

Tight squeeze

A SECTION of Calder Alley between Fraser Street and Humes Alley might be the site of alterations pending borough council action. Sidewalks are being considered to provide easier access to newly-erected shops in the area and as a safety measure for pedestrians.

Calder Alley under study

By PHIL STOREY
Collegian Staff Writer

Trucks bottle-neck traffic while unloading, cars creep along, bicycles wobble cautiously on a zig-zag course and pedestrians stay as close to the walls as possible. The scene on Calder Alley is a congested one.

Borough and regional officials are now studying a proposal which will make the going easier at least for the pedestrians. If the proposal gains the approval of State College Borough Council, raised sidewalks will be installed along the north side of Calder Alley from Humes Alley to Fraser Street.

Ron Short, director of the Centre Regional Planning Commission, admitted that no serious accidents in the alley have been reported.

But besides giving walkers a safer feeling, the six-foot-wide sidewalks would encourage business development along the alley, Short said.

More pedestrians have been using Calder Alley as a pathway as several small shops have sprung up along the alley in recent years.

"Borough council is actively encouraging businesses on Calder Alley," Short said.

Short sees Calder Alley "developing

like an underground Atlanta" — the shopping and entertainment center of the Georgia capital.

The whole proposal seems almost too good to be true. But there are some kinks in the play.

Adding a sidewalk will significantly narrow Calder Alley, in some places from 15 to nine feet. Large trucks parked in the alley unloading supplies to the back doors of businesses fronting on College Avenue would render parts of the alley impassable to anything larger than a Volkswagen.

Short does not view this as a problem but as a virtue of the proposal.

He said that many people are using the alley as a shortcut across town, instead of using College or Beaver Avenue. The trucks, he said, would tend to force car drivers to choose an avenue instead of Calder Alley, giving more room in the alley to bicyclists.

One section in the alley, from Allen Street to Humes Alley, would be too narrow for emergency vehicles to pass through if a truck was parked there. Short said this problem could be solved if unloading were prohibited at this section.

But State College Police Chief Elwood Williams cautioned that trucks

delivering to businesses along the Allen-Humes stretch of the alley would start unloading on College Avenue to cut down the distance from trucks to stores. This would add to the congestion on the avenue, he said.

Williams added that the rest of the trucks might start unloading on College Avenue "by natural instinct" because the truck drivers would not want their trucks boxed-in by other trucks unloading on the newly narrowed alley.

"A lot of dialogue has to take place before anything is decided," Williams said.

That dialogue is taking place. The Centre Regional Planning Commission referred a study of the proposal to Borough Manager Carl Fairbanks who in turn referred it to the borough staff and the State College Planning and Traffic Commissions.

Meanwhile, Ron Short and his staff are working on getting the bugs out of the proposal.

Fairbanks said the proposal probably would not be voted on by council until after January.

"We're in the first stage — identification of the problems," Fairbanks said. "The second stage is figuring out ways to overcome the problems."

State budget sent to Shapp —

HARRISBURG (AP) — An \$87 million budget package narrowly passed the Senate yesterday, ending six months of wrangling over how much the state should spend this year.

The 26-23 Senate vote was the minimum needed to pass the bill, which was sent to Gov. Shapp.

Four Democrats and 19 of the Senate's 20 Republicans voted against the measure. The other Republican was absent.

Opponents complained about the \$2,500 increase in legislative expense accounts and the large amount of aid for Philadelphia and Pittsburgh.

Legislators in both the House and

Senate now get \$5,000 for expenses.

Several lawmakers said their constituents would oppose a legislative pay or expense increase, although all admitted they could use the extra money.

Sen. Louis Coppersmith, D-Cambria, said increasing expense accounts was not the proper way to increase a lawmaker's compensation.

"A more frank way... a more direct way to deal with inflationary pressures is through a salary increase," he said.

The bill, which does not affect a lawmaker's \$15,600 annual salary, allots \$2.3 million for the expense account increases and additional staff.

State departments and agencies are in

line for \$32 million; the counties, \$28 million; local Bicentennial programs, \$10 million, and housing and redevelopment, \$5 million.

Allegheny County gets \$9.6 million; Philadelphia, \$8.9 million, and all other counties \$9.3 million. The money is for child welfare, food stamps, county courts and environmental programs.

"It's just loaded too much for Pittsburgh and Philadelphia," said Sen. Robert Jubelirer, a Republican from Blair County.

Ordinarily, the budget bill must be passed in June before the start of the fiscal year July 1.

— as U.S. budget clears Senate

WASHINGTON (UPI) — The Senate gave final approval yesterday to a temporary federal budget for the current 1976 fiscal year after a blast by its budget chairman at President Ford for his threat to veto "essential" tax cuts.

