

Sense and Nonsense

University President Eric A. Walker injected sense into yesterday's state House of Representatives Higher Education Committee hearings on the state's Master Plan for higher education; his testimony proved large parts of the plan to be nonsense.

Sense: Walker pointed out that by 1970, according to a Pennsylvania Association of Colleges and Universities study, college and university faculty in the state will fall short of the number of applicants by 70,000.

Nonsense: The plan's provision calling for the merger of commonwealth campuses into community colleges. Or, as Walker put it, "Certainly these (70,000) places can't be found by turning branch campuses into community colleges."

Sense: Walker's proof that students transferring to the main campus from commonwealth campuses do as well academically and "statistically a little better" than their classmates who spend four years on the main campus.

Nonsense: The failure of the master plan's designers to scrutinize the quality of the Commonwealth Campuses, and the concomitant assumption of the merits of community colleges. Apparently the academic superiority of the commonwealth campuses was inconceivable to the planmakers, who therefore assumed its converse.

Sense: Walker's blanket comment on the plan: "In some cases we are happy about what it says and in some cases we are unhappy about what it doesn't say."

Nonsense: The plan's errors of omission Walker referred to under this statement, including failure to study graduate education, and failure to fully appraise future state manpower needs.

Walker pointed out a month and a half ago the difficulties that conversion of commonwealth campuses to independent community colleges would raise for the University.

Future plans call for devoting the University Park campus entirely to upperclass and graduate education. The master plan's obvious monkey wrench in this was stated by Walker in September: "It would be extremely difficult for us to put together a junior class from the product of liberal arts colleges or community colleges. Many of our degrees require a sequence of carefully planned courses which must be taken over a period of three and sometimes four years."

The prospect of a tangle of transfer credits, gaps in requirements (due to differing community college offerings) needing extra terms to make up, and inappropriate courses are enough to give any Uni-

versity administrator a potentially fatal case of the shudders.

If the education is just as good, why sacrifice its efficient administration? Why not, rather than uprooting standing institutions, build on and around them? Why not, to be cryptic, throw out this master plan and design a new one that is broader and more realistic? And why not let professional educators do it this time?

Column Policy

Since the beginning of the term, many "student leaders" have asked the editor of The Daily Collegian if they could write columns for this newspaper. Some request regular (weekly) space for comments, others want space just when they are momentarily inspired.

This is by no means a new request. Every Collegian editor has been asked this; some have given in. So we would like to make clear our policy. Space for editorial comment is given on a regular basis to members of the Board of Editors. Occasionally we solicit faculty comment on a particular issue, and we sometimes accept faculty contributions in the way of columns, again on a pertinent and current issue with which the faculty member is connected in some way.

Beyond this, individual pieces of commentary are used only in the form of feature articles by Collegian writers and Associated Press analysis, and these are at the discretion of the editor. We also welcome letters to the editor.

The Collegian will not grant regular (or irregular) column space for representatives of any group. As far as Undergraduate Student Government is concerned (we've had requests from USG officers, class presidents and others in USG) Awareness is designed to be the medium of opinion. If this is not used, there are many other media (including a weekly radio program). And Collegian reporters are available to talk with USG personnel and get their opinions.

Most other groups which have approached us also have periodic newsletters through which they can express their opinions. The argument goes that the audience is much smaller this way, but, here again, opinions can be made clear through Collegian coverage of group meetings, interviews with reporters and succinct letters to the editor.

Why this policy? Let it merely be said that this paper is committed to no group or special interest. We would have to make space available to every group from every corner of the campus. And we feel that your opinions are adequately covered through the communications channels now open.



"And I'm FOR Pat Brown, because he DOESN'T have sex appeal!"



USG and Me: True Confession

In full awareness of the mortification it will bring me, I have decided (the people's right to know, and all that jazz) to publish this startling confession.

I was a USG Congressman. My election last spring was one of the most resounding victories in the history of the Congress. I swept the town area, polling an unheard-of 864 votes more than anyone running against me.

I was, incidentally, unopposed. My first meeting, as a congressman-elect with no voice in the proceedings, was an atypical session.

It was a special meeting, called to provide swift rebuttal to the apartment visitation innuities promulgated by the Dean of Men's office. The bill we passed was called the Visitation Ruling Disapproval Act. It said, among other things, that "once a student lives in an off-campus apartment he is subject only to civil law." Great stuff.

The only other bill on the agenda was another good one called the Human Relations Act. It set up a committee to investigate problems of discrimination, problems with which, believe it or not, this campus is rife.

