

Editorial Opinion

Wail of Persecution

The Letters to the Editor column in a newspaper is indispensable as an open forum for public expression.

But we become very disturbed when it is misused by irresponsible letter-writers who give half a story and then make vicious, unsupported accusations such as the gestapo accusations hurled at the dean of men's staff and the housing department in the recent case of a room search in Nittany 37.

Twenty-five residents of this dorm composed an indignant letter emphasizing how their rights had been infringed upon when counselors herded them into a lobby and searched their rooms.

They neglected to mention the fact that for weeks some of them had been abrogating the rights of their fellows by setting off firecrackers in the residence hall during study hours.

Several of the signers to this letter had been found to have possession of firecrackers (violation of a state statute), but they cried all the more.

The men in this residence hall had valid reason for protesting a room search without the presence of the occupants. The dean of men's office has admitted that this was a slip-up on the part of the counselor and has re-emphasized its policy that room occupants or the president of the residence hall be present during all searches.

But the Nittany men involved have no cause to self-righteously cry "gestapo" in a hurt voice after participating in their dangerous little game of throw-the-firecracker.

They were not breaking a University regulation but a state law.

And to accompany their wail with warped accusations indicates only immaturity and an adolescent persecution complex that fits their mental age if not their physical.

One deranged student felt justified to plaster the bulletin board with profanity that can be identified only with 14-year-old hoodlums.

Unfortunately, other non-thinking students, who live in town and were not even connected with the incident and had no first-hand knowledge of the facts, jumped on the bandwagon and burst forth with more irresponsible accusations without checking the facts.

The dean of men's office has made clear its intentions to henceforth insure that occupants are present when rooms are searched, but when will these occupants grow up?

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Letters to the Editor

Contract Rule On 'SGA Deficiencies' Requested for Room Search

TO THE EDITOR: It seems to me that only one constructive conclusion can be drawn from the search of Nittany 37.

SGA should request the University to change its housing contract. The change should require the resident or residents of a room to be present when a search is conducted.

As a resident of Nittany 37, I know the reasons for the search were valid. As a student I was appalled at the crude manner in which it was conducted.

True, incriminating evidence was found. But this doesn't invalidate the complaints about the methods used in searching.

It seems to me that each counselor that took part in this search placed great trust in the members of my dorm.

Suppose one of us had been dishonest enough to claim that a theft had taken place. Who is to blame in such a case?

I would also like to remind those few counselors, who have forgotten, that the University is trying to encourage not discourage students to live in these residence halls.

—Barry Rein

TO THE EDITOR: In response to the recent editorial concerning the state of student government, I submit two letters (second letter will appear in tomorrow's Collegian) as a point of departure for constructive commentary on the SGA. This letter deals with the deficiencies of student government; the second letter suggests remedies for these problem areas.

There are at least eight major deficiencies in the structure of S.G.A which render it ineffective:

•Class representation is outdated. Five-year curricula, the quarter system, and the non-functional nature of the class concept render it nothing more than a tradition which is impeding student government.

•The national government concept is fallacious in student government. Penn State society is unique, and demands a distinctive governmental structure to accommodate its needs. The differences in the scope of these respective organizations is indicative of this.

•Assemblymen represent nebulous groups having no specific constituencies. They have allegiance to their class, student body, and party at best. Class and student body are vague groups. Parties represent a very small portion of the student body at present.

•Important constituency groups (TIM, AWS, IFC, MRC) are not directly represented on the highest legislative body.

•Important interest groups (ICCB, Leonides, ISA, Panhellenic Council, etc.) are not directly represented on the highest legislative body.

•The Assembly is too large to be effective. Forty-two members are too unwieldy. Quality is sacrificed for quantity on the assumption that size is the basis for good government. This mania for quantity has undermined student government by depleting the ranks of qualified student leaders available for the committee system, which is a backbone of any legislative body.

•SGA has no training program to provide a core of responsible workers who are qualified in the issues, problems, functions, duties and operations of the organization. Such programs are found in the Daily Collegian, and La Vie, and have proved very successful.

•There is a lack of continuity in the administrative practices of the SGA apparatus. The standardization of operating procedures, forms, and filing systems is non-existent. Every year, pioneering must be done in these areas, rather than perfecting potentially good methods.

There are at least three deficiencies on the part of the student body which are both causes and results of ineffective government:

•Candidates have an inadequate nominating base, which undermines their legitimacy.

•Lack of participation in voting indicates a lack of student support and mandate, which undermines the legitimacy of the Assembly.

