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The Daily Collegian

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Open Board Meetings: Much Needed

Why not open the meeting of the boards of state institutions to the press?

That is the question asked by Rep. Francis Worley (R-Adams) in the bill he will introduce into the State House of Representatives next week. He wants to open their doors because the boards "conduct public business and spend tax monies in the operations of their institutions."

He is right. He goes on to say, in an interview with a Daily Collegian reporter by telephone last night, the bill would probably apply to the University. This is indicated, he says, because the University "is receiving direct appropriations from the Legislature," and several members of the University Board of Trustees are appointed by the Governor.

Opening the boards of state institutions has been a pet project of Jerome Weinstein, editor of the Centre Daily Times and president of the Pennsylvania Society of Newspaper Editors. He is heartily in support of the proposed Worley Bill and speaks of the University as the

greatest offender, through closed meetings, in the state.

"It spends \$20 million of the taxpayers' money and conducts its board meetings in private," he pointed out yesterday. On the success of the bill he has no idea, but says it is "a great step forward, if for no other reason than to bring it before the public."

This is all very fine. We agree with Rep. Worley and Mr. Weinstein in thinking the bill a very good one and that it is proper for the meetings of the boards of state institutions to be open to the public. One question, however, must be answered before a bill of this type could be applied to the University.

Is the University Board of Trustees the board of a state institution? Some times it is and some times it is not. It causes more discussion in legal circles than, "Which came first, the chicken or the egg?"

University attorneys and legal advisors have debated the issue for nearly the 100 years of the school's existence. Each time the legal question arises, it must be established for particular instance whether Penn State is or is not a state institution. This comes from the University having a private corporate charter and still being supported as the state university.

From our point of view, we would like to see all board meetings open whether or not they are the board of state institutions. It seems little harm could be done if the board had nothing to hide and, at the least, it would keep them cognizant of the fact the people effected by their doings were watching them.

The issue at hand, however, involves the boards of only state institutions, and whether their proceedings are open to the press depends on the Worley Bill. The effect on the University can only be determined after it is established if the University is a state institution. In spite of all this, we stand for open meetings.

Constitutional??

According to recent press releases, it looks like Penn State student government is going to be a junior United States of America. Robert Dennis, member of the All-University Cabinet constitutional revisions committee, made the statement Wednesday that student government here will probably more closely parallel the three departments of the federal government. The main change, to effect such a parallel, will be in the court system and according to Dennis. Tribunal may have power to rule on actions of Cabinet.

Such a set-up looks fine at first glance. There certainly is nothing degrading about being compared with our national government. But we wonder just how close a parallel can actually be drawn between the two bodies.

Under the change briefly outlined by Dennis (which is not an official release from the revisions committee and is still subject to further discussion by the committee), Tribunal will have a degree of power over Cabinet actions. Tribunal is now a men's court exclusively. This provision means that either the women's court is left out in the cold so far as Cabinet action is concerned, or the women's court will be incorporated into Tribunal.

The one alternative is about as unfeasible as the other. If women are not given a part in the judicial powers of student government, the entire system loses an element of democracy. If Judicial is incorporated into Tribunal, this means the double standard now in operation at the University (i.e. the difference in regulations for men and women) will have to be carried into the court system. And we wonder just how concerned the male element of the court would be about a violation of women's dorm hours, or the women about the number of showers mangled in Hamilton Hall.

It is of course possible the committee can manufacture a close enough analogy between Penn State and the United States to draw up a constitution parallel to that of the national government. We wonder, however, just how it will adapt such a constitution to the seemingly unremovable factor that all student court decisions must eventually end up in the laps of the dean of men and dean of women. —P. M.

Safety Valve...

Beaucoup: Con

TO THE EDITOR: Did you hear the thunderous roar that rose from the fourth floor of Main Engineering on the morning of Jan. 13? It all happened when the architecture students read Marcie MacDonald's "cute" column on the Hetzel Union Building, in which she states that "it's beginning to look like a building instead of a Frank Lloyd Wright nightmare."

It is one thing to have an opinion, but quite another to express this opinion in a manner highly detrimental to one individual. Frank Lloyd Wright has done more than any other living American architect to save the architecture of this country, to provide contemporary Americans with a contemporary architecture. He has given the United States the chance to point proudly to its contemporary architecture, the chance to call itself a leader in this branch of the fine arts. Not all of Wright's work is an unqualified success, but to hold his work to be a nightmare is simply a lack of education.

