

Editorial opinion

No vote, no voice

By refusing to vote, students surrender their say in government

Students never vote. Many students register to vote in drives by the Department of Political Affairs of USG, but a large percentage of them forget to vote when election day arrives.

While students are registering to vote in greater numbers in the state and across the country they still are not turning out to vote. Until they do, elected officials will ignore student's concerns.

Locally, the legislators who represent Centre County and the University correctly think students don't give a damn about government. And as long as legislators hold that view, students will never be taken seriously when lobbying in Harrisburg and Washington, D.C.

Most students do not feel that student lobby groups do anything which really affect their lives.

Legislators have power over University appropriations (the levels of which affect tuition); financial aid levels and availability; criminal codes, standardized testing legislation (SATs, MCATs, LSATs, and GREs); marijuana reform; the drinking age, and so on—the list is endless.

Granted, legislators do have some control

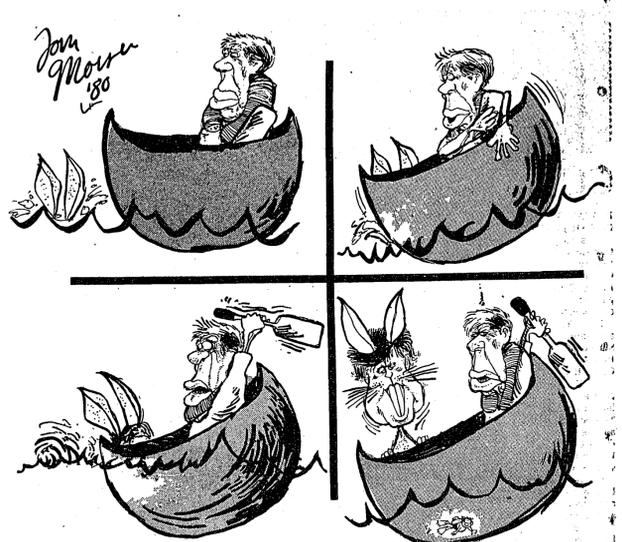
over students' daily lives but they don't listen to students anyway. That might be true, but why should legislators listen to students when they do not stand to lose anything if they turn their backs on them. Students do not vote.

Today is the general primary in which the Democratic and the Republican parties will be selecting their favorite presidential candidates, choosing delegates to the party conventions and nominating candidates for a U.S. Senate seat being vacated by Sen. Richard S. Schweiker, R-Pa.

The following positions are also on the ballot; the U.S. House of Representatives seat currently held by the William Clinger, R-Central Pa., and the state House of Representatives seat from the Centre Region, now held by Republican Gregg Cunningham.

Other offices being contested in the state include the auditor general, treasurer and the first elected attorney general in the state's history.

If students want to be taken seriously in the General Assembly and Congress they should use their constitutional privilege and vote. Elected officials may notice.



Energy proponents and economists rolled together

Nuclear energy proponents have an arrogance all their own. They seem to feel that anyone who doesn't share their views is victims of fear or ignorance, or both.

They assume that if people would only be rational, they would also support nuclear power. But here they fall into a trap, for you can't be rational about a program that is based on an irrational progress-for-progress-sake mentality.

To prove their rationality, and combat the emotionalism of their opponents, nuclear proponents have an endless stream of statistics proving how nuclear power is needed to meet our current and future energy needs.

My question is, where do these alleged needs come from? Amory Lovins, in "Soft Energy Paths," says they are often merely extrapolations from past trends to some arbitrary point in the future.

This may be a way to get numbers down on paper, but it is a very stupid way to plan for the future. It is stupid because it doesn't question the unstated assumption of American economics — "more is better."

People never ask this question because it is a sacrilege. Idolatry is man worshipping the products of his own hands. Can't it be plausibly maintained that this is the common American attitude toward the economy?

Haven't we have defiled our standard of living? Don't we seem willing to sacrifice anything—the ecological balance, the quality of life for people in poor nations, the lives of young people (remember President Carter's saying that we would go to war for our "vital interests")—on its altar?