•Students vote on the basis of popularity; not merit. The results are obvious.

—Earl Gershenow '62

Soph Poet Comments

TO THE EDITOR: This is a footnote to Mr. Donald Kuspit's letter that appeared in Tuesday's "Collegian," and was concerned about Penn State students feeling they were part of a mass.

"We," they call us, not one but we,

We are the class of '63—four thousand strong.

Four thousand all to build and break and free

This world of ours from Marx and tyranny.

Don't ask our names, our hopes, our private tears,

We go by our matriculation number here.

Four thousand to be processed and degreed.

Four thousand to go out and fight the not-so-free.

Who would deny the worth of an individual "He."

—Dianne Lamb '63

Droll 'Drama' Drowns

TO THE EDITOR: Re: Saturday's letter to the editor on Blum's Article.

A 20TH CENTURY SEQUEL: PROMETHEUS BLUM BOUND

Dramatis Personae: Prometheus Blum, Horrible Hermes Setting: Blum is sitting cross-legged in his padded cell with bongo drums to his left, papyrus and quill to his right. His green book bag is hanging on the wall behind him.

(Enter Hermes)

Hermes: You there, the clever one, and too sharp in your sharpness, the one who sinned against the gods by throwing stones of witchcraft at the humble masses. Why do you stir them with your mystic ubiquity? You must tell me not in riddles, but straight out.

Blum: If I could escape from this cursed straight jacket, I would hurl my stones at you too, you lackey of the gods! Now you go back again over the road you came from, since you will hear none of the things you ask.

Hermes: Before now it was by a self-conceit like this you brought yourself these sufferings.

Blum: For your menial position, you organization man of the gods, I would not exchange my own ill fortune.

Hermes: No doubt it is bet-

ter to be a menial to the padded cell than to be the trusted messenger of father Zeus.

Blum: (Gesticulating wildly) Adracadabra!

Hermes: You speak like a madman, brain sick seriously.

Blum: Yes sick, if it is sickness to oppose all that is opposed to the form of the good.

Hermes: But what does your mystic slingshot have to do with the forms of the good, you pseudo-sage?

Blum: Sticks and stones will break my bones, but names will never hurt me.

Hermes: Names? Ha! Such unmitigated arrogance! Stubbornness in a mind whose thoughts have gone astray has in its simple self less strength than anything.

Blum: Your words beat on me vainly like a wave. I shall never budge — If only I could hurl jagged stones at you.

Hermes: Talking about stoning, you had better get yourself stoned on some more Milton, for Zeus is going to send his winged hound, the blood-red eagle of reality to gnaw your liver black. (Exit Hermes)

Blum: Black, Black! Hack, hack! (He begins to pound his bongos furiously)

—Dave Stang, '61

Gazette

TODAY

- ACE, 7 p.m., Home Ec.
- AIM, 8 p.m., 203 HUB
- Alpha Epsilon Delta, 7 p.m., 214 Boucke
- AWS, 8:30 p.m., 203 HUB
- Bloodmobile, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., HUB card room
- Camera Club, 7:30 p.m., 217-218 HUB
- CBA Student Council, 6:45 p.m., 314 Boucke
- Chem-Physics Student Council, 6:45 p.m., Delta Delta Delta Suite, Cross Hall
- Chess Club, 7 p.m., HUB card room
- Faculty Women's Bridge, 1 p.m., HUB main lounge
- Israel Folk Dancing, 8:30 p.m., Hillel
- IVCF, 12:45 p.m., 218 HUB
- Kappa Phi, 7 p.m., Wesley Foundation
- NDEA French Institute Film, 8 p.m., 209 Home Ed. South
- Psychology Colloquium, 12 noon, HUB Dining Room A
- Riding Club, 7 p.m., 203 Willard
- School Board Institute, 6 p.m., HUB ballroom
- TIM Movies, 12:30 p.m., HUB assembly hall
- Women's Chorus, 6:30 p.m., HUB assembly hall

WDFM Schedule

WEDNESDAY

- 3:25 Financial Tidbits
- 3:30 Stock Market Reports
- 4:00 Critic's Choice
- 5:00 Music at Five
- 6:00 Studio X
- 6:55 Weatherscope
- 7:00 CAMPUS BEAT
- Seven O'Clock Report
- Album Review
- News, world
- Jazz panorama
- Forum of the air
- Comedy
- Sports
- Obelisk
- Compus news, sports, weather
- 10:00 Virtuoso
- 12:00 Sign Off

