

Editorial Opinion

University Status

There is jarring dissonance among authorities concerning the legal status of what we know as The Pennsylvania State University.

The argument does not lie in semantics, but in attitudes and commitments.

If legal precedent is to be accepted as a foundation for orderly government operation, Penn State is clearly the University of the Commonwealth. Current opinion or convenience aside, a legal precedent to this effect was set in 1921.

There exists on the part of state officials, a reluctance to grant the validity of this status. By admitting that Penn State is an organ of the state, the Commonwealth would be forced to commit itself to the maintenance of the University. Such commitment is held as unsavory by the state. By keeping our status hazy, state officials can manipulate Penn State's climate in accordance with their own convenience and ambitions.

This almost incoherent debate could go on ad nauseam.

The act of Feb. 22, 1855, P.L. 46, incorporated the "Farmers' High School of Pennsylvania." The name of the institution has undergone three changes since that time. However, because of these changes government officials apparently do not interpret this as creation of a state university by act of the legislature.

This then is what we call for—a specific act passed by the General Assembly designating Penn State as the state university.

Penn State officials then would have an uncluttered view of the channels from which they are to seek financial aid. The state would be forced to stop playing political ping-pong with our officials and our budget in favor of responsible support.

Inherent in this legal status would be a Board of Trustees which would in fact, as well as name, be responsible to the people of the Commonwealth.

This is also established in the legal precedent set in 1921 by then deputy attorney George Ross Hull, who wrote "... although the Trustees of Pennsylvania State College are a separate and distinct corporate body, they have received and now hold their property as trustees for the People of the Commonwealth."

The current Board of Trustees is only in small part responsible to the people, and even that part is vague. Of the 32 members on the board, five sit ex-officio. Four of these five represent the state government. In addition, six members are appointed by the Governor.

The rest of the board is composed of nine elected representatives of the Alumni Association and 12 elected representatives from the state's agricultural and engineering societies.

Thus the only members to represent the state (the people) are the appointees and ex-officio members.

In addition and inconsistent with a public function, the meetings of the Board of Trustees are closed to the public and the press.

To make the functioning of the University a part of the state and to make its Trustees responsible directly to the people of the state, we urge a change in the composition of the board and the opening of the meetings.

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Letters to the Editor  
Grad Student Criticizes CD Efforts

TO THE EDITOR: Morality, according to the Winston Dictionary, refers to the teaching or practice of the duties of life; virtue, righteousness. It has to do with a sense of right and wrong; with justice. Reason, logic, and probability also bear upon the subject. Morality has to do with theories, principles and practices of virtue.

Roget's Thesaurus also brings into the picture incorruptibility, honesty, scrupulousness, conscientiousness.

What has this to do with Penn State University and the recent efforts to make us Civil Defense minded?

There has been a continuous effort in the past months to channel University thinking into accepting a Big Lie, namely the efficacy and validity of CD generally, and of fallout shelters in particular.

Civil Defense as a principle is basically immoral if you apply the criteria from the dictionary and the thesaurus.

From the moral viewpoint, which is considered to be on a more universal than personal level, CD and fallout shelters in particular are not concerned with righteousness, nor with justice, nor with a sense of right or wrong, nor with the teaching and practice of the duties of life and virtue.

There is a distinct sense

(where there is no obvious self-righteous gullibility), of corruptibility, commercialism, and having to do with the self-aggrandizement of little minds. There is dishonesty in promoting as fragile and inadequate device as are currently designed fallout shelters. There is a cruel deception which makes the whole racket reek.

In truth the purpose of CD and fallout shelters is basically a scheme to make our foreign policy appear stable. Somehow we have lost faith in our ability to win the respect and assurance of our sincerity in our diplomatic relations, so we fall back on the treats of military might and show of civilian backing through such calculated measures as huge military spending and CD programs. Where is the virtue here?

These actions by us, however, are accepted as threats by other peoples. Aren't such measures as fallout shelters and CD further proof of our war-mindedness, our willingness and expectancy — almost eagerness, to take part in a nuclear war? There is a deep fallacy as well as immorality in the concept that bigger and stronger arms will deter so-called enemies.

