



Behind Closed Doors

Open Records Called Trustees Compromise

By LARRY JACOBSON
Second of a Series

Participants in the controversy over closed Board of Trustee meetings at the University—pro or con—have gravitated over the years into three distinct categories.

On one extreme is the group preferring to keep the meetings private, and on the other end are proponents of the open meeting. Stuck in the middle are backers of a compromise which would keep the meetings closed, but would have minutes of the meetings published.

Those who would keep the meetings closed use as the basis for their argument the legal fact that the University is a private corporation, thus its business meetings are private.

On the other hand, proponents of the open meeting follow the same reasoning as State Senator Jo Hays (D.) from State College who introduced a bill in the State Senate to open the meetings of the University Board of Trustees. The bill passed the Senate unanimously, but was buried in a House committee.

Hays told The Daily Collegian that the state pours some \$30 million into this University every two years, and parents of students also pay tuition fees. The people of the state have a right to know, he said, what goes on with their money. And they should have the right to see what goes on in meetings, he added.

Any formal motion or action, Hays added, should happen at an open meeting. "This doesn't exclude the use of executive session (closed to public and the press) when personalities are involved," he said.

What about the possibility that the meetings would merely become a rubber stamp for decisions that were reached in private hotel rooms, etc.? Hays said he felt this would occur to some extent, "but there are always a couple of dissident elements that would speak up during a meeting, bringing many things out into the open."

Then Hays concluded his argument with the idea that the University is in reality a state university, and thus an agency of the state, which could come under the newly passed open meeting and open records laws.

Fuel was added to this last part of Hays' argument Tuesday when President Eric A. Walker in a speech classified the University as separate from any state-aided institutions such as the Universities of Pittsburgh or Temple, and later in his speech, said "... that Penn State is the eastern outpost of the western state university."

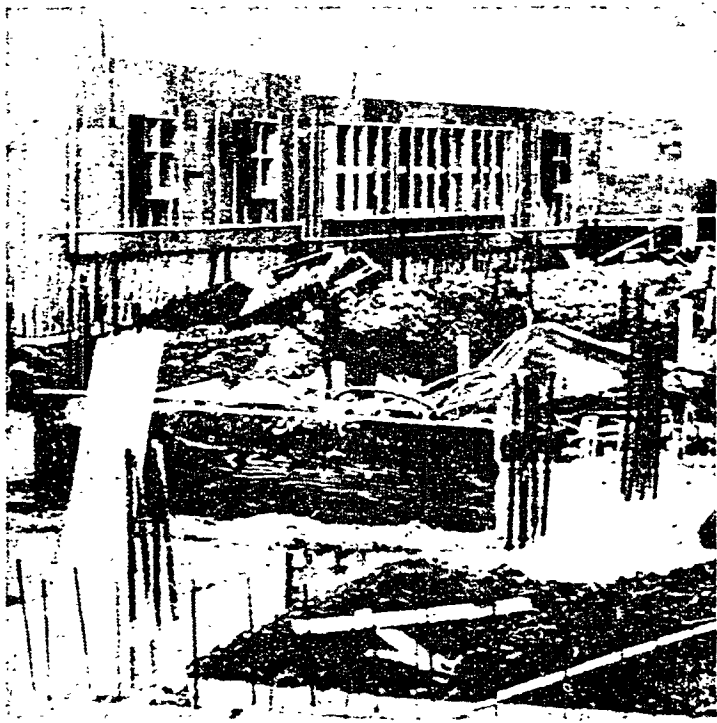
The compromise groups' thinking was best expressed by two members of the University's Department of Political Science who said, "Open meetings wouldn't be any good because then all action would take place in the neighborhood bar or hotel room, and the meetings would be nothing more than a rubber stamp."

The idea of having open records but closed meetings, is the only concession the Board of Trustees would ever consider, one professor said. A colleague added that the meetings could never be opened on the basis that this is a state university.

"After all, he said, "the University employs a... lawyer who probably doesn't do anything else but keep the University riding the fence between a private corporation and a state institution. This seems to be his life work."

In addition, backers of this idea feel that the Board might grant publication of minutes, since none of the dirty wash would come into public view.

In the light of present opinions, the idea of open records is the plan with the most chance of succeeding.



—Daily Collegian photo by John Zerby
WAITING FOR SPRING—No active construction work is being conducted on campus, Walter H. Wiegand, director of Physical Plant, said yesterday. Construction on these walls for the new men's dormitories along Park Avenue will be continued after warmer weather arrives.

St. Francis Library Drive Nets 1100 Books in 3 Days

A total of 1100 books have been received in the drive to aid the library of St. Francis College, Loretto, after three days of collection.

All books collected will be donated to the library, which

Smaltz to Address Young Democrats

Donald Smaltz, senior in education from Lebanon, will discuss last week's \$100-a-plate Truman Dinner at a meeting of the Young Democrats Club at 8:15 tonight in 217 Hetzel Union.

An account of the Kerstetter trial now in Centre County Court will be given by Gerald Bogus, junior in arts and letters from Brownsville.

was destroyed by fire last month; in the name of the late Dr. George L. Leffler, assistant dean of the College of Business Administration.

Wesley Bergey, chairman of the drive, has set a goal of 1500 books. The drive is scheduled to end Saturday.

Persons who have books to donate may bring them to 2-F Boucke or the Hetzel Union Card Room from 1 to 5 p.m. any afternoon except Tuesday when the hours are from 3-5.

Anyone who wishes to have books picked up may call AD 8-8441 ext. 2428 any afternoon during the same hours.