The undersigned suggest that in the future, it would be best that only those qualified to speak about architecture do so, and that Miss MacDonald continue her comments in the field of fashion.

Charles Wright, Richard Hartman, Marty Darlington, Gerald Rishel, Lee Stauffer, George Hughes, Judith Byrns, James Howard, Robert Breeding, Frank Wagner, Charles Matts, Richard S-abold, Peter Lenz, Donald Lenker, Cynthia Palmer, Richard Stanley.

AIM: Suicide?

Apathy is one thing, but cutting one's own throat is another. That is exactly the situation the Association of Independent Men Board of Governors is approaching through their indifference to board meetings.

For two consecutive meetings now the board has had to scour the neighborhood for a quorum before the agenda could be started. AIM president Robert Dennis has decided the situation is critical enough to warrant a compulsory attendance clause in the AIM constitution. Under the clause those councils whose representatives are illegally absent from board meetings lose their seats on the board until they name a new representative.

Constitutional clauses of this nature are not unusual in themselves. The unfortunate thing is that they should be necessary.

Just what is motivating this indifference toward AIM is hard to say. If it is the result of dissatisfaction with the AIM government, board members should realize abstinence will not bring about any constructive changes. These can be made through participation only.

If, rather, the trouble lies in just plain disinterest in AIM, then board members should re-evaluate the entire situation. Independent students for years have clamored for a strong part in student government. They have this role now. They should think twice before throwing it to the wind—which they are doing through their present attitude. —Peggy McClain

Beaucoup: Pro

TO THE EDITOR: Three cheers for Marcie MacDonald, a home ec major who is aware of architecture, who knows the name of Frank Lloyd Wright, and who has opinions she is willing to express.

I am aware that some architects have written a letter to the editor about Miss MacDonald's column. I feel that these architects signing the letter have been very narrow-minded, expressing the desire that architecture be left to the architects. Many signers are members of Pi Gamma Alpha, a fraternity whose purpose is to promote the interest of art and architecture at PSU. Can they be sincere in condemning Miss MacDonald for expressing her beliefs? Do they actually believe the architects of the HUB have even come close to the correct solution for a building that is to be used by 14,000 students each year? Certainly Wright would laugh at this factory-like box.

Let these architects realize they will be designing for many people, some who can even think and express their opinions. We need architects who can sell their ideas, not condemn others.

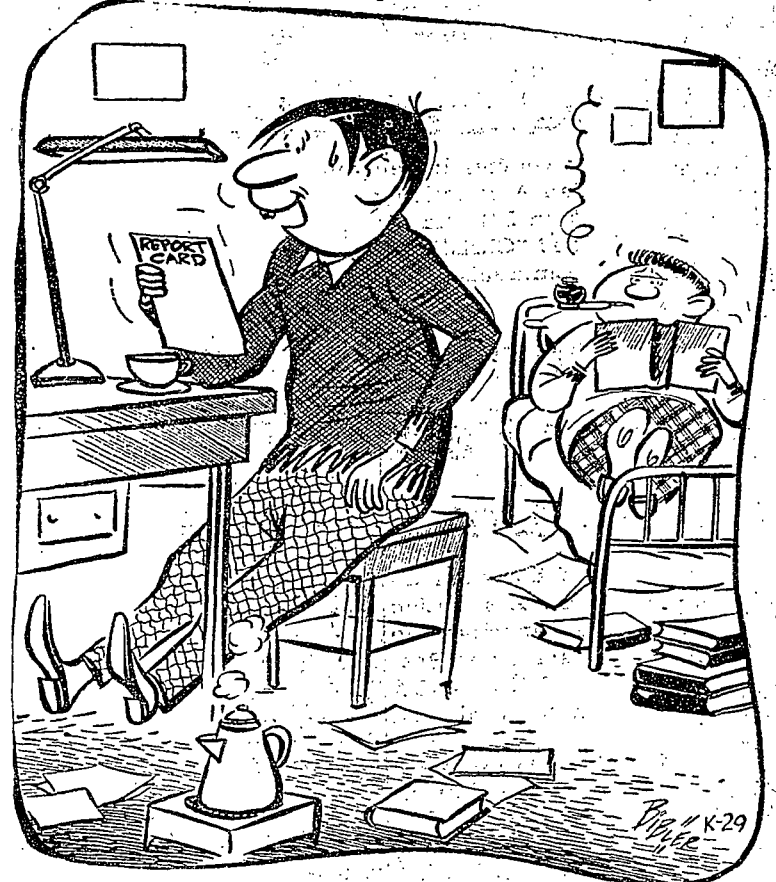
—Hubert Ream, President, Scarab Architectural Fraternity

