

Editorial Opinion

The Problem Is Action

Student government at this University seems to have reached the peak of apathy and absurdity as evidenced by the lowest voter turnout in recent years last week and the legal mess in which the present SGA system finds itself over legality of elections and seating of members.

But the problem is more than just placing blame for this mess. The problem is deep-seated, not in the structure (several structures could be made to work), but in the fact that most of the time has been wasted on structural changes and relatively little has been done for the students.

Over-concern with self-perpetuation of the system has blotted out the real purpose for student government—governing the students and representing their interests.

Student government—not just SGA or any specific system but the whole concept of student government—now is caught in a deadly cycle. The present members of student government complain because no one will vote or take an active interest in student government.

Students counter that their apathy is caused by the fact that student government is just a political mess and does nothing for the students.

Both are right, but nothing will be accomplished until both wipe the slate clean and start over by taking a positive attitude toward student government and what it can and should do.

The present members of student government are going to have to take the first step.

For two years the present student government system (the SGA elected-representative system with definitely constituted executive and legislative branches) has floundered and has dwelled almost exclusively upon mechanical changes to its own system.

It has passed very few measures that have stated unequivocally the stand of the students on the issues of vital importance to them. It has not represented the students' interest. It has suffered from the lack of devotion to the job by most Assemblymen and the lack of inspirational leadership from the executive branch.

This does not mean that the structure of the organization has to be changed but rather that the attitudes and work of those in it must be changed.

Of the 13 bills passed by SGA this fall, five concerned the mechanical structure of the system. Two backed worthwhile projects of student government—Stone Valley cleanup and mock national election—one set up a committee on the infirmary which we haven't heard from since and two merely lended support to projects that were also being sponsored by other organizations.

The only actions that really represented the students' stand on a topic of interest to them were the creation of the SGA non-discriminatory housing list, the request for extended library hours and the request to open the HUB lot for students on a trial basis.

Suppose student government rose up and took a strong stand on an issue that vitally affects students—one that has been floating around for some time or one that hasn't even been mentioned.

Suppose student government stood up and said, "The library facilities at the University are wholly inadequate for the necessary academic study of 16,000 students seeking their degree here."

Or suppose they took an issue that has apparently gone unnoticed—that many of the best qualified professors are leaving for more attractive positions elsewhere.

Suppose student government—the representatives of the student body—said, "The University is losing good professors at an alarming rate, and the faculty is rapidly becoming inadequate to give a proper college education to 16,000 students."

The University may be able to take some action or they may be unable to do so because of lack of finances.

But stands like these from a student body are going to be picked up by the wire services and read across the whole state.

And when this happens legislators may receive phone calls and letters and they may awaken to the situation that exists at their state university and they may be less prone to cut the University's appropriation the next time around.

It is the job of student government to point up the needs as seen by students, and if strong stands are taken, it might be surprising to see the action that results.



Gazette

- TODAY
- Ag Student Council, 7 p.m., HUB
 - Agronomy Seminar, 4 p.m., 111 Tyson
 - Alpha Kappa Psi, 7:15 p.m., Sigma Chi
 - Angel Flight, 7 p.m., HUB assembly
 - CCC Committee, 7:30 p.m., 204 Boucke
 - Dairy Cattle Committee, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., 212 HUB
 - Ed Council, 6:30 p.m., 217 HUB
 - EE Seminar, 4:15 p.m., 207 EE
 - German Christmas Sing, 7:30 p.m., Schwab
 - Hunters, 8:15 p.m., 111 Boucke
 - ICG, 8 p.m., 203 HUB
 - IVCF, 12:45 p.m., 218 HUB
 - IVCF, 8 p.m., 218 HUB
 - LA faculty meeting, 4:15 p.m., 121 Sparks
 - LA Student Council, 6:30 p.m., 212 HUB
 - Meditation Chapel Choirs, 8 p.m., Helen Eskin Eisenhower Chapel
 - MI Student Council, 7 p.m., 216 HUB
 - Nittany Grotto, 7 p.m., 121 MI
 - Panel, 6:15 p.m., 203 HUB
 - Plant Science Club, 7:30 p.m., 111 Tyson
 - Psychology Colloquium, 8:15 p.m., 214 Boucke
 - Social and Rec Ed Committee, 4 p.m., 212 HUB
 - Sociology Club, 7:00 p.m., 204 Boucke
 - Sociology Club, 8:15 p.m., 11 Boucke
 - Hat Society Carol Sing, 9:30 p.m., in front of HUB
 - Senior Class Ad Board, Class Gift Committee, 7 p.m., Phi Mu suite

HOSPITAL

- Larry Barton, Eric Berg, James Black, Leslie Blair, Rosalyn Bonas, Gail Buchanan, Stanley Christman, William Crawford, Eugenia Estruc, Nicholas Falcone, Robert Fisher, John Gander, John Giacola, Howard Gleit, Dennis Harnish, Judith Ann Harris, Stephen Jacobs, Walter Marsland, Charmaine Merlino, Shirley Mertz, James Murphy, Judith Northrup, Samuel Palley, Judith Price, Donald Restler, Gertrude Biedman, Carolyn Rosol, Dennis Schaefer, Ruth Silbey, Susan Stolzer, John Sweeney, Marian Uramey, John Wechsler, Kiraten Wescott, Carol Wolf, Harry Wolf.

