

Vet services

Now that Uncle Sam no longer needs them, his veterans are being gradually shut out of needed services.

Because there was not a 10 percent increase in the number of veterans enrolled at the University in 1975-76 over 1974-75, federal funding was discontinued, and the University picked up the slack.

These funds covered various services for the veterans such as the veterans office.

Now the University's 1,400 vets are in danger of losing the University's support, too, because of budget cutbacks.

The decline in enrollment of veterans is obviously inevitable as the years since Vietnam increase. But is that any reason to pull out the rug from under their feet?

The vets deserve the funding they are receiving, and they should continue to receive it.

If the federal government will no longer support the vets at University Park and the 1,800 at the commonwealth campuses, then they should receive their share of funds from the University. After all, they deserve it.

Your task

University Task Force. What's that?

It's a group of representatives from various organizations who have been working to reorganize the student government structure at the University.

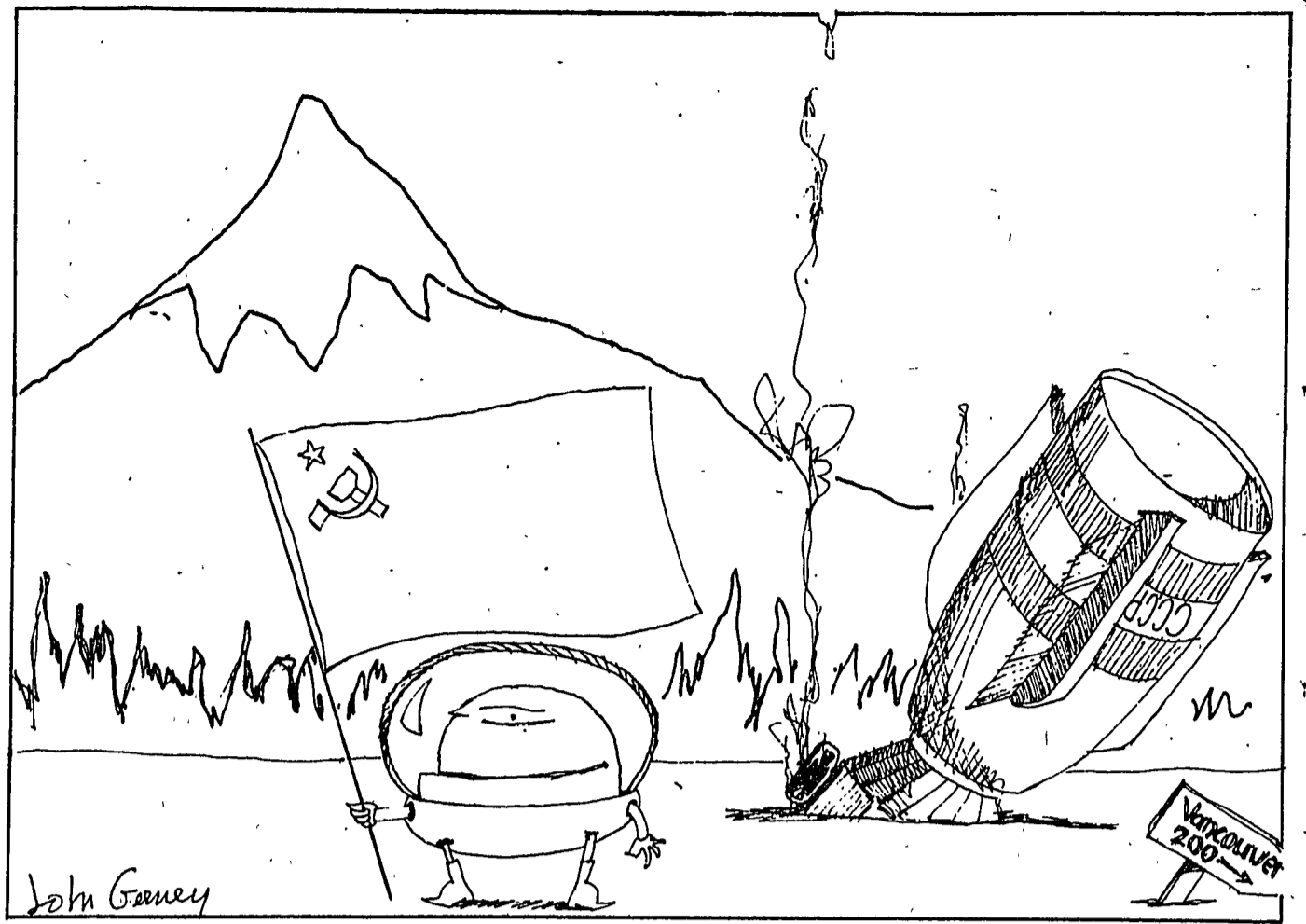
The plan they've come up with could change the concept of student government to an association. A central council would be the main administering body, and its president would be elected by the students.

