

Pass-fail option may end

By LEON J. POLLOM
Collegian Staff Writer

The pass-fail option and late drop period soon will be eliminated if a proposal going before the Faculty Senate this month is approved.

The Senate Pass-Fail Committee is recommending the two options be replaced by the Academic Redemption Option.

With the new option, all courses could be taken for a letter grade but a student also could petition to have up to 18 credits of course grades removed from his grade point average. All grades received would remain on the student's transcript.

The proposal would permit the grade of any course to be eliminated from the grade point computation, but such courses would not count toward graduation.

In addition, a student dropped by

the University because of grade deficiency points could use the option to increase his grade average.

The option would be available to all currently enrolled students and could be used at any time before the student graduates.

Candidates for associate degrees would be permitted to apply the option to a maximum of nine credits of previously scheduled courses. Adjunct students would be limited to six credits.

The proposal recommends that students who have already used pass-fail be limited in their use of the new option if it is implemented.

For instance, a student who has used nine credits of pass-fail would be permitted to use only nine credits of the Academic Redemption Option.

The committee's report stated that the new option is needed because the

pass-fail system has created more problems than it has solved.

"Certain professional schools, graduate schools and prospective employers are reported to take a dim view of 'pass' grades when evaluating applications for admission or employment," the report said.

The report also cites complaints by faculty that students do only enough work to get by with a "D" or "pass" grade.

The Committee concluded that pass-fail and late drop actions "are interrelated methods by which students attempt to reduce pressure for grades and make up for less than maximum performance."

The Committee said the new system will tighten academic standards and reduce grade pressure at the same time.

The report said the standards would

increase because every student in a class would have to work and be graded on the same basis. Students would feel less grade pressure because they could eliminate a grade if it was unsatisfactory, the report stated.

The committee said they think it will eliminate the problem of students begging for an "F" rather than a "D" since students could file for redemption regardless of the grade received.

"It will also end student attempts, now quite common, to reverse the Pass-Fail decision after discovering the pre-converted grade was higher than expected," the report said.

It added that the new option would permit a good student who has had a bad experience in one or more courses to eliminate those courses from grade calculations and give a cumulative average that reflects his actual abilities.