The high priests of this cult — we call them economists — speak in a mysterious, ritualized language. How many lay people understand the effects of a production possibility curve, or the prime interest rate or any other piece of economic jargon? Our economic priests offer murky prophecies that are understood by most of us no better than if the Delphic Oracle had made a comeback.

Like too many of the priests of the past, priests spend much of their time hickering about the best way to cure the illnesses of the god. The

current ailment, inflation, is particularly elusive. The last great prophet, Keynes, cured the dreaded Depression Disease. We seem to be doing little more than waiting in hope for another prophet to come along to cure inflation.

Ironically, inflation seems caused to a large extent by an over-use of Keynes' magic elixir. Ask yourself, what is the measure of success in America? Is it to be a loving person, no matter what your income? Or is it to have a big house and lots of goods, as long as you aren't caught in crude criminality? (Remember, price-fixing and other white-collar crimes are often considered just "sound business practice.")

Similarly, don't we get part of our "national self-love" from our standard of living? Don't we love to call ourselves, over and over again, "the richest nation in history?"

Advertising plays a huge role here. Even if claims of subliminal influence are exaggerated, it is safe to say that most advertising is aimed at having people irrationally identify their self-image with use of a product.

The hidden message of most advertising is, "If you buy this product, you will be rich, snobby, or macho as the model." Now, ad-

vertising doesn't force anyone to buy a product, but its constant hammering at irrational impulses makes it very difficult for people to make rational decisions about their lifestyles.

The problem with this kind of irrational identification is that it recognizes no limits — you can always make more money or acquire more goods. That would be no problem in a world of infinite resources, but that is not the world we live in.

However, when people get their self-esteem from their deeds, not their possessions, there is no strain on nature. Trying to be the best you can be as a parent, singer, athlete, or whatever, does not use up natural resources.

Simply stated, we need to start being concerned with the quality of our lives, not the quantity of gadgets we can accumulate. This kind of thinking is the only base for truly rational economics.

Once we start thinking along those lines the decisions reached on nuclear power will certainly be rational, but they will probably not be what the nuclear proponents expect. They will have people irrationally identify their self-image with use of a product.

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Energy czar points out savings

Last Tuesday I woke up on sun rays and bird noise. Spring. On my way down to breakfast I noticed that the thermostat was cranked way up and registered the house temperature at 70 degrees.

In my six-person household I have earned the title of energy czar. It was to be placed above the thermostat asking that we turn off the heat for the season as a welcome gesture to spring.

"You know the temperature's supposed to go way down today," said my roommate Zeke, "maybe as low as 35."

I pointed out that our house is very well insulated and would not lose much heat over a cold spell, but Zeke was adamant.

"I'm all for conservation," he said, "but my room is the last one to get the heat, so if we had to turn it back on after it had been off for a while, I'd be the coldest the longest. Why don't we just wait a few days?"

"Zeke," I reasoned, "this is our chance to take a stand." I drew a deep breath and went into my most convincing soap-box environmentalist spiel. Didn't even make a dent in him.

Mamie was the next person down for breakfast. When I came back to my sign, scotch tape in hand, it had been supplemented with sarcastic tidbits, again regarding the forecasted temperature drop.

"Any other time I'd go along with this," she apologized, "but I've had a lot of work to do lately and I haven't been getting much sleep so I'm in a pretty rotten mood."

Well Mamie, Zeke, buddies, this column's for you. 'Cause one of the main drawbacks of conservation is that we can't wait a few days, we can't put it off until it's easy or until we're in the right mood.

Conservation is just a small step in the gamut of alternatives we can turn to to avoid overconsumptive self-destruction. And it is a step that every person, no matter what his political, economic or environmental standing, can take.

The most difficult aspect of conservation is the initial decision to rearrange one's priorities, to choose the more environmentally sound alternative over the one that is easier. Once this decision has been made, it becomes clear that little is missing from a slightly less consumptive lifestyle. In fact, the knowledge that one is contributing to such a universal effort can be very rewarding.

So what I'm saying here, Mamie and Zeke, is that it's time to stop making decisions on the basis of what appears to be the easiest or most comfortable at the moment. Now, while we still have the choice, let's choose moderation, and keep our lifestyle at a level where we will always be able to support it.