All other governing groups would be under this council.

Tomorrow evening the Task Force will start the first of three public hearings. They want to know how the students feel about their proposals; they want your suggestions. A copy of the Student Association constitution will be available.

If you don't like the idea or if you want to find out what's going on, attend the hearings. They will be held from 7 to 10 p.m. tomorrow at the HUB Main Lounge; 7 to 10 p.m. Thursday, Findlay Lounge; and 7 to 10 p.m. Monday, Pollock Union Building.

If you complain about the student government now, be there. The next one can be made more effective if students tell their representatives what they want.



Tass, today, announced the discovery of a new planet.

Getting what you pay for is true at Pentagon, too

The United States and her allies will lose the next war we get ourselves into. Not only that, folks, but we will pay \$115 billion for the dubious privilege. President Carter must think the United States is invincible — or that the Soviet Union is stupid. He is very wrong both ways.

With a proposed budget for 1979 of \$115 billion, the U.S. military will be operating on essentially last year's budget. The Soviet Union's military budget is now three times larger than ours.

The Soviet Union uses over half of its total budget on research and development, and it is paying off well for them. The United States uses almost half of its budget on personnel and administrative costs, with only about 20 percent going to research. It will be too little, too late.

The Soviet Union can field 10 times more field artillery and tanks than NATO can in Europe. They can heave twice the intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) and air-launched nuclear weapons at us; by 1985, this ration will expand to a ten-to-one margin as well. Their total military forces are over twice the size of ours, yet we are drastically reducing our forces while they are drastically enlarging theirs.

The Soviet Union can put about 60 percent of its entire urban population under fifty feet of concrete in ten minutes — plenty of time to get to safety when alerted of an ICBM attack. The United States has the capability to put only selected members of the Federal government underground. There is no such thing as civil defense any more.

The Soviet Union can knock down any subsonic aircraft or other weapon over their airspace. Soon they will have the capability of doing the same to supersonic weapons. We have no

such automatic defense system except for manned interceptors.

Why don't we have some kind of parity with Russian forces? Our military strategy states that, if provoked, we will immediately launch our nuclear weapons against pre-selected Soviet targets with an accuracy of about the length of a football field.

Dale F. Brown

The Soviets have countered this by practically guaranteeing that both their people and their military installations will survive everything except a direct hit with a nuclear weapon. Even though we can launch many nuclear warheads during an attack, we could never hope to hit all Soviet military bases spread over territory twice the size of the United States before they can use their forces against us.

It is obvious that we cannot afford to play catch-up ball with the Russians. So, we have tried to get them to agree to a multi-lateral arms limitation, the Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT).

The first SALT treaty expired last October, and we are in the process of negotiating a new one. However, Paul Nitze, formerly a SALT negotiator and former Deputy Secretary of Defense under President Johnson, has said that, "We are locked into inferiority, and I don't know how to get out of it." Because of the United States' tedious position now in relation to the Soviets, we are finding the new negotiations very difficult.

For instance, we have agreed that after a certain date, neither side can set up any newly developed missile systems. According to the agreement, the United States cannot deploy its new MX missile system. By "sliding under the wire," however, the Soviet Union can continue to set up over 300 new SS-19 missile sites, each of which has more firepower than the MX system and can be later modified, when the treaty lapses, to loft more multiple warheads. Meanwhile, the MX will probably stay on the drawing board.

The cruise missile, the system President Carter opted for over the supersonic B-1 bomber, has a maximum range of over 4,000 miles. SALT II would restrict this range to 2,500 kilometers. The problem — for us — is that the cruise missile would be launched from a 30 year-old B-52 bomber or a big C-141 or C-5 transport. As mentioned, the Soviet Union can easily defend itself against any kind of subsonic intrusion — the cruise missile included — and in a few years they will have extended this capability to almost 2,000 kilometers from their shores.

A supersonic mother craft would give the cruise missile a better chance. The B-1 bomber was designed to penetrate the Soviet defenses (going 4 to 5 times faster than the B-52, and at tree-top level to boot), and another supersonic bomber, the FB-111, could also have effectively delivered cruise missiles. Both weapon systems were cancelled because of budgetary considerations.

Meanwhile, the Soviet Union has deployed its own version of the B-1, code-named BACKFIRE. The Soviets have assured us (outside the treaty, since deploying BACKFIRE would have violated

the treaty) that the BACKFIRE would never be used outside the Soviet Union. So now the Soviets have a supersonic bomber. In case of a war all treaties are void, and almost nothing the United States has could stop it from penetrating our continental defenses.

