

Point Of View

The Case For Guns At Capitol Campus

For months your paper has been looking for a controversial issue to cover. By chance the issue of arming the campus security officers arose. You immediately took the opposite side of the issue. This is good when done responsibly. However, it is quite evident that the CC Reader has deliberately distorted the facts for the sake of attracting readership through controversy. This is poor journalism. Opinions should be confined to the editorial page. We have felt the need to clear up this issue.

Mr. Perrone and Mr. Adams, you wanted the facts and figures. Here they are, in print, for you and everyone to read.

Your poll's figures are correct for the 5.5 percent of the campus population you canvased. The sampling methods you employed are questionable.

Witnesses of your sampling techniques indicated that your sample was uncontrolled. Furthermore, the facts of your poll were distorted. **WE ARE NOT ARMING THE STUDENT PATROL!**

In at least one case, witnessed by four people, your pollster indicated that the Student Government Association suggested arming the student patrol.

When the results of your poll were published, no indication was made as to what organization conducted the poll. Only the last paragraph hinted that the poll was not handled by S.G.A..

On the other hand, the S.G.A. poll surveyed those students who must live with this issue twenty-four hours a day: the resident population.

From a total of 784 residents, single and married, up to now, our poll surveyed 486 people, which is 63 percent of the population. Furthermore, our survey was controlled. All campus residents are being polled and signatures are being taken to insure each resident votes once.

In reference to the "Scare Potential" of the survey form. There have been three burglaries within a thirty day period on campus. The total value of the property stolen was \$1,500, not \$2,500 as stated in the CC Reader.

Local crime figures have also shown recent increases. [See Below]

The term para-professional is not an ambiguous term. The

person or persons unknown who burglarized Meade Heights, exhibited enough expertise to know what to take to maximize profits and minimize risk. However, their methods of entry did not show the same expertise. The statement on the S.G.A. survey form would have been false had it read "amateur" or "professional". Hence the term para-professional.

Relative to the statement "most probably armed", consider this statement:

"The criminal element recognizes a uniformed/blazered policeman as a threat to his ability to pursue his activity. The law breaker will respond to the...policeman without regard to whether or not the policeman is armed - it will be assumed that he IS armed."

Why did the Student Government Association request that the survey be kept out of the paper? Not because we wanted to get a jump on our opposition, as Mr. Perrone said. Mr. Perrone was in attendance at the February 2 S.G.A. meeting when the reason was discussed.

To set the facts straight, members of S.G.A. requested that the story not be printed because doing so would advertise the fact that our campus police officers are presently unarmed and have no access to a weapon.

Some of the arguments against arming our campus police officers have been "giving them guns makes the campus look like an armed camp," "Having guns is provocative, money is better spent on the curriculum, and armed officers are inconsistent with the ideal university environment," and "it is dangerous to permit armed men and women to roam the campus."

Other arguments involved a variety of compromises such as arming officers at night, only if they are in the patrol car, and disarming the officers in proximity of a disturbance.

"The extension of the 'armed camp' argument holds that police officers are likely to be more conservative and reactionary than the average citizen, and thus are more likely to respond to a situation with force. While it is true that the police officers hold a special position of authority vis-a-vis other members of the community, the other assumptions are not true..."

In another view of the "armed Camp" theory, Chief Teegarten of Colorado State University relates this story.

"Up to the mid 1960's, Colorado State University Police only appeared armed at night. One day, out of the blue, he instructed his personnel to continue wearing their weapons during the day. After several weeks he had not received any reaction whatsoever from any members of the academic community other than comments he himself solicited by pointing out the change."

"The London, England, Police are not armed. They may truly be thought to function in an atmosphere other than an 'armed camp'. Few observers would try to assert that our criminal element would disarm because the police force in a area of their operation (the campus) was unarmed.

For example: "The security operation of the University of Northern Colorado performs a para-police function on that campus in an unarmed state. One glance at their catalogue of dangerous incidents for the period dating 1970 to 1975 shows over fifty cases with deadly weapons involved. Thus it is obvious that unarmed police inspire no sense of fair play whatsoever in the potential law breaker. If anything, common sense suggests that such a situation may even encourage the criminal to enter the campus with virtual impunity."

"In situations of jeopardy where lethal force is necessitated, chemical agents do not possess instant cessation potential. In less lethal confrontations, they do not offer the positive defense capabilities provided by impact weapons... When a firearm is needed, chemicals are of no value. When impact weapons must be employed, aerosol units offer an unacceptable alternative. Under all other circumstances, professional humane and effective defensive tactics are preferable."

"Thus the 'armed Camp' argument may be shown to be completely irrelevant to the issue at hand. The proliferation and easy availability of weapons and ammunition in our society render the phrase perhaps more descriptive of society as a whole. The institution of higher education is part of that society; and if it's citizens and law breakers are

armed with increasing frequency, then the situation too reflects the society as a whole."

"Clearly, crime is a part of Campus life, just as it is a part, albeit unwelcome, of the life of American Society. Clear, too, is the inescapable fact that the persons committing these crimes are frequently arming themselves with weapons and bringing them onto the campus. Finally, it is also obvious that our campus law enforcement agencies are viewing, confiscating and/or otherwise encountering these weapons in the course of their duties."

