

### TREND MOVES TO BRANCH CAMPUSES

For the first time in the 30-year history of The Pennsylvania State University's Commonwealth Campuses, freshmen and sophomore students at the branches outnumber their counterparts at the main campus.

Penn State's 19 branch campuses this year have a total enrollment of 9,741 first and second-year students compared to 9,462 at the University Park campus, according to final registration figures for the Fall Term.

Included are students working toward two-year associate degrees, and lower division baccalaureate degree students.

The enrollment on the Commonwealth Campuses this year is an increase of more than 32 per cent over a year ago—the largest increase ever in a single year. It is also an increase of more than 300 per cent over the enrollment at the Campuses just ten years ago.

Responsible for the increase, according to Penn State officials, is the growing trend of students to go to a Penn State campus near their home, and the resultant growth of the physical plants at the branches.

More than \$30 million in new construction has been programmed at the branches within the last two years. Sparking the Commonwealth Campuses' growth have been funds from local, State and Federal sources.

Counting funds now available for construction, the physical plants at the Commonwealth Campuses will exceed the total physical plant worth of the entire University in 1953.

In the coming years, freshmen and sophomores at the Commonwealth Campuses are expected to continue to exceed the numbers of freshmen and sophomores at University Park with 16,500 students expected at the branches by 1970, and 38,000 by 1980.

The increase in branch campus students comes as no surprise to President Eric A. Walker.

In fact, so closely are the Commonwealth Campuses linked to the main campus, says Dr. Walker, that for many years the whole future development of Penn State has been planned in terms of the increasing role these units will play in the University's ability to satisfy the growing educational needs of the State.

"We decided some time ago, for a number of practical reasons," says Dr. Walker, "that we would have to limit our enrollment at University Park.

"Since the costly and complicated laboratories here are used mostly for graduate and upperclass work, it is obvious that we will have to continue to assign more freshmen and sophomores at our Commonwealth Campuses.

In view of the important role that Dr. Walker attributes to the campuses across the commonwealth, he stands very much opposed to the state of Pennsylvania's Master Plan of education that suggests turning over Commonwealth Campuses into Community Colleges. This would cripple the long range plans of the Pennsylvania State University, plans that call for increasing dependence on these for undergraduates.