Besides a \$374.9 billion ceiling on government spending through June 30, the legislation also sets a revenue floor of \$300.8 billion — built around the six-month extension of tax cuts Ford says he cannot accept.

This would leave a budget deficit of \$74.1 billion — some \$25 billion less than once feared.

The measure, in the form of a concurrent resolution to continue federal programs at roughly last year's level until actual appropriations are completed, now goes to the House. It does not require presidential signature.

Sen. Edmund S. Muskie, D-Maine, chairman of the new Senate Budget Committee, charged that Ford's "high-handed attitude" in insisting that any tax cut be coupled with a \$395 billion spending ceiling for fiscal 1977 "represents nothing less than an effort by the President to abort the congressional budget process" mandated by law.

"He may ignore it, but we dare not — unless the country is to sink once more into the quagmire of unrelated budgets, runaway spending, inflation and recession," Muskie said.

He called the tax cuts "essential" to responsible budget-writing but said Congress cannot accede to Ford's demands to set a 1977 budget ceiling now because it will not even receive his budget proposals and supporting figures until next spring.

"There is no exception in the Budget Act for election-year politics," Muskie said.

The budget resolution, binding on Congress under the new budget law, forbids consideration of any legislation that would lower revenues beyond the authorized floor or hike spending beyond the ceiling.

Besides the levels set through June, it also sets a spending ceiling of \$101.7 billion and a revenue floor of \$86 billion for the June-September "transition period" to the new fiscal year system beginning Oct. 1. The three-month deficit would be \$15.7 billion.

For the entire 15-month period from July 1, 1975 through Sept. 30, 1976, therefore the resolution calls for a spending ceiling of \$476.6 billion with a revenue floor of \$386.8 billion for a resulting deficit of \$89.8 billion.

Peace, goodwill . . . and suicide

By SHERRIE SPANGLER
Collegian Staff Writer

Christmas break begins next week, but Pat, with no family or friends, will have only an empty apartment to look forward to. While most students head for home; the ski slopes and parties, Pat will sit in her room, lonely and depressed.

Even those smiling students rushing around town in search of the perfect Christmas present for a friend have problems. According to Albert L. Ingram, director of the Mental Health Center in Boucke, suicide rates go up around the holidays because people realize how lonely they are. "It really scares you when you find out how messed up some kids are, although they appear to be well adjusted," one resident assistant lamented.

In fact, recent studies at several universities showed that about 90 percent of the students reported having felt deeply discouraged and unhappy at times, and more than half had thought about committing suicide.

The national average for suicide is three in every 10,000 college students, according to Ingram. Suicide is second only to accidents as the cause of death among college students.

Maurice L. Farber, social psychologist at the University of Connecticut, calls suicide a disease of hope. "Suicide is usually precipitated by a blow that threatens acceptable life conditions. This blow interacts with a low self-image to produce a low level of hope. When hope is extinguished, suicide may occur."

Ingram says suicide usually does not result from one isolated event, but occurs after a long accumulation of depressive incidents. For example, a poor family life followed by years of loneliness at school may cause mild depression, but a sudden drop in grades added to these problems could precipitate suicide.

It's difficult to estimate how many

suicide attempts are made. Some experts say for every successful suicide there are five attempts; others say ten. Ingram said most attempts are actual calls for help or attention.

Penn State averages only one or two suicides a year, although depression is still a serious, widespread problem, he said.

The major depressive factors among students are interpersonal relationships, grades, jobs and money.

Freshmen often have problems adjusting to school and being away from home Ingram said. Tom, an RA who has worked in East Halls, which houses mainly freshmen: Nittany Halls, which houses mainly upperclassmen; and Centre Halls, said, "Depression is everywhere. Some freshmen can't make the adjustment easily. Many seniors can't get an interview, let alone a job. And the opposite sex is a pervasive problem."

Occasional depression is normal, but when the feeling lasts several days and becomes a nagging obsession, Ingram said the student should seek help. Dorm residents can turn to their RA. Anyone can call the OASIS help center at 234-0323 or stop in at the office, on Beaver Avenue and Garner Street, to discuss their problems with an understanding volunteer. And the Mental Health Center in Boucke offers the services of six psychologists, two psychiatrists and five graduate assistants.

RAs take Counselor Ed 198, a three-credit course that teaches dealing with people and how to pick up clues to problems that an untrained listener might miss. They receive special training in handling suicidal students. For example, they learn that if a student gives away a prized possession he may be contemplating suicide. RAs also are alert to withdrawal by students. If there is an immediate danger of suicide, they seek professional help.