I was, to say the least, turned on. All those shibboleths about USG's impotence were obvious lies. Why, this was the kind of thing the student government should be doing.

So it was not without enthusiasm that I took the oath of office at the next meeting. It was a tense gathering indeed. The administration's bill on apartments was before us.

We took a brave stance, striking out all the patent silliness. The "two couples or two coeds" provision went first. Then those dumb hours for visiting. At last, in a dramatic crescendo, we voted out the party registration plank. But the tumult and the shouting died, and that same night, I found out what USG was really all about.

We spent an hour or so in fierce debate over the Class Gift Fund, and wound up voting a wad of money out of our coffers, over the treasurer's objections.

Then we passed a measure "to distribute USG awards to deserving undergraduates." As I understood it, there were lots of certificates lying around that had to be got rid of.

Then we debated some bill or other to change the by-laws (we were always debating some change in the by-laws). Another bill to set up a Campus Tour Guide was withdrawn.

I left in a daze. It had all taken several hours, but at least in the first half-hour or so we got some glory. Or so I thought.

As it turned out, the administration's disdain for our proceedings was almost total. They laid down the parental permission dictum soon thereafter, with no reference to anything we had said or done.

In the next meeting we talked interminably about Student Health Insurance, took a self-congratulatory report from the Elections Commission, argued a revision in the by-laws and a Reorganization of Class Duties Act, and set up a committee to investigate something or other. The HUB committee chairman, calling her organization (rightly enough) apolitical, introduced a resolution to get the HUB committees off our allegedly political congress.

At the next meeting I was co-sponsor of my first and only bill. Its wording was lousy, its implementation was clumsy. But at heart (if you will pardon my immodesty) I thought it was in the right spirit. It proposed that we declare all administration rulings on apartment visitation null and void, and make USG the sole governing agency in this area. It was, in short, a play to take a little power, since after all we were calling ourselves a government.

The bill was "postponed indefinitely" (read: "killed") after some debate. In retrospect, I think this might have been the proper fate of such an illiterate proposal—but the objections weren't over its construction. They were over the shocking idea that we should declare the administration null and void, that we should attempt to represent and govern, that we should attempt to be relevant.

After that, I just yawned, while we talked about the by-laws again, and the HUB committees, and something or other (voted down) about Commission System Reform. Then a sort of abstract-impressionist "Student Season Ticket Reprisal Act" was discussed.

We declared ourselves against the eight-dollar season ticket. Our resolution might have done something—at least we are now permitted to pay blood money for one football game at a time.

We closed out the Spring term by voting to "unify the freshman class" and volunteering to go out and say nice things about Penn State.

My yawn turned into slumber as my term of office ended this Fall. We voted to keep the HUB committees, and to change our elections system.

Now that it is all ended, I can assure all of you, my former constituents, that despite my growing cynicism, I remain Simon-pure, my honor unscathed by my tenure in "politics."

Why? Because power corrupts, and infinitesimal power corrupts infinitesimally.

Letters to the Editor

Financing Plan

TO THE EDITOR: Two recent changes in University financing have come to my attention by way of your excellent newspaper; these are as follows:

1. The sale of student tickets for football games.
2. The sale of drugs to students at the Rittenour Health Center.

Now, I am not an expert in university finance; but I am that (an expert) in the role of student finance, which role I have played for many years. I have a suggestion: that we, as students, urge the integration of the two changes by having all income from change No. 1 allotted to a student drug fund, thus eliminating change No. 2.

W. M. L., PSU '64
(Author's name withheld at his request.)

'Administration Followers'

TO THE EDITOR: Rich Kalich and David Karr have tried to explain the poor voter turnout in the past elections as caused by weak campaigns, uncontested congressional seats, and lack of publicity and student awareness about the elections. As usual, they have managed to overlook the true reason. They have failed to realize that there is a large and constantly growing student awareness — an awareness that USG is useless as an effective form of student government.

USG cannot by itself make any important decisions concerning the student body. It must beg what power it has from the Administration and, because of this, it must pander to the Administration's desires while ignoring the students' needs. In the past, USG congressmen have proved themselves to be "Administration followers" rather than "student leaders."

I think that Ministers Kalich and Karr should be ecstatic over a 1 per cent turnout. The Administration has taken away our right of self-government by bending USG to its own ends. At this time a vote for USG is merely a vote for the Administration. I think most students realize this and want nothing to do with USG. This attitude will continue until a truly autonomous and democratic form of student government is reached.