So, after SALT II we are left with an aging B-52 that may or may not be able to carry cruise missiles to an effective striking range; no B-1, even if we decided later to start building them; no new missile systems, even if the Soviet Union continues to build massive new systems; and a general lack of funds across the board that limits our research of new weapons systems, forces us to reduce our numbers and fighting capabilities, and also reduces our bargaining posture in the SALT talks and in relations with our allies.

Why does it seem we are getting the shaft in our military preparedness? Two possible reasons would be the willingness of our administration to make concessions in deployment of new weapons systems, and our inability to re-allocate funds away from maintaining our existing nuclear forces to devising new ones, possibly ones that are not restrained by any SALT agreements. When the Russians begin deploying sleek, modern weapons, we are playing right into their hands if we have to scrap and fight to barely maintain our big, expensive weapons and quarter-century-old strategic tactics.

It is a fact that many important people in our government believe that a nuclear war is impossible and unthinkable — that if it got right down to it, nobody would press the button. If this view is accepted, the United States could then afford to give up new or existing weapon systems as long as it meant that the Soviets would do the

same. By agreeing to rather one-sided terms in the SALT negotiations, by limiting our total forces and by decreasing our total funding for weapons, we show that we are willing to negotiate disarmament. It is not bad dealing, then, when we sacrifice the B-1 or the neutron bomb or limit the range of land-launched cruise missiles to 600 kilometers; it should be a sign of peace and a signal for reciprocity by the Soviets.

Of course, it is equally true that many members of our administration, including the President, are just plain cheap.

Cheap and rather near-sighted. National security should not be considered a totally political issue — when it is a popular topic the military gets the money; when it's unpopular, well... too bad.

Compare our military to a fire department. When a city constructs more buildings, or when the buildings get taller and more complex, or when the population increases, the fire department must change in order to keep up. Sure, it is still possible to fight fires with horse-drawn equipment — but it is dangerously impractical.

Like a fire department, the military must be constantly maintained and modernized. One hopes it is never used, but if it is, it must be effective and as efficient as humanly possible.

We cannot expect to fight the wars of our immediate future with last year's budget. New and better equipment costs money, and, at the risk of sounding trite, we get what we pay for. No one wants a war, and no one wants a proliferation of weapons that could blow us all into space, but we cannot afford to be behind when it's time to cash in the chips.

Our military forces will not be the losers. Dale F. Brown is a twelfth term history major.



Consumer group works for student needs

PIRG organizers to try it one more time

By JEFF GOLDSMITH
6th-community development
And JACK COLLITT
10th-community development

Did you ever wonder about how decisions are made that affect your life? Why are students considered responsible enough to vote and pay taxes, but are not responsible enough to make the decision of whether or not to drink? Who decides how often the buses should run in State College? What can be done to protect us against unscrupulous business practices?

Students today are labeled as being apathetic. Could it be that we just feel we don't have the knowledge or input to affect major change?

A Public Interest Research Group would give students the opportunity to have a say in matters that affect their lives. A PIRG is a statewide consumer agency operated and funded by students, assisted by professionals. These lawyers, scientists, economists, accountants and engineers add expertise, direction and continuity to PIRG.

The professionals would investigate problems which students feel should be addressed. In the past, students'

efforts to create meaningful change have proven ineffective. This is partly due to academic schedules which make it impossible for them to spend the time necessary to deal with large-scale concerns. Political, economic and social problems don't disappear when we have to study for midterms, finals or leave for summer break. We need professionals who have the time and the resources to devote to these issues.

Collegian Forum

Since the early '70s, PIRGs located across the country have made effective use of professionals in dealing with major problems. Recently Indiana PIRG successfully took on the phone company and kept them from levying a 10-cent charge for information calls.

If a PIRG existed here in Pennsylvania, perhaps Bell of Pennsylvania's efforts to institute the same 10-cent charge would have also been blocked. The federal government has turned a deaf ear to corruption in Pennsylvania, as can be seen by the removal of David Marston as special prosecutor in Philadelphia.

In New York, PIRG successfully recovered \$875,000 that the legislature had illegally voted itself. If the federal government is unwilling to deal with corruption in Pennsylvania, then we must form some type of citizen's lobby to protect our rights.

These are only two examples of PIRG activities. However, these PIRGs needed student input and support to be effective. A minimal \$2 fee, collected through the tuition billing system, provides the funds to hire competent professionals.

