

# EDITORIAL

## Reader Examines Activities Card

The institution of the activities card this year raises an important question concerning the authority students have vested in their Student Government Association.

That question is: When should our elected officers and representatives act in our behalf, and when should they get direct student input via polls or voting referendums prior to taking action?

Before giving our response to this question, it's important to present the facts and sequence of events in what has become a controversial issue among students.

The concept of an activities card was presented at the May 29, 1975, SGA meeting by Paul Bailie, this year's appointed social committee chairman.

This last SGA meeting of the school year included the newly elected SGA officers. The activities card was approved at the meeting on a trial basis for the fall term by a vote of 10 to 2.

Paul worked on the procedures for the card over the summer with discussion and approval by Scott Deardorff, SGA president, Roberta McLeod, student activities coordinator, Jerry South, director of student affairs, and social committee members.

Most students first heard of this extra expense during registration.

When asked why students weren't notified prior to the start of school of this extra expense so it could be planned for, both Bailie and Deardorff replied there was no time.

According to Bailie, 111 activities cards have been sold for the entire year, 1 for 2 terms, and 43 for one term. There are 2570 students enrolled this term. Only six per cent have bought activities cards.

SGA is scheduled to vote on continuing or discontinuing the activities card at the end of this term. Bailie says he is counting on SGA approval because he sold cards for the entire year. He says it would not have been feasible to work on a one-term basis. If the card is not approved, refunds will have to be made to those who paid for more than one term.

Whether the activities card is approved or not, The Reader believes the complaints about this additional expense can be used by SGA to examine the amount of direct student involvement it gets prior to making decisions that affect students.

The Reader has two suggestions. Student opinions should be sought if any SGA proposal will mean an added expense for students, and when any proposal will directly alter students' lives (the "common time" proposal is one such example). These opinions should be obtained by voting referendums or by a poll taken of the student body. This poll, in the form of a yes or no question, could be published in The Reader.

We are not advocating an impotent student government. Rather, we are suggesting an attempt at more direct participation by students.

There is an inherent tendency in any government to insulate itself from its governed and to slide into the "we know what's best for you" attitude. Let's guard against both.

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### Faculty Forum

## What Makes Jacob Run?

By Jacob L. Susskind

On a canvass of my ward, I met a young man who told me he was recently graduated from college with a major in political science. I introduced myself and asked for his vote.

"I can't vote for you," he replied.

"Why not?"

"I'm not registered."

This conversation reinforced my belief that knowledge without action is sterile. No doubt this recent college graduate had "learned" the democratic theory of participation in government. He probably had courses in the theory and analysis of political processes and institutions. His instructors were doubtless well versed in the literature.

What had gone wrong? Why wasn't this intelligent person actively involved in his own governance? In the political process of his own community? Why hadn't his education prepared him for participation in the exercise of his franchise?

This was not the first time these questions occurred to



Jacob L. Susskind

me. Hadn't people fought and died for the right to be free which is the radical meaning of "franchise." Hadn't we been on the front lines with all those freedom fighters from the signing of the Magna Charta to the Voting Rights Bill? Throughout my years at school and afterwards, these questions kept recurring to me.

I had no ready answers. I knew, however, that alienation and cynicism regarding the political process did not enlarge my freedom nor did

it make me feel better about myself or my neighbors. The more I thought about it, the more I realized that I must become personally involved.

Not that I consider myself a savior; but simply as one actor in the course of history who may do something to direct his own destiny. As a "professor" of social science and education, I had to find out how word and deed interact; how theory and practice relate; how I could integrate my knowledge and experience to make a more perfect whole.

As a candidate for the Middletown Borough Council, I met many of my neighbors in the first ward, some of them for the first time. I learned about their concerns and problems. I became aware of the inequities and injustices which afflict those less fortunate among us. I grew in understanding and sensitivity to my neighbors. I realized the wonderful diversity which I encountered.

In short, I became more of a person. Isn't that what we are supposed to get from our education?

### EDITORIAL

## Elections Reflect Apathy

The recent SGA elections reflect the apathy that has become synonymous with Capitol Campus. Where enthusiasm and desire to experience a functional government in action should have existed, there was instead the need for a delayed election. After three weeks of posted encouragement for students to run for the Senate, only four students had filed petitions with the Screening Committee.

When the elections were finally held several weeks ago voter turn-out was minimal. The grand finale was the removal from the ballot (after voting had already started) of an ineligible senior who had somehow slipped by the Screening Committee, much to its embarrassment.

Why are SGA elections a farce? Only last year, controversial vote counting procedures left SGA without a President until a special run-off election was held. At that time, SGA enacted procedures to guard against future disruptions in the elections. But what happened?

Do SGA problems exist simply because "things just go wrong" or is it something deeper?

Is that "something" perhaps the attitude of students and even SGA members themselves that SGA and other student organizations are not really that important?

Reasons for apathy at Capitol abound. They are heard every day. It's a commuter school. The student body is "older". Student organizations don't do anything anyway. They are all delusions. They are all cop-outs.

The relationship between student and college should be more than walking from class to car. Interest and involvement in student organizations can only broaden the business of living.

The SGA elections demonstrate that the level of interest and credibility put into an organization by the students determines the out-put of that organization. If students don't expect much, not much will be delivered.

Apathy is pervasive. After the college experience, who can say which facet of life it will next invade?

## Letter To The Editor

All you good sports fans who turn out faithfully to watch or participate in our home soccer games BEWARE!!

Due to university regulations, parking spaces are limited to visitor stalls only.

Violators will be visited by our on-the-spot security patrols. Parking is available in the lot behind the security office. Barry Foltz

The editors and staff of The C.C. Reader welcome letters for publication. Letters must be typed, double-spaced, and must contain the writer's signature and telephone number. Anonymous letters will not be accepted. However, if the writer requests, a pseudonym will be used in publication. The editors reserve the right to edit letters for style, grammar, and good taste.

## Council Plans Study

A subcommittee to study the document, "Interim Procedures for Resolving Student Allegations of Discrimination," has been appointed by University Council and will make recommendations to the Council.

Dr. Russell E. Larson, provost and chairman of the Council, named Dr. Richard F. Reynolds, assistant professor of mathematics at the McKeesport Campus, as chairman of the subcommittee and as members: Dr. Robert J. Scannell, dean of the College of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation; David C. Shaffer, an undergraduate; and Kevin N. Wright, a graduate student.

Council members also decided to seek information on the practice of scheduling more than 13 credits per term, a matter that also is under study by the Student Advisory Board. There has been discussion of an additional per credit tuition charge for students who schedule more than 13 credits per term. Prescribed class loads per term, except in rare cases, have 12 or less credits.