Tom said, "Students don't come to male RAs as much as to females. I pick up things mainly by living with the guys,

not by them coming to discuss their problems with me."

Pam, another RA, said girls come to her with a wide variety of questions. There is a constant flow of girls in and out of her room.

OASIS has about 55 volunteers — about 50 are students — who are eager to soothe a worried or depressed person.

OASIS co-chairperson Ed Crumb said, "Most people are reluctant to open up at first because they don't know us, they don't think we can really help them, or they think their problem is insignificant. But we treat every call as a serious cry for help."

"To get people to talk, we use empathy. We try to reflect their feelings so they know we are listening to them," he said.

Calls to OASIS are more frequent after mid-terms, when Crumb said, "Students have just gotten over a really stressful time, and they feel kind of empty."

Crumb estimated that OASIS receives an average of two calls a day and handles about one serious suicide threat a month.

OASIS volunteers receive 24 hours of training over an eight-week period. They learn methods of crisis intervention and how to deal with a suicidal person, who Crumb described as "helpless, hopeless, rejected, withdrawn."

"One of the most striking warnings of impending suicide is a depressed person suddenly saying, 'Well, I think I'm okay now.' This person has probably just decided that suicide will solve his problems," Crumb said.

Among those seeking help at OASIS, depression manifests itself in loneliness, frustration, confusion, withdrawal and a low desire to communicate, Crumb said. "They're just down."

While OASIS will try to help anyone, the Mental Health Center deals only with students. Director Ingram said interpersonal relationships — roommates, lovers, etc. — and academic and financial problems are probably the

most common causes of depression among students seeking the center's help.

"Getting depressed is not a weakness to be ashamed of," Ingram said. "If students would only come to us we would help them cope with the depression and look for the factors that caused it."

For example, if a student is depressed because of poor grades, Ingram said he would try to discover why the student was doing badly and would refer him to an academic counselor. If the student were severely depressed, Ingram said he would set up a series of interviews with him.

"At what point does a student need help? According to Ingram, "When you feel you need help, then you need it. But remember that occasional brief periods of depression are normal."

Countless studies have been done to determine the characteristics of suicidal-prone personalities, but the results are conflicting and inconclusive. Many experts report that student suicide and depression rates are higher among students with no religious beliefs, with high grades and who live in apartments rather than in dorms. Other experts disagree.

However, there is general consensus that poor interpersonal relationships and an intense, competitive atmosphere often seem to go hand-in-hand with suicidal gestures among college students, said Professor J. Eugene Knott of Rhode Island College.

Ingram said a long-range solution might be making the education experience as personal as possible — making students feel as if they belonged. "But," he said, "I don't know how to do it. Smaller classes cost more money."

Crumb offered some general advice to students who feel the weight of depression: "Don't withdraw. Talk to someone, anyone — a roommate, an RA, the cleaning lady. Get involved. Know someone cares."

Leaders argue spending ceiling

Ford, Congress in for tax fight

WASHINGTON (UPI) — President Ford and Congressional leaders failed to reach a compromise yesterday in their battle over whether to attach a spending ceiling to an extension of this year's tax cuts, and both sides prepared for a veto battle.

"We were unable to agree on anything," said Senate Finance Committee chairman Russell Long, D-La., one of four senators who met for two hours with Ford in an attempt to strike a compromise.

Long said Ford, stuck to his position that any tax cut must be accompanied by a dollar-for-dollar cut in projected fiscal 1977 federal spending, while Democrats stuck to their position that they cannot put a ceiling on a budget they have not yet seen.

Budget Director James T. Lynn, who sat in on the meeting, agreed there was no progress, and quoted Ford as telling the senators, "We'll just have to let the system work."

Asked if this meant Ford was resigned to a veto, Lynn said, "The most that can be said is that... there was no compromise arrived at" and no further meetings were scheduled.

Lynn said there now was "no doubt" that Ford would veto the bill that

Congress will send him next week. It is expected to contain a six-month extension of 1975's recession-fighting tax cuts, thus preventing withholding tax rates from rising in January.

"I made just one small request, that if he vetoes it he do it in a hurry so some people don't have to miss their Christmas holidays," Long said.

Ford was noncommittal on Long's request according to Sen. Edmund Muskie, D-Maine, chairman of the Senate Budget Committee.

Muskie said the only compromise Ford was willing to make during the meeting was to say he was willing to accept a higher budget ceiling than the \$395 billion he has proposed, but only if Congress trimmed the tax cut to cover the loss in revenue.