Two main criteria must be kept in mind when developing a funding system for PIRG. The first is the decision to pay the PIRG fee must be clearly voluntary on the part of each student. Secondly, the funding system must be stable enough to set up an efficiently operating PIRG.

A group of students at the University is now attempting to establish a PIRG. The Undergraduate Student Government is sponsoring an informational meeting about PIRG at 8 tonight in 306 Boucke. Those of you who believe that students can make a difference should attend.

Letters to the Editor

Good advice

The College of Liberal Arts is looking for dedicated students to apply to be Liberal Arts student advisers for the 1978-79 school year.

A student adviser is responsible for a number of freshmen advisees, serving as an academic counsellor. The adviser helps the student during preregistration, registration, drop-add and the declaration of majors. Being a student adviser is a responsibility that requires time and dedication, but the effort is personally satisfying and rewarding.

An applicant is not expected to understand the academic system of the college, so a course is offered during Spring Term to familiarize the prospective adviser with the Liberal Arts advising system.

Applications are now available in 129 Sparks for any and all interested in becoming Liberal Arts Student Advisers. Apply now.

Lee Carpenter
5th-liberal arts
Carol Gifford
5th-political science
Jan. 25

Rent rise

Today some very interesting reading was pushed under my door. The realtors, A.W. and Son, had something to say. The owners of Penn Towers, Cedarbrook, Park Hill and other various apartment buildings directly off campus have just released their new rates for next year.

Some will say that the present rates were high enough, but like everything else these days, their costs have surely risen

also and a small rent increase for next year was expected. However, how can they justify a jump from a \$5 increase a month last year to a \$120 a month increase this year for the same two-bedroom apartment?

Let me say that I have been in a tenement in these apartments for three years now, and even though the rent is a bit high, I would say I made a good choice compared to what other places had to offer. However, a \$45 a year increase is acceptable, a \$1,080 increase is not.

I'm happy to say that because I'm graduating this spring, I won't have to deal with this hassle. But to all of you unfortunate who do, all I can say is that you'll have to grin and bear it. Why? Because there's hardly any other place to go.

A word to the owners at A.W. and Son. Your social responsibility index (on a scale of 100) has gone from a 99 to 50 overnight, and that ain't good.

Nelson J. Lacey
11th-economics
Jan. 26

Analysis

Thursday's editorial on the possibility of cutbacks in electrical power to the University demonstrates the irresponsibility and insensitivity of The Daily Collegian with regard to the current United Mine Workers' strike. Previous coverage of the strike has been superficial and one-sided, never analyzing, let alone mentioning, the issues which are at stake in the strike. This is in some ways understandable, given the Collegian's apparent dependence on the wire service for national news.

However, to imply, as the editorial does, that the UMW may be responsible for a "blackout in education," without ever

discussing the issues involved, is simply irresponsible.

The desire of the coal operators to link the health, safety and security of miners to coal productivity and to limit the control rank-and-file miners have over their daily working conditions can be identified as the major reasons for the current strike. UMW members and their families have sacrificed their income, health benefits and soon, in the case of retired miners, their pensions, in their struggle for a better life. To even begin to compare these sacrifices with the possible inconveniences students and others may "suffer" is absurd.

If the Collegian actually desires to provide information to the University community, it will analyze these issues in greater depth. To do otherwise, while discussing energy conservation and "blackouts," is to encourage a misinformed, victim-blaming, anti-labor attitude which will only be to the benefit of the coal producers and their attempt to break the strike through public opinion.

Mark A. Phillips
graduate student-community systems planning
and development
Jan. 26

Please

Because of the treacherous weather this winter, can't something be done about the dangerous condition of the malls on campus, especially where they slope down to College Avenue? There is nothing to stop a person from falling there down the incline.

Surely some cinders or sand placed at the dangerous spots would ease the mind of many people who travel the malls to the buses in the evening. I fell once this winter on the slippery condition of the mall (near College Avenue) and I do not want

a repeat of that, with possibly more serious consequences. Please, just a few cinders or some sand. Surely the University can afford that.

Ruth Patterson
staff member

It's your turn

The Daily Collegian will be running an Opinion-Editorial page on the University Task Force Feb. 9. Opinions on the Task Force are welcomed and should be brought to the Collegian office (126 Carnegie Building) by this Friday.

the daily Collegian

Jeffrey Hawkes
Editor

Scott R. Sesler
Business Manager

Letters policy

The Daily Collegian encourages comments on news coverage, editorial policy and campus and off-campus affairs. Letters should be typewritten, double spaced, signed by no more than two persons and not longer than 30 lines. Students' letters should include the name, term and major of the writer. The editorial editor reserves the right to edit letters, and to reject them if they are libelous or do not conform to standards of good taste.