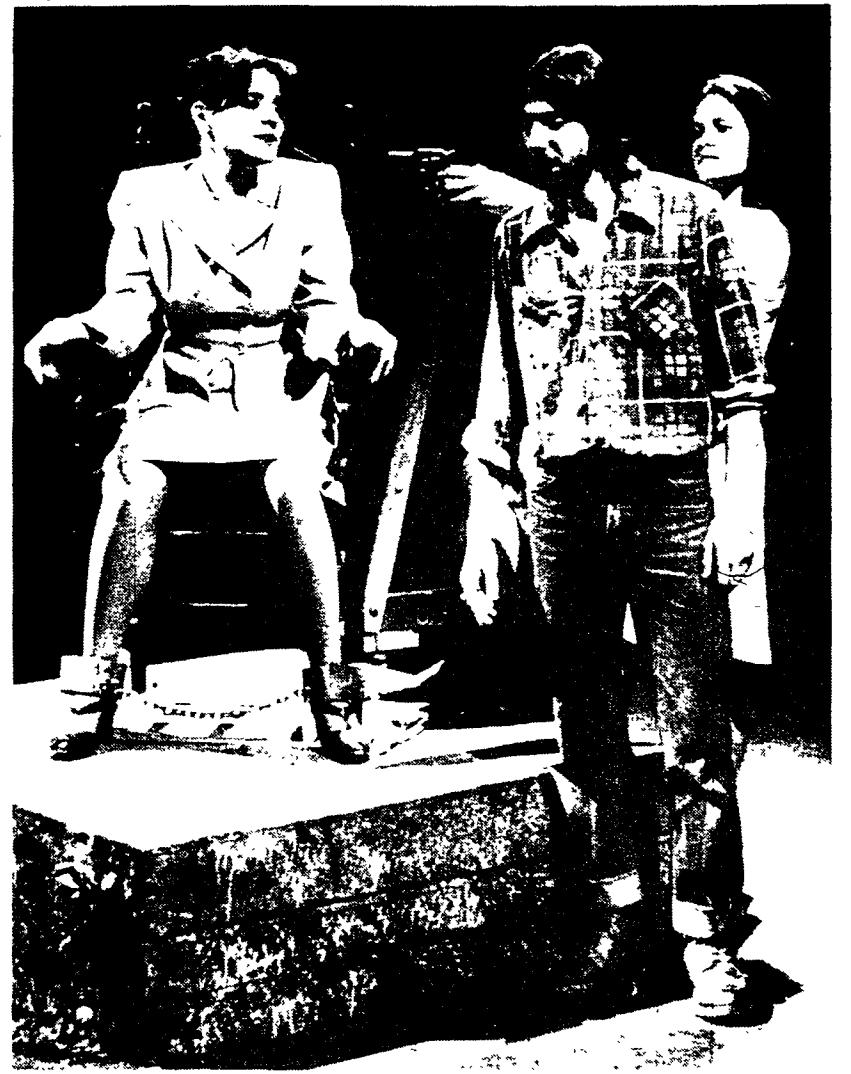


Photo by Ira Joffe

Prisoner KATHY McGRATH (11th-theatre) is held captive at gunpoint by Bill Wertz (9th-theatre) and Regina Murphy (6th-theatre) in "The Girl"—the final Five O'clock Theatre production. It will be presented 5:20 p.m. Wednesday and Thursday and 7:20 p.m. Friday in the Pavilion Theatre. Admission is free.

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Cambodia takes U.S. ship

WASHINGTON (UPI)—An unarmed American merchant vessel reported yesterday it had been seized under fire by a Cambodian naval vessel. President Ford termed it "an act of piracy" and warned of "serious consequences" unless the ship is promptly released.

Announcement of the incident came from White House Press Secretary Ron Nessen, who said the container ship Mayaguez had been fired on, seized on the high seas and taken into the Cambodian port of Kompong Som along with its American crew.

There were immediate demands from some members of Congress that the administration take quick action to assure release of the ship and crew. A State Department spokesman said "we are taking immediate steps" along that line, but declined to elaborate.

Nessen told reporters at the White House that Ford "considers this seizure an act of piracy." He said the President held an emergency 45-minute meeting with the National Security Council, and warned that failure of the Cambodians to immediately release the vessel "will have the most serious consequences."

Like the State Department spokesman, Nessen declined to spell out what alternatives the President had in seeking return of the ship, owned by Sea-Land Inc. of Menlo Park, N.J.

Later, Nessen said there had been no contact, directly or indirectly, with the Khmer Rouge government which took control in Cambodia after the American-backed regime fell.

Asked if the freighter might have carried intelligence equipment for a spy mission, Nessen said: "The answer is a flat no."

He said "as far as we know" there were no injuries to the captain of the ship or its 39-man crew. He said the vessel sent a "mayday" international distress signal before its radio went silent.

Nessen also disclosed that the Cambodians had seized a Panamanian ship on the high seas several days ago and released it. The White House said it had information that this vessel was headed toward Bangkok.

Nessen said the seizure occurred in the Gulf of Thailand, 60 miles from the Cambodian coast and 8 miles off a small rock island claimed by Cambodia and Vietnam. The ship was en route from Hong Kong to Thailand.

Jack Mayor, vice president of Sea-Land in Washington, said the ship carried 40 Americans. He described it as a C2 class cargo ship of about 10,000 tons loaded with "just general cargo anything from soup to nuts."

Mayor said, "We have some military cargo but it's not classified stuff of any kind."

Asked to describe the situation, Nessen said, "I'm not going to characterize it as grave or serious but I would call your attention to the original statement" by the President.