Long's Senate Finance Committee approved a bill Wednesday that would lower Treasury revenues by \$6.4 billion compared to what would be received if no bill was passed. Ford's proposal calls for a \$28 billion tax cut matched by an equal trimming of the federal budget, or no net Treasury loss.

Two Republicans also attended the meeting, Sen. Carl Curtis, R-Neb., ranking GOP member of the Finance Committee, and Sen. Henry Bellmon, R-

Oklahoma. Curtis is a staunch supporter of Ford's position, but Bellmon apparently sided with the Democrats.

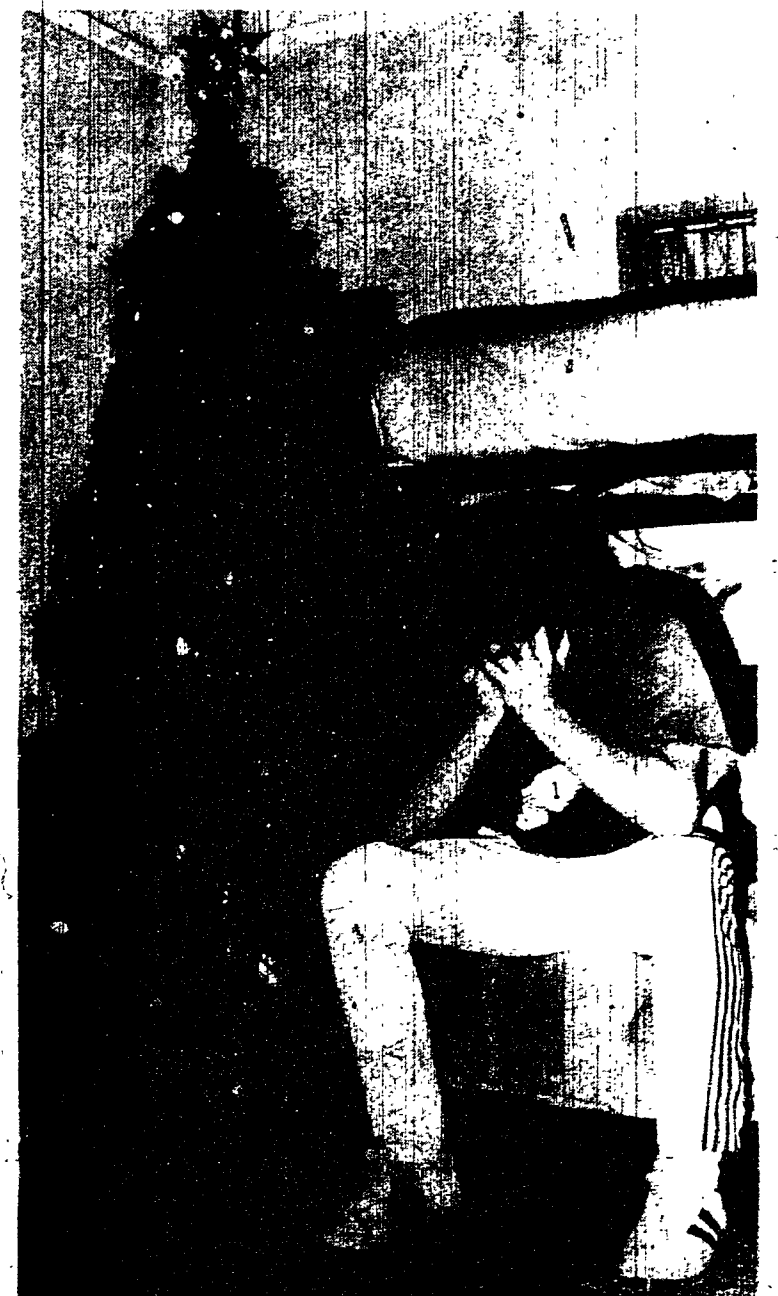
"The time for this will be next May," Bellmon said. "He's asking us in my opinion to violate the budget act we passed last year and in this way kill the whole process. And I don't believe it's in the long-range best interest of this country to move in that direction."

A large number of Republicans have deserted Ford, particularly in the Senate, and it appears now that there are more than enough votes to override a veto in the Senate and probably a sufficient amount in the House.

Long said following the meeting, "We understand one another better than we did, but we're not in agreement. The difference between the Senate and the President remains about where it was."

Weather

Did you know that State College is one of the cloudiest spots in the nation? Skies will remain overcast and damp at least through tomorrow, with a period of snow or sleet possible early today. High 34 Cloudy tonight and tomorrow with rain arriving by Saturday morning. Low tonight 30. High Saturday near 40.



Silent night

Photo by Eric Felack