Where is the morality—the righteousness, the virtue, in creating and arousing negative

emotions: fear, greed, suspicion, jealousy? Yet that is precisely the foundation for acceptance and action in CD and fallout shelters. These all undermine good logic, sound reasoning, and virtue. And do not students of psychology declare that fearing often brings on the feared, actually promoting it?

We, as educated individuals, should not be tricked into illusionary panaceas characterized by CD and fallout shelters, nor accept the monetary adolescent kick of following a current fad, but face up to the fact that nuclear warfare is a matter of life and death and not to be confused with the semantically contrived "war-game" psychology of those currently in power.

A positive answer to this problem lies in promoting within the University the moral values upon which important judgements can be made with some assurance of long-range hope.

We need greater understanding of, and honesty in, the economics and politics which lie behind our national policies.

We need morality when actively seeking out ways and means of contributing to human welfare the world over.

—Elizabeth R. S. Richards  
Graduate student

Letter cut

Freshman Asks 'What Can We Do?'

TO THE EDITOR: One evening as I entered my dormitory on the way to my room, I came upon a group of boys discussing "world problems" as college boys sometimes do. Evidently they had been talking for some time as comments were diminishing and the atmosphere was filled with frustration.

Then, one boy shrugged his shoulders and said, "Hell, what can we do?" At this, he arose, and there followed a general dispersal of the group.

"What can we do," I thought to myself, and realized that here was half the problem. My friend wasn't really asking a question, but expressing his resignation in the shadow of overwhelming conflicts.

Author John Steinbeck wrote in "Grapes of Wrath": "Hell, you ain't never gonna know. Casey tries to tell ya an' you jest ast the same thing over. I seen fellas like you before. You ain't askin' nothing; you're just singin' a kinda song. 'What are we comin' to?' You don't wanta know. Country's movin' aroun', goin' places. They's folks dyin' all aroun'. Maybe you'll die pretty soon but you won't know nothin'. I seen too many fellas like you. You don't want to know nothin'. Just sing yourself to sleep with a song—'What are we comin' to?'"

What are the other songs of today? "More aid!—No taxes!; Fight communism—whatever that is; Hold South Viet Nam!—No American blood!; All

men are created equal—except . . ."

Actually most of the world's ills are not overwhelming. It is just that their solutions are not easy. The overwhelming issue is getting people to accept the responsibility and actively participate, pooling their efforts to overcome them.

Yet, if you haven't the interest then you will deserve what catastrophes befall you. But remember, these catastrophes don't just come. They are not acts of God. They are made by men. You and I have a part in them. If you and I don't do our share, we give those who are acting that much more of a chance to be effective. And those who are acting are not all acting in our interests (if we have any).

William J. Lederer and Eugene Burdick, authors of "The Ugly American," are aware of this responsibility. "If the only price we are willing to pay is the dollar price, then we might as well pull out before we're thrown out."

"If we are not prepared to pay the human price, we had better retreat to our shores, build Fortress America, learn to live without international trade and communications, and accept the mediocrity, the low standard of living, the loom of world communism which would accompany such a move."

"How can a man be satisfied to entertain an opinion merely, and enjoy it? Is there any enjoyment in it, if his opinion is that he is aggrieved?" —Henry David Tho-

Myers Critic Hit by Soph

TO THE EDITOR: I would like to take exception to David Johnston, who in the Feb. 10 Daily Collegian, attacked a recent Joel Myers editorial. Johnston attacked Myers because he felt some of Myers' statements could not be substantiated.

One such statement Mr. Johnston pointed out was Myers' prediction that the Democrats would win resounding victory in the fall.

To satisfy Mr. Johnston, Myers could have gone on and listed several of the important Democratic victories last year including:

The hotly contested House seat won by a liberal Democrat

in Texas where conservative strength is supposed to be so high, the third term victory achieved by Mayor Wagner in New York, and Judge Hughes' victory over his more noted opponent, former Labor Secretary Mitchell, in New Jersey.

These three important elections Mr. Johnston obviously skimmed over without giving their portents much consideration.

As for his inferring that a resounding Democratic victory in November would lead this nation straight down the road towards communism, Mr. Johnston would do us all a favor if he would substantiate his statement in this connection.

—Richard W. Wohlson, '64

