

# Letter released by Baker

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** President of the University Board of Trustees Michael Baker, Jr., in a press conference in Old Main yesterday afternoon, released his copy of the letter from student leaders which requests that the Board ask for University President John W. Oswald's resignation.

Doug Ford, the letter's composer, said Tuesday that 32 student leaders had signed the letter, but Baker's copy had only 30 signatures.

The following is a verbatim printing of the letter and signatures:

Dear Member of the Board of Trustees,

It is time that we as responsible members of the University community realize what is happening to Penn State. The citizens of Pennsylvania and our representatives in Harrisburg who once respected Penn State as one of the finest educational institutions in the Commonwealth no longer hold that opinion. There is a reason for this prevailing attitude (sic) and it is because of those reasons (sic) that we write this letter.

There is an overwhelming public image that Penn State is an affluent and wasteful university. This feeling is particularly strong in Harrisburg. In recent trips to Harrisburg, we have found that many legislators believe the University is crying wolf when they ask for more money. This impression does not emanate (sic) from students or faculty, but from the administration. This impression has grown because Harrisburg has seen a tremendous increase in the administrative staff at Penn State, especially in the number of vice presidential positions that have been created. A good example of this is the reaction of the appropriations committees to 26 administrators coming to Harrisburg for four days. Penn State outnumbered the membership of both committees and many legislators questioned not only Penn State's ability to spare 26 administrators but also asked why the University needed more money if they could send 26 administrators to Harrisburg, expenses paid. Harrisburg has also seen a great deal of the physical plant space allocated to the administration, more than is proportionately realistic for the little growth this University has gone through in the past five years. We feel that this is a result of an administrative

style we cannot afford to have at Penn State—where the administration comes first and the rest of the University comes second.

Another problem concerns the lavishness in which the present administration operates. The public does not react favorably to offices that are expensively furnished and expensively decorated. This is a common reaction coming from many parents who have visited Penn State. In addition the number of parties and expensive dinners has increased tremendously in the Oswald administration. Dinners that serve wine, steak, lobster, and expensive desserts do not sit well with people especially in this time of austerity. Two past presidents of this University, Dr. Eisenhower and Dr. Walker saw little need for this kind of activity. They were more concerned with education than public relations.

As students, we have seen this administration in its five year period use threats and intimidation as a way to deal with students. Instead of dealing with students on a cooperative and educational basis, it has been on an authoritarian basis. This is primarily due to the action of Dr. Murphy and Dr. Oswald.

Several incidents have happened to substantiate this statement. Dr. Oswald refused to meet with students several times. At one time Dr. Oswald cancelled a meeting with members of the Undergraduate Student Government because of a piece of legislation criticizing the University discipline system. Dr. Oswald revealed to two members of the USG Senate that his real reason was that he did not want to meet with certain members of USG. Another dramatic example was when Dr. Oswald and Dr. Murphy walked out of a PENNPIRG meeting. This has never happened at any other University that has tried to start a PIRG program even under the same circumstances.

Other things Dr. Oswald has condoned is the use of telescopes and binoculars by Police Services to look in dormitory windows for surveillance purposes. Some other incidents Dr. Oswald has condoned deal with the possible censorship of the Daily Collegian. In relation to this, over a thousand Collegians bought by the University to distribute to those high school students visiting the University to compete for scholarships at Penn State were not distributed due to the

article on Dr. Oswald's walkout of the PENNPIRG meeting.

Another incident demonstrating direct intent to thwart a student organization was the discovery by the leadership of PENNPIRG that a communique had been sent to all Commonwealth Campuses by the administration by personal carrier saying that they are to discourage activity in PENNPIRG but if someone asks them as an administrator about it, there (sic) feelings are neutral. This can be substantiated.

Many issues of concern both to the University community and to the students never would have been dealt with by Dr. Oswald if students had not forced the issue. Some examples are the EOP issue where the Board of Trustees ordered Dr. Oswald to meet with the EOP students. The handicapped problem at Penn State was ignored until USG and a group called ABLED forced the issue. The housing problem at University Park was ignored by the Oswald administration until OTIS and ARHS forced the issue. The administration's solution was to let OTIS and ARHS handle the problem. The administration also ignored the problem concerning the escort and canvassing policies. Because of Dr. Oswald's refusal to help student organizations with these problems, we run into difficulties such as the present ACLU suit against the University over the canvassing issue.

All of these examples, and these are just a few, have caused students as well as faculty to have a lack of confidence in this administration. This problem is not isolated—it is being felt all over the state by parents, alumni, and state officials. This is why we have become greatly concerned over the situation. It is because of those things we have pointed out in this letter that we are asking that Dr. Oswald be asked to resign. We feel this letter is the most responsible action we could take. We do not support such actions as the rally that was held last Thursday.

We have taken the initiative because we recognize that many discontented faculty and administrators fear their jobs (sic). We are concerned however that some action may be taken against us when Dr. Oswald finds out about this letter. This is an honest reaction and is a product of what has happened between students and the administration. None the less (sic), we fear for the welfare of the University more than we fear for ourselves and our organizations, and we do so because we all feel a great loyalty and responsibility to her.

We hope you will seriously consider our recommendation. Thank you

Sincerely (sic),

Al Leard, president pro tempore, USG (Undergraduate Student Government) Senate

Rick Glazier, OTIS (Organization of Town Independent Students) vice president  
Tim Kavanagh, Pollock-Nittany Residence Halls Association president  
Leslie D. Evans, USG Academic Assembly Executive Council

Joanie McCarthy, former USG senator  
Joanne Schwartz, ASA (Associated Student Activities) budgetary committee member, OTIS

Bruce J. Dagers, ASA, USG treasurer  
Marjorie Storch, AWS (Association for Women Students) president

Tony Stemberger, former president pro tempore, USG Senate

Cindy Dawson, former USG senator  
Jeannette Morris, chairman, ASA budgetary committee and chairman, Residence Hall Advisory Board

David E. Hasseltine, Hetzel Union Board (HUB) vice president

Douglas Ford, runner-up USG presidential election, OTIS, former USG senator

Harris Abrams, former chairman, USG Senate Student Affairs Committee

Edward Brown, ASA, Academic Assembly  
Sam Malizia, ARHS (Association of Residence Hall Students) president

Vicki Spagnol, OTIS president  
Susan Douglass, HUB president

Robert A. Kelso, acting president, Academic Assembly  
James J. Sullivan, IFC president

Mary L. Gitschier, president Panhellenic Council  
Leo J. Lacheik, vice president Undergraduate Student Government

Joseph C. Seuffer, president USG  
Duane R. Dunlop, president, East Residence Association

Kyra Goidich, former chairperson, OTIS consumer committee

Tom Amrhein, University Council undergraduate representative and member of UAB (University Advisory Board)

Joe Harteis, USG senator  
David L. Hindman, president, Centre Halls Residence Association

David E. Robbins, executive vice president, Association of Residence Hall Students

Thomas M. Sweitzer, former president OTIS

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