Steven Pincus, '68

LETTER POLICY

The Daily Collegian accepts letters to the editor regarding Collegian news coverage or editorial policy and campus or non-campus affairs. Letters must be typewritten, no more than two pages in length, and should be brought to the office of The Daily Collegian in person so that identification of the writer can be checked. If letters are received by mail, The Collegian will contact the signer for verification. The Daily Collegian reserves the right to select which letters will be published and to edit letters for style and content.

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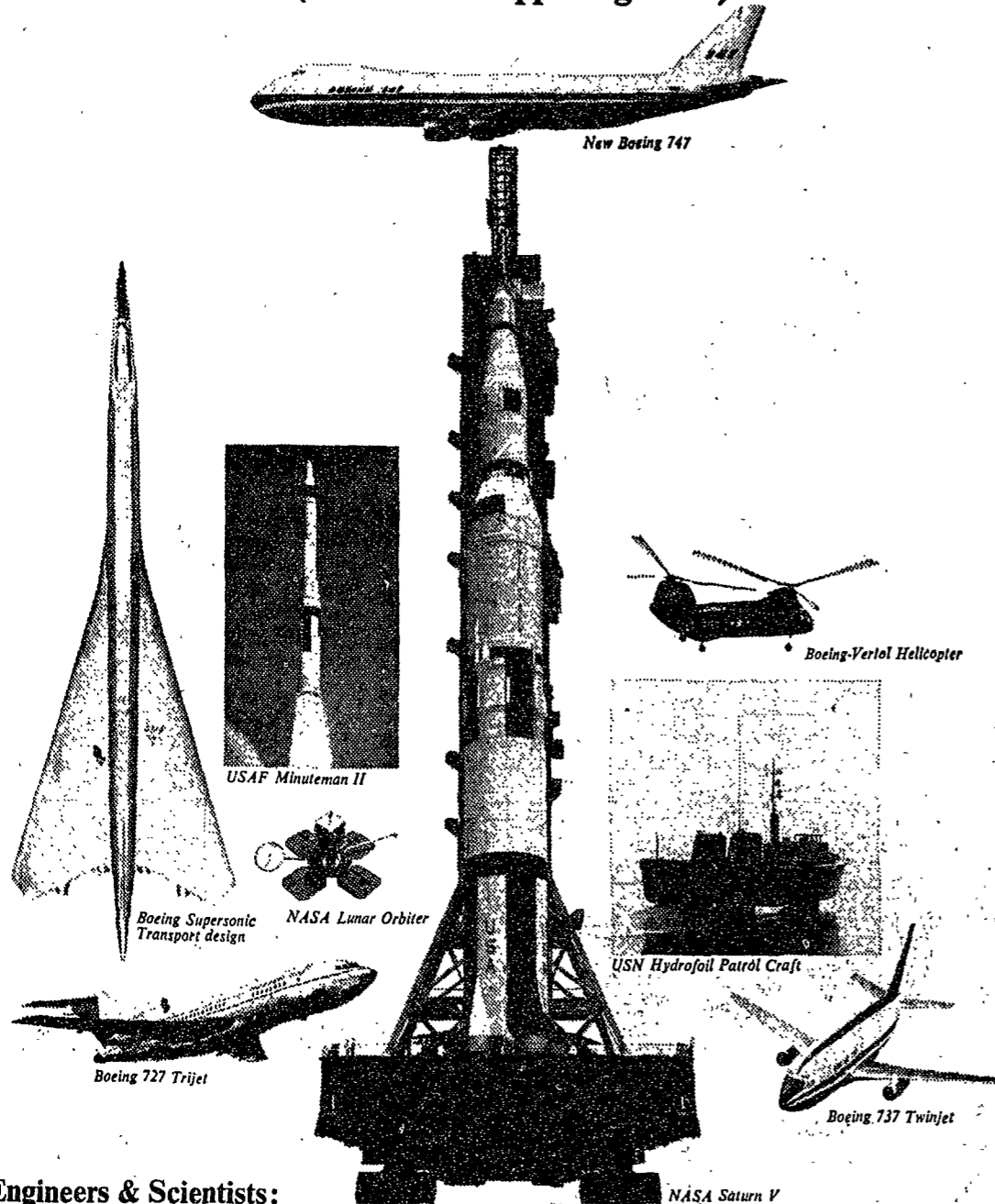
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Fifty years ago we only made 'aeroplanes'. (See what's happening now!)



Engineers & Scientists:

Campus Interviews, Thursday and Friday, November 3 and 4

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