Gazette...

Today
NEWMAN CLUB, Daily Rosary, 4:30 p.m., Our Lady of Victory Church. Open house, 8 p.m., Catholic Student Center.

Little Man on Campus

By Bibler



"Let's see—I got "incomplete" in math 215, "withdrawn" in English 2, "conditional" in social studies, and a "D" in phys ed—Boy! Thank goodness I didn't flunk anything."

They Say So...

Singing In The Wilderness

By EDMUND REISS

(The other day we heard an interesting impression of one of the important student groups—supposedly the most important—at the University, and because of the large number of student clubs and discussion bodies that might be included in this description, we feel that it might interest our readers.)

Everyone is tense as the moment approaches. The press reporters file into the room. Most of the seats, tables, windowsills, and floor itself are filled with interested spectators. The distinguished-looking people around the large table settle down, one of them (probably the most distinguished) slams the gavel and the meeting begins.

As usual the evening is taken with the most pressing problems, and revolutionary decisions are made by this prominent group around its large table. Hours and hours pass and all the while the reporters are busily jotting down the words of wisdom they hear uttered so the world (or at least the world of the immediate vicinity) can read and learn and know that its government is under the supervision of exceptionally capable people.

Far into the night goes the meeting of this group (by far the most important group to meet around a large table), but still, the spectators have their eyes and ears riveted to the extraordinary spectacle going on before them. Certainly great things will come out of this meeting; no one (at least no one in the know, or at least no one in the know of the people gathered around the large table) doubts that.

All sorts of codes, revisions of former codes, programs, and changes in former programs, are brought up and discussed. (Sometimes, amazingly enough, some action on these is taken.) Also reports are read, revisions of these reports are heard, and finally changes in the revisions of the reports.

Each member (of the important people around the large table) is making reports and suggestions for revision of these reports for each realizes the reporters are efficiently jotting down their words. Thus, several radical things are proposed for who doesn't like to see his name in the paper? Also, there is the incentive that perhaps a picture of one of these important persons (around the large table) will be included with the story in the paper.

However, why should only the important people (again when we speak of important people, we are talking only of those around the large table. After all, who else is important?) be the ones to get their names in the paper? Therefore, someone from the

mass of fascinated spectators, invariably arises and addresses the group (around the large table) and as would be expected, brings up some point which causes the reporters to feverishly bear down on their pencils in an effort to have these brilliant words for posterity.

However, the important people (as was said above, this term for obvious reasons pertains to those around the large table only) do not like outsiders trying to muscle into their territory. This person from the audience is not important, therefore why should he get his name in the paper. Thus, they try as hard as possible to make the person's words appear ridiculous (a not too difficult task).

So goes the meeting. Finally after several hours, a decision is to be made, but just then, a feverish courtier (sometimes called spy) rushes into the room, and whispers to the most important of the dignitaries around the large table.

This person looks shocked and then very tearful. However, he remembers his position, slams his gavel and announces the decision will have to be postponed to another meeting, for someone (an outsider, not one of the important people around the large table) has said "beards should be worn" by all men in the area under the group's guidance.

The reporters rushed out with this fact for such an important statement would surely replace anything that could be decided by the important people around the large table.

Their day of glory would have to be postponed, and so, as the important people (formerly those who were around the large table) file out of the room, each one is thinking that he will have to be the first one to grow a beard (at least each one mature enough or capable of such an act.)

Tonight on WDFM

91.1 MEGACYCLES	
7:25	Sign On
7:30	Starlight Serenade
8:30	Marquee Memories "Roberta"
9:15	News and Sports
9:30	Master's Palette
10:30	Thought for the Day