"There has not yet been developed a reliable method for the police officer to pre-determine whether or not a weapon will be encountered in a given situation. To quote from the introduction of the so-called Dangerous Incident Catalogue from the University of North Colorado files 1971 - 1975: 'It is impossible to know the seriousness of any situation until you are actually involved in it. There are few incidents which can be predefined as dangerous or non-dangerous.'"

An interpretation of the crime figures for Capitol Campus [Below] show that during a six month period, from June 1, 1976 to December 31, 1976, the campus averaged 59.33 complaints per month. In the one month period of January, 1977, the campus averaged 161 complaints, an increase of 101.67 percent, or an increase of 272.01 percent.

During the same six month period, the campus averaged 2.5 thefts per month. This year, the campus averaged 4.0 thefts per month, an increase of 160 percent.

MONTH OF JANUARY 1977		
COMMUNITY	POP.	COMPLAINTS
Highspire	3,000	202
Lower Swatara	7,000	333
Middletown	10,000	191
Capitol Campus	784	161

TYPES OF CRIMES		
BURGLARY	ASSAULT	THEFT
Highspire	1	7
Lower Swatara	3	4
Middletown	4	14
Capitol Campus	0	4

VANDALISM DISORDERLY INDECENT CONDUCT ASSAULT		
Highspire	2	1
Lower Swatara	2	0
Middletown	3	0
Capitol Campus	0	0

Capitol Campus Crime figures for the Six Month Period of June 1, 1976 to December 31, 1976.

COMPLAINTS		ASSAULTS	
356		2	
FOR JANUARY 1977			
161		0	
BURGLARIES		ATTEMPTED BURGLARIES	
2		2	
2		0	
OTHER CRIMES		THEFTS	
15		15	
For 6 Months		4	
For Jan. 77		0	
		SEX OFFENSES	
		2	
		0	

The figures show an incredible difference in the crime rates of the three communities and Capitol Campus.

A letter was drafted to Dauphin County District Attorney Leroy Zimmerman following a meeting with him. He responded with a letter printed in full below.

"This is in response to our discussion in this office on February 9th, and your letter dated February 10th.

The carrying of firearms by law enforcement personnel is a serious responsibility. The legislature recognized the importance of the responsibility when it enacted into law certain minimum training standards for all municipal police agencies. Part of the training and certification involves the use of firearms. So long as a sworn police officer, duly constituted under the law, receives the essential training in the use of firearms, that particular individual is permitted to carry a sidearm in carrying out his duties.

Obviously I support the need for sworn police officers to carry firearms and have always done so in the past.

Whether or not employees of Penn State University, who serve as Capitol Campus Police officers, can carry firearms is solely and exclusively an issue for the officials of Penn State University, since it is my understanding that the current policy prohibiting the carrying of firearms is a university directive.

"It has always been my position that police officials should not be hampered or curtailed in any manner in carrying out the lawful objectives assigned to them by their sworn duties."

Copies of this letter and reference material used for this article may be examined upon request.

John Leierzopf, Ray Martin, Carol Uhlig, Kitty Nestor

Point Of View

The Case Against Guns At Capitol Campus

By Ed Perrone

I'm pissed off. For three weeks, members of the Reader editorial staff have been asking that the S.G.A. quit jerking off and come out with the facts surrounding the issue of arming the Campus Police. It's time to stop the shouting and get down to the pitty-gritty: are guns necessary, and do the students want them?

Well, the S.G.A. answered, all right. Nine typed pages - of more rhetoric. Of accusations of irresponsibility and distortion.

And a long, unacknowledged excerpt of a magazine article, almost totally irrelevant to the present situation.

Okay, John and Ray and Carol and Kitty. Try these on for size:

For months we have been looking for a controversial issue to cover. True. We are a newspaper, not a press-release sheet. If anyone should know, John, you should, that the issue of guns is news, and news deserves coverage. If it's controversial, it's controver-

sial; so be it. We didn't start it. But it is our duty to inform the students of this school what is going on. We didn't create the controversy, we just reported it. Then, as individuals, some of us became involved by writing editorials expressing our opinions; namely Tim Adams and me. Our editorials always appeared on page two, entitled, if you'll notice, "Perspectives Page". I defy any of you to cite one instance of a distortion of facts in either of the two news stories we carried on page one.

They are the facts, people, as we saw them happen, or as they were reported to us. Sure we get emotional, sure we get biased, but our opinions remain, under specific bylines, on our editorial page. And we each take full responsibility for what we say.

I'll show you where the distortions lie.

You claim that we have sampled 5.5 percent of the campus population, while you have surveyed 63 percent of the residents. How can you

compare these two numbers? They are percentages of two completely different groups. Yet, by your placing them together, you make it seem as if your survey were almost twelve times larger than ours. This is not the case. We surveyed 163 people; you surveyed 486. Your survey is only 3 times larger than ours. Don't distort the facts.

The facts of our poll were not distorted. It was made clear in my article on page one, February 10, 1977, that the