

The Daily Collegian

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Customs Failure Result of Apathy

There has been an increasing amount of discussion lately on the subject, "How can we make customs work?" The suggestions have flown increasingly thick and fast as the campus finds itself faced with the entrance in the near future of an abridged February freshman class. But the surprising thing about the commotion over customs is the small number of people who are doing all the worrying.

For the largest complaint among the worriers is the high-complete apathy among all but a handful of students involved in customs enforcement. The worriers wonder how to perk up upperclass participation in customs. They make reproachful sounds at all upperclassmen, all hatwomen, and most hatmen for failure to "do their duty" in making customs stick.

And they completely overlook the possibility that this failure, this "apathy," may not be indifference at all, may in fact be a reasonable vote of no confidence in customs for Penn State.

What about customs, the theory, the fact? What relations do customs bear to the College? We submit that one of the basic functions, perhaps the most basic, of a college is the development of mature human beings. The recurring miracle of an institution creating men and women out of boys and girls in four brief years often is overlooked precisely because it is so commonplace.

Unless this concept of college as a maturing force is completely false, customs appear in an extremely poor light. What contributions do customs make to maturity, how do they start the high school graduate off on the most important, most splendid four years of his life?

They place a "dink" on his head and a bow tie about his neck. They cause him to doff his strange little hat to a shapeless gray lump of stone on the Mall, and to anyone whose right to this tribute has been established by his having been on the campus longer than the freshman. They reward conformity, at the time when the freshman should be entering on four years of the most independent thought possible. They punish non-conformity in a number of ways: they may place the student in female clothes for the evident enjoyment of all about him. Good clean fun? Sure, but hardly conducive to maturity.

They ban dating, for a variety of high-toned reasons, at a time when the most important contacts with the opposite sex in the student's entire life should be beginning.

They put him at the beck of upperclassmen, for whom he may be required to sing, cheer, or produce identification papers. The United States has not yet become a country of identification papers, but then the colleges are always at the forefront of new movements.

But the most important thing to note in this second year of the return to customs at Penn State is the very strange effect customs have had on upperclass men and women, even the "student leaders" of the hat societies. These people have in the overwhelming majority proved magnificently unexcited by their new privileges. "Indifference," cry the worriers, "Apathy most reprehensible."

We submit that neither indifference nor apathy are more than the most trivial issues in the strange case of Penn State's woeful non-enforcement of customs. We submit that the upperclassmen have attained or are attaining the maturity that is the finest gift of the College. We submit that they neither wish to involve themselves in what they regard as the juvenile practice of customs, nor yet inflict this practice on a pliant, impressionable group of new young students.

And we suggest that the worriers should stop crying shame at the great body of non-enforcers, should instead pause to reexamine their automatic assumption that they are enlightened and their opponents unenlightened.

We even suggest that they study the possibility that customs have been turned down quietly, overwhelmingly by the Penn State student body.

And we offer them this one ray of hope. Think, worriers, Mightn't it be better this way?

—Ron Bonn

Ideals Must Be Basis for Allies

In his recent address here at Penn State, Arthur Schlesinger Jr., the noted historian, hit upon several discordant notes in American thinking.

Schlesinger cautioned the United States to choose its allies not on the basis of their economic structures, but rather on the basis of their belief in human rights. In addition, he warned that socialism can go the way of the totalitarian state or the democratic state.

We have been shocked in the past to hear members of the United States Congress complain against assisting socialist Britain on the grounds that we as a capitalistic nation should have no dealings with socialism. It is difficult to understand this type of reasoning. The men who are responsible for it are either knaves or fools.

Our quarrel is not with socialism as an economic theory, our quarrel is with socialism in the form of a communism—if indeed we can say that communism is a kin of socialism—where communism denies those basic human rights which are the keystone of democracy.

On the political level socialism can take the road toward communism or toward democracy. If we are to forsake those countries now economically socialist, they will turn to communism as a political theory.

As a corollary to Schlesinger's theory, we hold that we are at the same time making a mistake if we choose our friends simply on the basis of what they can contribute as military allies. We are, of course, referring to assisting such nations as Argentina, the Chinese Nationalists, and Spain.

We are now engaged, as President Milton S. Eisenhower has said in the past, in a war for men's minds. If we are to win that war, we must choose allies whose ideologies are consistent with our own aims. We cannot preach democracy and human rights on the one hand and court the favor of fascist dictatorship on the other.

We made the mistake once—in selecting the Soviets as our allies—and are paying for it now. Are we not to learn from history and repeat our error?

Profs Not on Ball During Semester

The last minute rush—or as it could more appropriately be called, stampede—is on at Penn State again.

The stampede is a semi-annual affair occurring during the last two weeks of both the fall and spring semesters. That is the time when professors suddenly awaken and realize that not even one half of the course has been covered in the first fourteen weeks of the semester. In the remaining two weeks the professors try to cram the rest of the course into the students' heads.

That is also the time when professors realize they have given only one or two exams in fourteen weeks of work. In order to have grades on which to base a final mark, they usually will schedule a number of tests for the final week before exams.

What possible value can this last minute cramming have for the students? Professors exhort throughout the year that students should not cram for tests, but rather that they should do the work right along. Why then, do not these same professors follow the advice they so glibly hand out?

The last week of any course should be a time when students could look back on the semester's work to find out the points on which they are not certain. It should be a time for firmly fixing the facts in their minds. It should never be a time for cramming the last half of the book down the students' throats.