He described the Cambodian vessel as a "gunboat" but offered no further description.

Nessen said Ford was not briefing congressional leaders specifically on the incident but had disclosed some details to Senate Republican and Democratic leaders Hugh Scott and Mike Mansfield, in Montana during telephone calls concerning legislative affairs.

Sen. James L. Buckley, R-N.Y., urged Ford to "order immediate punitive air and naval attacks on appropriate targets in Cambodia," saying "in no other way can we underscore the fact that we will no longer tolerate acts of international banditry."

Sen. John Sparkman, D-La., chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, said the United States should get the vessel back "any way we can"—that "if a person shoots at you, you've got a right to shoot back."

Sen. James B. Allen, D-Ala., called the seizure "an outrage which we can't let go unchallenged."

The senators were joined by retired Navy Cmdr Lloyd Bucher, whose spy ship Pueblo was seized by the North Koreans in 1968. "Our reaction has to be positive and swift," he said.

Sen. Jacob K. Javits, R-N.Y., counseled patience but did not rule out the eventual need for force.

Pentagon officials declined to say what if any alternative actions they were considering, although spokesmen indicated the primary effort would be aimed at release of the crew.

The Pentagon declined to say whether any U.S. Navy ships were in the Gulf of Thailand. The U.S. 7th Fleet, considerably above normal strength because of the evacuation from South

Vietnam, is in the Pacific but its location was not disclosed.

At the State Department, spokesman Robert L. Funseth said: "We are taking immediate steps to obtain prompt release of the ship. We do not believe it would be helpful at this time to discuss what we will do."

The vessel, registered in Wilmington, Del., was en route from Hong Kong to Sattahip, Thailand, when seized, Mayor said.

Sea-Land Service, one of the world's largest shippers of containerized cargo, said at its Menlo Park headquarters the ship is used to haul materials, between Far Eastern ports but does not sail from the United States.

The Mayaguez is known in the shipping industry as a feeder vessel that moves between smaller ports and transfers cargo to larger oceangoing ships that carry 1,000 containers.

The 480-foot Mayaguez has been in service with Sea-Land since 1944. The company says it has a capacity to carry 266 containers at a speed of 15 knots.

Nessen said the seizure occurred near nine degrees, 48 minutes north latitude, 102 degrees, 53 minutes east longitude.

The seizure evoked memories of both

the capture of the American intelligence ship USS Pueblo in 1968 and the international incident in the Gulf of Tonkin in 1964 when North Vietnamese patrol boats reportedly fired on two U.S. Navy destroyers, the USS Maddox and the USS Turner Joy.

The Gulf of Tonkin incident prompted President Lyndon B. Johnson to order the bombing of oil storage facilities in Haiphong, an act which sharply escalated U.S. military involvement in Vietnam.

The Pueblo and its 83 crewmembers were seized by North Korea Jan. 23, 1968, an act which Secretary of State Dean Rusk described as "in the category of actions to be construed as an act of war."

Johnson reacted to the Pueblo capture by ordering a call up of 14,787 Air Force and Navy Reserves to active duty and bolstered naval and air strength around Korea.

The United States claimed Pueblo was inside 12-mile territorial limit when seized by North Korean patrol vessels.

Cmdr Lloyd M. Bucher, captain of the Pueblo, and 81 surviving crewmembers were released by North Koreans Dec. 22, 1968.

'Ball lightning' hits area, rarely seen phenomenon

An unusual weather phenomenon, which had previously been witnessed by only a few meteorologists, was visible in the State College area at 11:45 last night.

According to student meteorologist Roy Gallant, "a yellow flash of lightning rolled down the valley from the northeast, changed to green and then split up into separate bolts." Gallant said the lightning, which lasted for 20 seconds, is known as ball lightning and is rarely seen.