Maja Fischler is a 13th-term journalism major and a staff writer for The Daily Collegian

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Op-ed letters

Energy calculations

Energy conservation today is of utmost importance. Or at least it should be. It's only on a rare occasion, though, that I ever see any indication of someone trying to conserve energy.

I live in a dorm, and I know full well how much energy is wasted. I spend a lot of time turning off lights that just plain aren't necessary. Let me present an interesting statistic that I have figured out.

It's a proven fact that six 100-watt bulbs burning for five hours use 10,200 BTUs. This is the energy content of a pound of coal or a half pint of oil. I have come up with a rough approximation of the amount of energy that could be saved just in my dorm alone. According to my calculations, my dorm could save well over 100 pounds of coal in a single day.

I do not propose studying by candlelight or removing your contact lenses in the dark. My calculations were based on lights burning unnecessarily — fully-ill roommates uncupied — halls in the middle of the day with every light on — lights on in a bathroom which nobody is using. I have turned lights off in the middle of the day that have been burning right where the sun is coming through the window. But these lights are using every bit of much energy as when they are on.

During a normal day almost no lights need to be turned on. It certainly isn't difficult to flip off a little switch when the light is not needed. So let's see what can happen with just a little awareness as to what we have and what we are losing. Now is the time to conserve.

Tom Betts, 3rd-environmental science April 17

Ways to save

I welcome the opportunity to share conservation ideas. Our household has implemented energy savings measures. To save oil this winter the temperature was set at 60 degrees. We wore sweaters at home and were not uncomfortable. The curtains were opened wide in the morning to allow in the sun's available heat and light. We cut cardboard inserts to fit each of the downstairs windows. They were placed in the windows each evening, before the curtains were drawn for extra insulation.

We save material resources by recycling any glass, aluminum or tin that we use. We limit the amount of these materials by reusing glass jars and avoiding aluminum products. We always buy beverages — beer and milk — in returnable bottles. We strictly avoid plastic products, which require petroleum and more time to biodegrade than paper products. Plastic bags are reused, and we bring paper bags with us to the grocery store.

None of the five members of this household has a car. We use public transportation. It is possible to rely entirely on walking and bicycles for all of our activities — school, work, recreation, shopping and visiting. For trips out of town, buses or carpools are utilized.

Electricity is saved in simple ways also. We do not use high wattage appliances such as air conditioners or space heaters. We have fiberglass which to insulate the hot water heater.

We are conserving energy and experiencing a very high standard of living. We can all conserve by adjusting our everyday habits. Let's prove that we don't need nuclear power or lower air quality standards in the state of Pennsylvania. Conserve.

Irene A. Szedymay coordinator, Eco-Action April 18

Students' choice

Last year, University refrigerators were installed in the dorms as a standard room feature. Previously, students had a choice of whether or not to rent refrigerators for their rooms. Today that decision has already been determined by the housing administration. Whether or not you use it — you pay rent that space-consuming appliance.

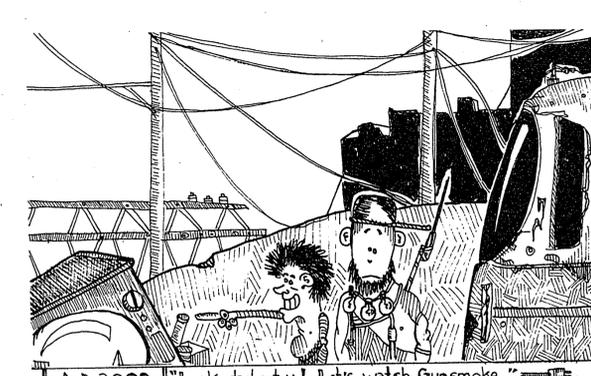
I propose that housing give each of your rooms more energy than the combined energy usage of your ultraviolet lights, stereo, hair dryer, popcorn maker, etc. Or, in other words, what is brown, cubeshaped and hums at night? Did you know that in order to keep the contents of your refrigerator cold, energy is being consumed all day and all night long? Even when the contents consists of nothing but air, electricity is being set up all the time.