Cabinet to Air New Traffic Rule

A recommendation to make a student subject to dismissal from the University for five traffic violations in one year will be included in a traffic report to be presented to All-University Cabinet tonight.

The list of recommendations, drawn up by a committee of five and already approved by Ossian R. MacKenzie, vice president for business administration, will be presented to Cabinet at 7 tonight in 203 Hetzel Union.

Cabinet also will hear a protest of University Party's second registration meeting, from Christian Hostetter, Anita Lorah and Gristje Flecking, who were

defeated for party offices at the meeting.

Other items on the Cabinet agenda include a report of last semester's \$15,301.64 Cabinet expenditures, a report from the community living committee, an insurance committee progress report and recommendations from the Interclass Finance Board.

The report also recommends that proceeds from traffic fines, after expenses of paying the secretary who handles the details of the parking violations system, be divided among the social recreation fund, a fund to improve parking areas, and the scholarship fund, which now receives the total proceeds of the court.

The present traffic code, according to Owen Proctor, chairman of the Traffic Court, does not provide for dismissing a

Senators 49-42 For 5-Cent Stamp

WASHINGTON, Feb. 26 (AP)—The Senate tonight voted 49-42 to accept President Eisenhower's proposal for a 5-cent stamp on nonlocal letters, but limited it to three years.

The vote was to reject an amendment of Sen. Monroney (D.-Okla.) to knock out of the bill the 5-cent stamp. The vote largely followed party lines with all but two Republicans opposing the amendment.

The vote thus kept in the postal rate increase bill a provision fixing the 5-cent rate on first class out-of-town letters between July 1, 1958, and June 30, 1961, with 4 cents on local letters.

The permanent letter rate would be 4 cents as compared with the present 3-cent stamp which has been in effect since 1932.

The President has sought a permanent 5-cent rate on nonlocal letters but nevertheless the decision constitutes a considerable victory for him and Postmaster General Summerfield.

The administration has been trying to get Congress to vote postal rate increases since it first took office in 1953, to reduce the postal deficit.

The roll call tonight settled the major decision to be made by the Senate on rates in the bill.

The House has passed a bill raising the 3-cent rate to 4 cents. When the Senate finally passes its bill, it and the House version will go to conference for adjustment.

The vote on the Monroney amendment found 40 Democrats and two Republicans voting to knock out the 5-cent provisions; they were overcome by 44 Republicans and five Democrats.

The 175 millions annually which the 5-cent rate would bring in above a 4-cent stamp would be earmarked for each of the three years for modernization of postal facilities, post offices and their equipment.

Republicans generally credited this modernization feature with furnishing the votes needed to sustain the 5-cent rate on the floor.

In all, the bill would raise postage rates by 747 million dollars a year.

Clover Club Elects Garbin President

Ferdinand Garbin, senior in agronomy from Turtle Creek, has been elected president of the Clover Club.

Other officers are Paul Johnson, vice president; Joan Alt-house, secretary; Larry Wherry, treasurer; Ralph Forsht, representative to the Agriculture Student Council.

Donald Tuttle, sophomore in general agriculture from Norristown, and James Holt, junior in agronomy from Philadelphia, have received American Society of Agronomy awards.

Kerstetter Found Guilty By Jury

A jury of seven men and five women found Elizabeth Ann Kerstetter, State College, guilty of involuntary manslaughter in the death of her baby, Oct. 2, 1957, but sentencing has been deferred.

Miss Kerstetter was found not guilty on a charge of concealing the death of the baby. The jurors returned the verdict at 4:45 p.m. yesterday in Centre County Court, Bellefonte.

The Commonwealth had charged Miss Kerstetter with murder and concealing the baby. She entered a plea of "not guilty" on Monday. The baby was found Dec. 1 by an employe of the Nittany Lion Inn.

The plea for the involuntary manslaughter charge was entered yesterday morning by defense counsel Musser W. Gettig. He said Miss Kerstetter's act was an "act of passion" and told the jury the defendant "fell to pieces and didn't know what she was doing."

The defense did not deny the evidence presented by the Commonwealth and called only one witness in addition to Miss Kerstetter. A member of the State College High School faculty testified as to the defendant's intelligence score while in eighth grade.

Miss Kerstetter took the stand to identify the confession statement which she made Dec. 5 at the Rockview State Police substation. The confession related how the birth of the baby was concealed and what Miss Kerstetter had done with the body.

District Atty. Richard M. Sharp presented the case for the Commonwealth and in his charge to the jury did not make any recommendation on what degree of murder to establish in its verdict. He called three witnesses to the stand yesterday morning to verify the statement made by Miss Kerstetter.

Testimony was concluded at 11:20 a.m. and after a noon recess, Judge R. Paul Campbell charged the jury, before sending them into deliberation.

Grads to Conduct Mormon Lecture

The second in a series of ten lectures on Mormonism will be presented at 8 tonight in 208 Boucke.

The lecture is entitled "Fundamentals of Mormon Thought and Practice."

The series is being conducted by graduate students who are members of the Mormon faith.

The historical and present day picture of Mormonism as well as the fundamental doctrines and practices of the church will be treated.

The series is designed especially for persons unfamiliar with these subjects. The lecture is open to the public.

Outing Club to Present 'Nature's Half Acre'

The Walt Disney film, "Nature's Half Acre," will be shown at a meeting of the Outing Club at 7 tonight in the Hetzel Union Auditorium.

Divisional reports will be given and plans for spring trips will be discussed.