"It is unexplained," Gallant said. "But there were five of us who saw it. We didn't know what it was. My roommate thought it was the Rapture and I thought I was having a heart attack."

Gallant and his colleagues—Bill Bua,

Mark Levisay, Dave Decker and Bill Hudak—watched the lightning from the Meteorology Observatory.

"We had a good vantage point from here," Gallant said. "We just watched as the green balls floated down the valley."

The lightning caused a power drop in the area. A number of lights on campus dimmed and flickered.

Panel finishes energy tax bill

WASHINGTON (UPI)—The House Ways and Means Committee yesterday completed an energy tax bill the chairman called a better program than President Ford's.

By a vote of 19 to 16, after an angry four-hour session, the committee approved a bill which would:

- Raise federal gasoline taxes by three cents next Jan. 1 and up to 20 cents a year later if consumption continues to rise.
- Tax business use of scarce fuels.
- Tax autos with poor mileage.
- Reward home-owners for making their homes more energy-efficient.
- Limit imports of oil and petroleum products.

The committee closed off any attempt, either in committee or later in the House, to add to the bill a clause providing for removal of price controls on oil and natural gas combined with a tax on the "windfall profits" which would result.

Committee Chairman Al Ullman said he hoped to bring the bill before the House for debate and a vote next week before Congress leaves for its Memorial Day recess.

"This has been a long, tough ordeal," Ullman said. "I don't think there is a tougher question to be resolved before this Congress. This is an invisible crisis and that is why it is so difficult to legislate. This bill is not all that all of us wanted, but when you compare it on an honest basis, this is going to be a better program by far than that offered by the administration."

At the end of the final session of wrangling, all the Republicans voted to oppose the bill and they were joined by

Democratic Reps. Phil M. Landrum of Georgia, Joseph E. Karth of Minnesota, Otis G. Pike of New Jersey and Henry Helstoski of New Jersey.

During the long session the committee first rejected, then approved, a move to delete a section that would have allowed the President to set up a federal purchase system for oil imports. That could have led to competitive bidding by foreign countries for the American oil market.

Also rejected were moves to delete the oil import quotas section and a section giving tax credits for certain large scale recycling of materials.

Republicans pushed for a provision lifting price controls from natural gas, and oil while limiting the "windfall profits" that could accrue to the gas and oil companies. But the committee voted to seek a House debate rule which would preclude adding the section.

Reps. J. J. "Jake" Pickle, D-Tex., and Barber B. Conable, R-N.Y., clashed over Pickle's proposal to give Congress veto power over the second round of gasoline taxes in the bill's two-phase system.

Conable called the proposal "a pretty shabby political game."

He said Pickle was "going to set it up that the President has to report on whether there has been an increase on gasoline consumption, and then let Congress save the day."

The committee rejected Pickle's proposal.

Rep. John J. Duncan said, "It's a bad bill and it won't work."

But Ullman said, "This is a bill that can very well be the first step toward turning to a new energy policy in this country."

Protest

2nd rally to combat tuition increases

By MARIE PEACHER
Collegian Staff Writer

A second rally organized by the University to protest increasing tuition will be held 7 p.m. today on Old Main lawn.

A similar rally held Thursday attracted almost 1,000 students and faculty members.

Another march around campus also is planned, scheduled to leave Old Main at 12:30. Nearly 100 persons participated in last week's march, chanting "Fight the hike—join us."

John Harris, one of the organizers of the second rally, said the rally was "misrepresented" in last week's issue of the Daily Collegian. Harris said the group does not plan to push for a strike but are willing to discuss it.

Bill Dutton (9th-food service and housing administration) said there probably would not be a strike unless students worked with the faculty and University workers. Cliff Weingus, president of the Tenants' Union, said the people who attend today's rally will

determine the possibility of a strike.

"If Oswald shows up and stands clearly on the side of the students," Weingus said, "It probably won't happen."

Harris defined a strike as the "physical closing of the University."