I propose that housing give back the choice to the students so that those who don't want refrigerators won't have to pay for them. Furthermore, the energy savings will be substantial if enough students can do without them.

Ted Kopec, Fall Class 1979 April 18

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Adding to disease

In my home fevers a disease so common that it goes unnoticed and untreated — energy waste. I live in the dorms, where mass quantities of energy are squandered because of negligence by my fellow students, who perhaps have not previously had the benefit of hearing Dad scream, "Turn off that stereo when you leave your room!" or who possibly didn't fight those sibling battles at the dinner table to decide who the last one was to leave the living room and consequently achieve a higher grade on the television.

Many dorm students are unconscious of being significant contributors to the energy shortage, and it is time for them to not only examine wasteful habits but also to mend their ways.

Taking a shower and eating dinner seem like innocent enough activities, but they are major causes of energy waste on my floor. While enjoying 15 minutes or so in the shower, my friends fail to think about the overhead lights and desk lamp that illumine their empty rooms, and the stereo that play music for nonexistent listeners.

Every afternoon I find showers dripping and shower lights that have been left on since morning. Come dinner time, the waste multiplies because the lights are stereo are left on by more people for longer amounts of time. Consider that five friends who eat together are responsible for at least half an hour. Those friends will waste more energy by taking the elevator instead of the stairs.

These and other wasteful practices abound in the dorms, but they can be easily eliminated if the last person in the room — be it a study lounge, TV room, shower or laundry — turns off lights an appliances when he leaves. It doesn't take extra time to flip a switch on the way out the door, and it saves energy.

Marilyn Colterhahn, 3rd-division of undergraduate studies April 18

the daily op-ed collegian

COG draws plans for 20 percent cutback

By JEANNE E. BRABANT Centre Region Energy Conservation Program

In January of this year, the Centre Region Council of Governments passed a resolution declaring 1980 as "Energy Conservation Year" for the people of the Centre Region and implemented the Centre Region Energy Conservation Program. Dennis Elpern, senior planner on the regional planning staff, is the coordinator of the program.

The Council of Governments is a voluntary association of six municipalities — the borough of State College, and the townships of College, Ferguson, Halmilton, Harris and Patton — which make up the Centre Region.

The Energy Conservation Program, the only COG program of its kind in Pennsylvania, is a valuable local intergovernmental approach to energy conservation. The focus of the program is data collecting, education and public information, municipal efficiency, ordinance revision and revision, and utilizing efforts of the University and local municipalities in energy conservation to reduce energy consumption.

The program urges all individuals in the Centre Region to conserve energy and reduce consumption of non-renewable resources by 20 percent and utilize alternative energy systems during 1980.

The idea for the Energy Conservation Program began with the Regional Energy Conservation Steering Committee. The committee continues to act as a review body for ongoing program projects. The major program activities for the first quarter of 1980 were:

1. COG Proclamation: A resolution was prepared and later adopted by the COG General Forum proclaiming 1980 to be "Energy Conservation Year" in the Centre Region and urging all to reduce energy consumption this year by 20 percent.

2. Earth Day 1980: The staff assisted Eco-Action on the procurement of large quantities of educational materials from the Department of Energy, the Governor's Energy Council and the National Solar Heating and Cooling Center. These will be distributed

by Eco-Action during Earth Day activities.

3. Community Energy Audit: A community energy audit forms the basis of data requirements for the analysis of energy usage. Total consumption of all fuel types for a given year are identified and divided into major user categories. Distributors of fuel to Centre Region consumers have been contacted and asked to submit data on fuel consumption during calendar year 1979. User categories include: residential (single and multi-family); industrial; municipal; University; business, service and institutional and transportation.

4. Municipal Energy Audit: An energy audit of a building accomplishes three things: (1) It identifies areas where improvements can be made to increase efficiency; (2) It specifies the improvements which need to be made and provides cost figures for such and (3) It calculates the length of time it will take to recover the investment cost in lower fuel costs (payback period).

Information has been gathered for distribution to each municipality concerning grant applications for funding available under Title III of the National Energy Conservation Policy Act. Such funding will cover half of the cost of conducting energy audits of municipal buildings.

