false and malicious actions. Wimmer received the unanimous support of the Student Government Association if he decided to press charges against Mr. Linn. When Linn heard of the SGA's vote, he was "shocked" and responded with the following remarks. "Surely the Student Government Association must understand my right to dissent . . . I only hope that they are not trying to tell me, and everyone else, that only students can dissent."

When Linn made the last remarks, he was running scared. He talked about a right to dissent. Yes, he has a right to dissent, but he has no right to make false accusations, to distort the facts, in a situation which he apparently caused.

Thank You

The staff of THE CAPITOLIST wishes to thank the advertisers who patronized us during the year.

Without the support of our advertisers, our weekly tabloid would not have been so good as it was this year. The income made from advertising was of tremendous value in the publication of the paper.

We take this opportunity to formally acknowledge the backing which we received from our advertisers. We hope to see them again next year:

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Pittenger Addresses Campus Group

by R. W. Bonaker

"Capitol Campus is a college with great potential because of its proximity to the capital—Harrisburg," said Pennsylvania Secretary of Education John C. Pittenger during a visit to campus last week.

Pittenger attended a luncheon in the Student Center last Friday. The audience was comprised of over 30 faculty, students and administrators.

The Secretary explained that his appointment to his post was not well received by some college newspapers. One called him a "political hack" at yet another job. One state college tabloid made preparations for what it called the "rape of the state colleges" under Pittenger's administration. He was burned in effigy for his alleged "non-participation in the Keddie Case at University Park, a situation which, based on academic procedures in the dismissal of a faculty member, did not involve me," he asserted.

"But I wouldn't have taken the job if I didn't like it," he added jokingly. Pittenger succeeded Dr. David Kurtzman earlier this year. He formerly served in the Pennsylvania Legislature, representing Lancaster County. He was defeated in his bid for reelection and took a job as a top administrative assistant for Gov. Milton Shapp, before being appointed to his present post.

"This is not my first visit here," he explained. "It is at least my third trip to the campus." He reiterated that it is unfortunate that a metropolitan area the size of Harrisburg had no facilities for higher education until the advent of Harrisburg Area Community College and the University Center at Harrisburg in the mid-1960's. As a junior college, HACC still is "lacking" in ratio of students to surrounding population. "Capitol can help fill that void," he said.

The Secretary made some interesting observations on student requirements at other colleges in the Commonwealth. He called the mandatory fee for a cap and gown of \$9.50 at one school — regardless of the student's intent to wear one — a "bit Mickey Mouse." He said that Penn State was fortunate to have a man like President John Oswald at the helm. "He is able to talk to the students and to people at other institutions, while his predecessor was not," he mentioned.

Pittenger emphasized that Harrisburg is a fast growing area, fairly sound economically, good transportation modes, with over a million people. "What is not here," he said, "is a good academic program to serve that industry" in the area.

Senate Bill 30, a new program for state aid to fund institutions of higher learning, was explained by the Secretary. "Earlier, some colleges receiving funding in outrageous ways, for example, Indiana Univ. of Pennsylvania. A tough problem concerns the 60 to 70 private colleges in the state. They don't have enough money. I wouldn't be surprised if a few of them had to close their doors in the next ten years. Senate Bill 30 will try to solve that problem."

The state, through the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency, provides scholarships to students of between "20 and 55 million

dollars. But I doubt if that is enough . . . we must do more," stresses Pittenger. When questioned about student input into the collegiate decision making process, he pointed to a recent move which placed students on the board of trustees at the 14 state colleges and the state related institutions of Pitt, Penn State and Temple. "The Senate has yet to confirm the appointments where one student will serve on each board," he said.

He termed the informal objectives for his Dept. of Education as stressing "more flexibility." He would also like to see more field work playing a part of a student's academic training. "Many times, the classroom is a waste of time," he observed. "Where else could you learn about 'macing'—the art of padding the party coffers through legislative allocations. You don't learn that in P.O.D.," he mused.

When questioned about a teacher surplus in Pennsylvania, he responded, "There are regional differences, it is a mixed picture. We have a surplus of applicants in small towns and suburban areas but there is no surplus for center city and urban teaching positions."

He observed that the state colleges are moving away from the normal school concept and are establishing alternative career programs. Pittenger looked at current methods of higher education and viewed them as inadequate in "Fitting the students for a seat on the job market." In the same light, "You don't get expertise by majoring in this or that. You get it from practice in a tough, exacting academic program — not a general major," he continued.

The Secretary elaborated on an apparent 'freeze' he placed on building construction on state colleges. He said that the dictum did not include Capitol's proposed multi-purpose physical athletic plant. "Proposals for that building are now pending in the Education department. I am casually optimistic about that Penn State project," he stated frankly.

Health Center

Robert Bailey, project director for uptown Harrisburg's Hamilton Health Center, has accepted chairmanship of the special population group Division.

Developing special health programs in cancer education for communities across the state, Bailey will lead the sub-committee part of the Pennsylvania Division, ACS, public education committee.

Math-Science Exams

Capitol Campus has been designated a testing center for the society of Actuaries.

The most recent exams took place last month when, for the first time, candidates for the initial preliminary examinations gathered from both the University and surrounding colleges. The next exams will be given in November.

The Math-Science Program offers courses in actuarial science to help candidates pass these exams. offers courses in actuarial science to he, offers courses in actuarial science to help candidates pass these exams.

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