Snowed Student Gov't Overtakes Froth

by Joel Myers



Before the SGA elections last week there was a drive under way to play a joke on student government by voting for an unslated party dubbed "Piddle Party."

However, of the one in six eligible voters that did vote only 103 students chose to waste their ballot in this fashion.

My funny bone is rarely tickled in the morning over my first cup of coffee, but when I read in Friday's Collegian that SGA had only been composed of a handful of legal members for nearly a year, I broke into a long laugh.

Later, upon talking to reporters who were present at the meeting or was it meetings, I found that the members, legal and illegal, also thought it hilarious. In fact, I am told the meeting resembled a school yard during recess time.

Penn State's student governing body apparently liked this comedian role and they made one last attempt to overtake Froth on Friday. That was when 48 members crowded around a table meant for 42. Now it can truly be said that everything at Penn State is expanding.

Despite these amusing

events, many SGA members believe in the "power" of their organization.

Upon posing a question of "What has been accomplished this year?" to one of the more realistic assemblymen, I was given a sharp reply which carried mention of the saving of the Thanksgiving Vacation and a half-holiday for the Liberty Bowl.

It is interesting to note that the Thanksgiving Vacation will be lost next year due to the adoption of the Quarter System and the classes missed on Liberty Bowl weekend must be made up on the day before finals.

I then asked what was being done to achieve some more important and certainly more useful projects like abolishing compulsory ROTC, securing an AM radio station on campus, setting up a student-run bookstore, expanded parking facilities and improving library facilities.

She told me that these studies had been done in the past and said that the reports are on file in the SGA office.

Cup of coffee anyone.

Interpreting

'Piddle' Vote Explained

TO THE EDITOR: In Friday's editorial you seemed to think that a person who voted for "Piddle" was trying to play a joke. I voted for the Piddle Party, not as a joke, but as a protest vote for the missing independent candidate.

When I received my ballot at the polls there were only three names on the ballot, two of these under the Campus Party heading and one under the University.

Since I did not approve the platforms of these parties and since I did not feel these parties would do a good job in representing me and since the independent candidate had been arbitrarily disqualified, I felt I had no choice but to cast a protest vote for "Piddle" in lieu of the independent candidates.

I certainly do not feel that a vote for "Piddle" is a joke anymore, since the Collegian considers the SGA a joke.

—Robert W. Mandelstam, '61
(Editor's Note: We do not appreciate Mandelstam's inter-

pretation? of our editorial policy. That Collegian does not consider SGA a joke is evidenced by today's editorial.)

Abrams Praised

TO THE EDITOR: Upon reading Mr. Slovonsky's letter in Friday's Collegian criticizing the sportscaster of the Eidophor broadcast of the wrestling match, we were amazed at the apparent lack of gratitude on Mr. Slovonsky's part.

The broadcaster, Mr. Gerald Abrams, is by no means a professional. However, we must remember that Mr. Abrams has dedicated his own time to enable the students to watch this match. He has done so without any financial reimbursement whatsoever.

Mr. Abrams, therefore, should be praised for his efforts to make a better Penn State, while Mr. Slovonsky should be criticized on making a bitter Penn State.

—Robert J. Solot, '61

—Ronald N. Watzman, '61

Interpreting

Population Overrides Advances

By J. M. ROBERTS
Associated Press News Analyst
The Western world, depending heavily on being able to create improved living standards and a dynamic economy in the underdeveloped world to forestall advancing communism, is leaning upon a reed of very doubtful strength.

The trouble is that improved economic conditions are not keeping pace with increasing population, which is greatest in countries where least supportable.

Take India, for instance. Tremendous strides in agricultural methods

have been taken, and food production is way up. Yet the Ford Foundation estimates a further increase from the 1959 record of 73 million tons to an expected 110 million tons of food in 1966 will still leave a 28-million shortage.

At the same time, there is no room on the land for millions and millions of farmers who are competing for jobs in new industries against a population which is rising now at the rate of about eight million a year.

Recent reports show that the Colombo Plan, under which Southeast Asia's agriculture and industrial potential is being developed, is barely keeping even, if that — and the prospect of real improvement is dim.

United Nations figures show that the Latin-American population is increasing at the rate of 2.5 per cent a year, and the

Population Reference Bureau says there is little hope that living standards can be improved while that continues.

The figures indicate that the world population will double in the next 40 years.

Efforts are being made to get started with a food distribution program through the United Nations. The United States would like to get rid of her surplus this way.

But the United States may not have a perpetual surplus. People are getting weary of farm subsidies. The President's Commission on National Goals suggested increased retirement of farm land and creation of jobs in industry for 1½ million farmers in the next decade. More importantly, the U.S. population is also expected to double in the next 40 years.



ROBERTS

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