5. Harris Township Municipal Building Review: After consultation with the architect, a review of the



proposed municipal building was submitted to the township manager. Included were suggestions on improving energy efficiency in the proposed building design plus a checklist of methods for achieving greater efficiency in future operations.

6. Centre County Energy Task Force: Elpern was appointed to represent the Centre Region on the county's Energy Task Force. Chaired by Norm Fischer, the task force's initial concern has centered on problems associated with the Federal Energy Assistance Program.

7. Home Energy Test: A home energy test was prepared for several social studies classes at Park Forest Junior High School. The test allows students to check vital areas of their own homes which present opportunities for energy conservation and then "grade" their homes' efficiency using a facsimile of the standard SCASD report card. Ways to improve their grades are suggested. About 245 students will take the test this spring.

8. Radio and Television Tips: Public service announcements are prepared each week on methods to improve energy efficiency and are distributed to the major user categories. Distributors of fuel to Centre Region consumers have been contacted and asked to submit data on fuel consumption during calendar year 1979. User categories include: residential (single and multi-family); industrial; municipal; University; business, service and institutional and transportation.

9. Centre Daily Times Energy Bulletins: Monthly articles are prepared and submitted to the COG as part of our efforts to provide educational materials to the public. Subjects discussed in the first three articles were: (1) Simple measures to reduce energy use, (2) Energy tax credits and (3) Landscaping to improve home energy conservation.

10. Library Bibliography: An annotated bibliography of books and periodicals dealing with various aspects of energy was prepared by Schlow Library. The Energy Conservation Program will print and distribute copies of the bibliography.

11. Directory of Services and Supplies: Preparation is under way to gather together a comprehensive listing of local firms and the services and supplies they can provide people seeking to conserve energy. The final product will be a brochure for public distribution.

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Conserving energy: living within system

By LIZ KAMRAN Eco-Action

Earth Day 1980, Earth Day 1980, Earth Day 1980. Environmentalism, or ecological ways of looking at our surroundings, is here to stay.

The unrealistic, idealistic, shouting of the '70s has settled down somewhat into more subtle economic ways of dealing with the problems at hand.

Those concerned with the uses of our natural resources have even gone beyond the question of whether or not we all should be involved in conserving — wisely using our natural resources.

As people working in such areas have become politically astute, the American system is being made to work for a fairly common consensus on the environment.

Considering the economic situation of 1980, and that projected for the next few years, we will be forced more and more to make decisions as to what we find acceptable in conservation and industry.

Local groups and governments are beginning to realize they must and can take control of their own area's actions with regard to consumption as well as production.

Ecologically sound decisions must be merged with a change in our lifestyles to make the best use of limited natural resources available.

Enthusiasts will have to be in the forefront of the further disbanding of this idea of localism, action and conservation.

If an active part is played in this broad educational movement by them, Earth Day 1980 will be a celebration of a moderated, changing way of life incorporating ecological living within the biology of all nature.

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Some old remedies for some old problems

By J. CARROLL DEAN Manager of energy conservation programs for the University

Mention conservation and watch the eyes begin. See the eyes glaze over. Maybe it is the terms we use: Kilowatt hours, pounds of steam, tons of coal, British thermal units.

There are more graphic ways to illustrate the Penn State energy scene. We use, for example, enough steam in one year to run an old fashioned locomotive on 30 round trips between Boston and San Francisco. We burn three tons of coal each year every student enrolled in University Park. We use as much electricity in a year as the Borough of State College does and we use enough water in 12 months to supply Bellefonte for 11 years.

I've been asked to list what students can do to aid the University conservation effort and I'll do that.

First, however, I'd like to tell some of the things we've already done to save energy at Penn State and to explain why it wasn't ever enough: why we can never be totally energy efficient without a dramatic change of attitude on the part of everyone in the University com-

munity — students, staff and faculty.

As a direct result of conservation efforts, we used less energy during the 1978-79 school year than we did during the 1976-77 school year. That reduction came despite 7 percent more building space to heat, 11 percent more full-time students using facilities and a winter that was nearly 14 percent colder.