Professors who have been secure in their positions for some time often develop these lethargic habits. They refuse to keep their courses up to date and do not exert themselves to aid the student in securing a knowledge of the specific subject.

If enough students protested over these abuses committed by the instructors, some action would necessarily be taken by the administration.

—Arnie Bloom

Bartender Limited

PHILADELPHIA —(AP)— The Pennsylvania Supreme Court ruled today that a bartender is exceeding the scope of his job when he shoots a customer in the neck to keep order.

A common pleas court jury had ruled that the owner of the Zaney Bar in Philadelphia should pay \$3800 to Eugene Howard, 22-year-old paperhanger. Howard testified he was shot by bartender Herbert Miles on Feb. 9, 1949.

The jury ruling was reversed later by Common Pleas Judge Frank Smith and Howard appealed to the Supreme Court.

In his opinion, Justice Allen M. Stearne said: "When the bartender, because the plaintiff made advances to the girl sitting next to him, pulled out a gun and shot the plaintiff, the bartender then departed from the scope of his employment."

There's a moral to this story. He's not the only guy to catch it in the neck because of a woman.

Little Man On Campus By Bibler



Interpreting the News

West Nears Stand On Southeast Asia

By J. M. ROBERTS JR.

Associated Press News Analyst

The Western Allies are moving toward a united stand regarding the possibility of communist aggression in Southeast Asia, and thus seeking to avoid the mistakes which invited the long and costly war in Korea.

A long list of developments primarily affecting Indo-China has created a period of considerable tension, but hardly adds up yet to a real crisis. That depends on Politburo plans.

The death of Gen. Jean De Tassigny, who only recently had turned the tide against the Vietminh rebels in Indo-China, was a serious blow to France. It just happened to come when France and Britain were conferring with the U.S. over increased American aid for their anti-communist campaigns in Southeast Asia, and when communist forces in China were making new threatening movements.

The communists were quick to accuse the western conferees in Washington of planning war in the area. This was taken by many to be another case of accusation parallel with Moscow's own intent. But for the moment it seemed just more propaganda. Each side is trying to warn the other of the dangers of a new outbreak.

Anthony Eden, Britain's foreign minister, said at Columbia University Friday that "it should be understood" that communist intervention in Southeast Asia would create a new situation similar to that met and faced by the United Nations in Korea. This was taken by some to be a warning to the communists. But its surrounding context and timing in connection with the Anglo-French-American discussions in

Washington seemed to make it just as much an appeal for solidarity of Western thinking and preparation.

The whole thing, however, faced the United States with the question of how far it was prepared to go in defense of Southeast Asia in event of communist attack. France's General Juin had not yet asked for a commitment of ground strength, but did seek air and naval promises and increased shipments of material. But it was enough to remind of the swift shifts from limited to all out action when the Korean War started.

Meanwhile, the United States already was committed to action through the United Nations in cases similar to that of Korea. In Paris the nations had voted to have troops ready if that body should issue a new call as it did in 1950. And that seemed, in the long run, to be the way any new aggression would be met, even though the greater part of the preparation would be through the three-power talks in Washington.

At any rate, enough was taking place to let Russia and the Chinese communists know that France would not have to stand alone in Indo-China, or Britain in Malaya.

Gazette . . .

- Tuesday, January 15
- ACCOUNTING CLUB, Simmons study room, 6:45 p.m.
- ALPHA NU, 107 Willard Hall, 7:30 p.m.
- CHESS CLUB, 3 Sparks, 7 p.m.
- COLLEGIAN business candidates, 1 Carnegie Hall, 7 p.m.
- COLLEGIAN business staff, 9 Carnegie Hall, 7 p.m.
- COLLEGIAN sophomore editorial board, 2 Carnegie Hall, 7 p.m.
- FROTH art and editorial candidates, sophomore, and junior boards, 3 Carnegie, 8 p.m.
- DUPLICATE BRIDGE CLUB, TUB, 6:45 p.m.
- PENN'S VALLEY SKI CLUB, 110 Electrical Engineering, 7:30 p.m.
- PSYCHOLOGY CLUB, 204 Burrows, 7 p.m.
- COLLEGE HOSPITAL
- Harvey Bolan, Lois Brown, Ron-

ald Cohen, Frances Katz, Wilma King, Harriet Kline, Elda Morgan, Barbara Newquist, Joseph Saber, Ronald Weaver, Ingetrawt Scheyer.

AT THE MOVIES
CATHAUM: Weekend With Father 2:13, 4:06, 5:59, 7:52, 9:45
STATE: I'll See You in My Dreams 2:11, 4:03, 5:55, 7:47, 9:39
NITTANY: Titan 6:25, 8:19, 10:15

STUDENT EMPLOYMENT
 Married man for janitor work.
 Women for office work. Typing and dictation necessary.
 Seventh and eighth semester aeronautical engineers and mechanical engineers for part-time government work.
 Man for typewriter repair work.
 Man for drafting; 15 to 20 hours per week.
 Man for office work; typing and dictation.
 Man for farm work in early morning.
 Woman for store work; evenings until 12 p.m.

COLLEGE PLACEMENT
 The Geological Survey of the U.S. Department of the Interior will interview January graduates in For., Geology, C.E. and M.E. Wednesday, January 16.