

# Railroaded out

Joe the Engineer readily admitted liking trains better than people. That admission has caused Joe a lot of grief.

When Joe was a Penn State student, he became notorious for trying to organize the scandalous Toy Train Club. The purpose of the club was simply to inform interested people all about toy trains.

The administration fought the formation of the club because the Penn Central Railroad had recently gone bankrupt, giving trains a bad image. The administration did not want Penn State associated in any way with trains because it feared appropriations might be cut if it were.

Because of this fear, the Toy Train Club was chartered only after many hassles with the administration. But by the time Joe graduated, the club was thriving.

Joe thought everything was going fine when he landed a teaching job in a Maryland junior high school.

But everything wasn't fine. Back at Penn State, six deans could not decide whether or not he should be granted his teacher's certification. In Pennsylvania a person must be of good moral character to be certified as a teacher, and the deans were not sure Joe had good moral character, since he did admit to liking trains better than people.

The deans decided to cop out on the issue and ask the state Department of Education if a man who liked trains better than people should be certified.

Joe had been teaching for three weeks when the Department of Education announced that a man who likes trains better than people has a good enough moral character to teach in Pennsylvania. The Washington Post and The New York Times considered that decision so amazing that they printed stories telling of Joe's battle for certification and for the formation of the Toy Train Club.

Because of the stories, the Maryland school board got wind of the fact that Joe liked trains better than people. Even though Joe had never mentioned the controversial subject of trains in his class and never intended to, the school board removed him from his teaching post and stashed him away in an administrative position. The school board claimed it did this because he had lied to them by not mentioning on his job application that he was president of the Penn State Toy Train Club.

With the financial support of the National Toy Train Association (NTTA), Joe filed suit against the school district in an effort to regain his teaching position.

Before the trial Joe explained his work for the hobby of toy train collecting on radio and

television. The court ruled that Joe could not be removed from his teaching position for liking trains better than people. But it did say his appearances on television and radio had made him a public figure who would be a disruptive influence in the classroom, so the school board did not have to give him back his teaching position.

The school board decided not to give poor Joe any position for the next school year. Since Joe could not support himself on Toy Train demonstrations and since he had always wanted to teach, he filed an appeal with the continued support of NTTA.

Although the judge reversed the lower court's decision saying the first amendment gave Joe the right to talk about his toy train beliefs on television and radio, he ruled that the school board could remove Joe from his teaching position because he had lied to them.

Again with the support of the NTTA Joe appealed his case to the Supreme Court. The court refused to hear Joe's case along with 800 others, claiming it was too overloaded with work to hear cases about toy trains.

Joe said of the non-decision: "The company of 800 other cases is no consolation. I feel as if they have run over me with a train."

Is it any wonder that Joe likes trains better than people?



# Letters to the Editor

## A chance for USG

TO THE EDITOR: The USG Senate has not been an effective body for a long time, but that has started to change—and change drastically. For anyone who cared to read, or could find the article to read about Monday night's Senate meeting in The Daily Collegian, he would have noticed the Senate formed five committees which are open to the public. These committees deal with a student lawyer, a complete review of the discipline system, constitutional reform of USG, the development of a reasonable audit strategy, and most importantly to set up necessary physical facilities for the handicapped on campus. These committees aren't just paper committees; they have already started work on all of these projects—vital projects. USG cannot work alone; we must have student involvement and feedback into everything we do. Get involved!

USG has been criticized because it has spent most of its time on impeachment and done nothing else. This is an unrealistic point of view. Impeachment is an unprecedented situation with drastic ramifications. The insurance case was thrown in our laps the minute the Senate came back this term. We didn't make it up out of thin air. Something had to be done to get the facts about the case out immediately. The students were without insurance and USG was being held responsible. USG could not function with the clouds of suspicion hanging over our proceedings. We are at least now able to function in the area we are elected for — student benefit!

We realize that the next two months are a do-or-die situation for the USG Senate. We also believe that if we don't perform now, we never will, but we need the chance to show that we can come up with beneficial programs for the student body.

We believe we deserve this chance, and if this last meeting and the enthusiasm that came out of it is any indication of where the Senate is going, and it is, then we believe this chance is justified.

Rich Glazier  
Harris Abrams  
USG Senators

## Cyclists' plot uncovered

TO THE EDITOR: Life is really getting rough in the PSIA. Another of our covert operations has been uncovered. We thought our idea to eliminate all the PSU pedestrians by running over them with bicycles was ingenious, but now the game is up. There was a lot of planning put into it. At first, I thought it would be difficult to accomplish, but our targets simplified matters greatly. We couldn't figure out how to get the pedestrians into a vulnerable position, but they came through for us. A secret study showed that the walkers often crossed the street without looking both ways (as per their Mommy's instructions). Many walk in a complete daze, totally unaware that the world exists. Our study also showed that some walkers looked, saw a bicycle coming and crossed anyway. All this, together with the fact that many fail to use the crosswalks (as per common sense), made it easy for our cycling assassins, who must have had poor aim (for all the close calls, few collisions occurred).

But it is all over now, for the pedestrians have begun to fight back. They even have a hero they have begun to rally around,

am, of course, referring to the John Wayne of the Campus Security, Officer 104, who without regard for the cyclist's personal safety and the courage and with the daring of Clint Eastwood, attacked a dangerously insane, potential assassin, who failed to plant his foot on the ground upon reaching an empty intersection. Without heroes like Officer 104, how would Ritenour stay in business? Officer 104, I hope you are proud of yourself. Along with an expensive bicycle and an ankle, you have broken our operation.

Robert Mattes  
Special Agent Orphan  
Penn State Intelligence Agency

# the Collegian

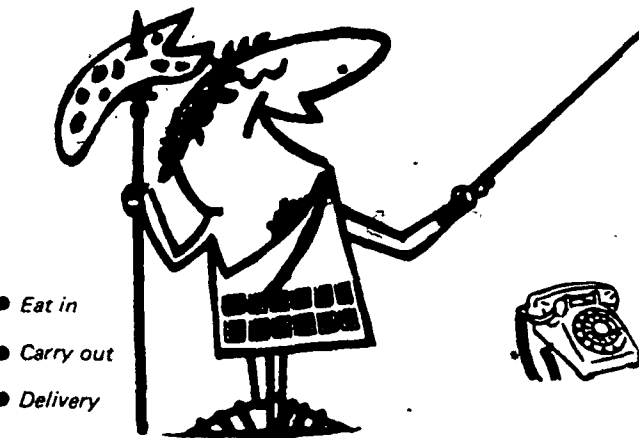
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LITTLE CAESAR

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