It was possible because we now have a central control system which monitors temperatures and ventilation in 85 of the 197 buildings at University Park. It was possible because we weatherized many of the old buildings to make them more energy-efficient. We keep heating temperatures lower and air conditioning temperatures higher than we did in 1973 and we decrease ventilation and temperatures in most buildings during term break.

In addition, we've limited the flow of water from shower heads and flushometers in the residence halls and lowered the temperature of hot water available to classroom and administrative buildings.

The bottom line is that we have good news and bad news. In 1972-73 we used 106.1 million kilowatt hours of electricity

at University Park and our bill was \$1.02 million. In 1978-79, we used 330,000 fewer kilowatt hours, but the bill was \$2.49 million.

This brings to light an important lesson: technical improvements will only get us so far. The rest is up to the individual. I estimate that improving the ability of buildings to become energy efficient will accomplish only 50 percent of the potential for energy conservation.

We are, of course, a long way from making all the technical improvements we can. Energy audits are made on campus to identify areas for potential savings.

What we really lack, however, is a firm commitment to conservation on the part of most people using University facilities. I hesitate to single out students as energy wasters. Each of us, after all, is a product of a society which, until recently, ranked conserving energy below reading junk mail on the list of important things to do.

There are some energy conscious students, faculty and staff members, of course, but not nearly enough. Several of the important things students living in the residence halls can do include:

* Turning off your resident assistant when your room is too hot or when a faucet is leaking. The RA doesn't then report the problem to the housing supervisor. If the RA doesn't follow through, tell the housing supervisor yourself and keep telling him or her. Opening the window to cool the room is an energy waster.

* Cutting down shower time. Try rinsing, then shutting off the water while you soap up, then rinsing again. We estimate it costs the University \$260 a day just to heat water for showers.

* Keeping curtains open during the day to provide light and heat for the room. Keeping them closed at night conserves heat. Similarly, closing curtains on hot days will keep the room cooler.

* Turn off lights, radios, televisions and stereos when you're not using them.

* As you can see, there are no real revelations in the list; nothing you haven't heard before. The point I've tried to make is that it's not the information on how to conserve that people need.

You know what to do. It's just a question of whether you want to do it.



Be energy aware

By RON LIGHT Eco-Action

On Sunday, April 20, a University student organization called Eco-Action set in motion a three-day environmental celebration — Earth Day '80. Earth Day was born in 1970 out of concern over the condition of our land, water and air.

Demonstrations and exhibits range from organic farming techniques, solar flying, to solid waste management and alternative lifestyles. Another focus of Earth Day '80 — one that can radically change the way Americans live — is energy conservation.

Conserving energy is simple and painless and can lead to a more healthy you and a more healthy environment. As students, there are many ways in which you can conserve energy and resources, whether you live on- or off-campus.

If you live in the dormitories you may be unconscious of the energy you use and the energy you waste. The fact is, however, that you are paying for that heat. By conserving energy, you can have an effect on the University's energy consumption and perhaps room and board charges.

You can conserve energy in the dormitories by taking shorter, cooler showers. When you have to brush your teeth, don't leave the water running. It costs money to heat water — your money. Whenever you leave your room, turn off your stereo, radio, lights and other energy users.

In the dining hall, don't waste food. Farming is energy expensive: if you waste food you are wasting energy. The

primary goal of Earth Day '80 is to make people aware of their attitudes and habits toward the environment. As a student, become aware of your energy consumption and solid waste generation. Some simple ways you can save money, save resources and ultimately, ensure that we will have a clean, healthy environment in the future.

If you buy beverages, buy returnable bottles — you pay for the convenience of throwaway containers. If you cannot buy returnables, you can recycle much of the waste that you generate.

Keep your thermostats no higher than 68 F and your air conditioner no lower than 70 F. Again, turn off unnecessary energy users and recycle what you can of your household waste.

If you commute to campus, ride a bike, carpool, walk or ride a bus. The money you save is yours. When you consume and solid waste generation, you own paper or plastic bags from the cashier if you don't need them.

The primary goal of Earth Day '80 is