The strike would show a "united effort," Harris said, although it probably would not be a sustained effort. He said a one-day strike may be held, depending on crowd reaction.

But, Harris said, the rally is not concerned primarily with a strike but will be a "united effort between students, faculty and workers" to present their demands to University President John W. Oswald, the administration and "any people in the power structure of the state who can affect the issue."

The six demands being presented are:

- to stop the tuition hike,
- an audit and review of the University budget,
- no cutbacks in faculty or academic programs,
- no cutbacks in University employment,
- no PHEAA (Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency) cutbacks and
- proportional and democratic student representation on the Board of Trustees.

Harris said some speakers have been scheduled for today's rally but no definite list is available.

He said Oswald had been contacted twice by letter to speak, adding he also had extended an open invitation to any Faculty Senate member.

Peter Myer, assistant professor of economic planning, also will speak and several PSUPA (Penn State University Professional Association) members, Harris said. Myer spoke at Thursday's rally, telling all students to quit school and go on welfare which would bankrupt the state.

Harris said that since Thursday's rally, "the consciousness and consideration of the (increasing tuition) issue has risen considerably. If for that reason alone, we consider it a total success."

that with one or two rather major exceptions, everything that was done was rather peripheral and connected in one way or another with the legitimate work of the agency.

"The allegation is that the agency was devoting a major part of its time on domestic areas when it was supposed to be operating abroad," Dillon said. "I don't think this was the case."

Dillon said he was surprised by initial reports that the CIA had engaged in illegal activity. Except for more details, he said, "We didn't dig up anything that wasn't there in newspaper reports."

He said in some cases, the original reports were exaggerated. And he said he had "no knowledge" of reports that Lee Harvey Oswald assassinated Kennedy in retaliation for an unsuccessful CIA plot against Castro.

"In fact, we have testimony by certain people it was not the case," he said.

Dillon said when the commission began work in early January, it did not expect to get into the problem of allegations that the CIA plotted the assassination of foreign leaders.

"We were asked to look into this by the White House—the President," he said.

The commission held the last of 18 weekly meetings to hear testimony from CIA and other intelligence area officials.

CIA investigations end

WASHINGTON (UPI)—The vice chairman of the Rockefeller commission said yesterday it was his opinion that with "one or two major exceptions," the CIA never engaged in massive domestic spying.

C Douglas Dillon, talking with reporters as the commission completed its 18-week investigation of the CIA, said the inquiry had uncovered "no major surprises" beyond original published reports last December that the agency was involved in wiretapping and opening of mail from private citizens.

Dillon said the commission thoroughly investigated allegations the CIA was involved in plots to assassinate foreign leaders, and centered on such reports involving Cuban Premier Fidel Castro. He did not divulge the commission's findings.

The former Treasury secretary, second-ranking member of the special presidential commission headed by Vice President Nelson A. Rockefeller, said the commission probably would not shed any new light on the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

"Was there any indication of massive lawbreaking—domestic spying by the CIA?" Dillon was asked.

"Not in my opinion," he replied. "My own personal opinion, which is not necessarily that of the commission, is

The commission will spend the next three weeks writing a final report which will be given to President Ford June 6.

The final two witnesses at the closed sessions were Adm. George B. Anderson, who has been chairman of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board for the last five years, and William J. Cotter, chief postal inspector for the Postal Service.

The Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board, along with the National Security Council, has overall responsibility for the CIA and the White House.

Cotter told reporters after the session that his testimony covered the same area he discussed a month ago before a House subcommittee when he revealed that the CIA had a 20-year program of opening all private mail between the United States and Russia.

Cotter said in his House testimony that he had tried to get the program stopped in 1969 but had been overruled by CIA Director Richard Helms. He said he finally succeeded in bringing the program to a halt in 1973.

Weather

Variably cloudy, cooler, few showers possible. High today 65. Clearing tonight. Low 47. Mostly sunny, pleasant tomorrow. High 70.