



The well-stacked man

Broadcasting from inside a house of 7-Up cases at the Nittany Mall, Tom Roberts of radio station WRSC planned to sell all this soda before coming out. The American Cancer Society received all the benefits of Robert's marathon, for which he kept plenty of food, books and magazines on hand to stay occupied when business was slow. He started the marathon Friday and had been inside for 30 hours at the time the photo was taken.

Cuban planes sink patrol boat, kill 4 in Bahamas

NASSAU, Bahamas (UPI) — Eight Cuban MiGs attacked and sank the Bahamian Defense Forces patrol boat Flamingo near Ragged Island, killing four crewmen and wounding several others, a government spokesman said yesterday.

The Soviet-built MiGs attacked the 102-foot boat Saturday night after it had taken two Cuban fishing boats into custody for allegedly poaching in Bahamian waters.

A Bahamas official said the Flamingo was carrying a 20-man crew when it was attacked and crewmen escaped the sinking patrol boat on one of the Cuban fishing boats it had in custody. Four Flamingo crewmen were killed in the air attack, but officials did not know how many were injured.

The Bahamas official said they believed the Cuban fishermen aboard the two boats that were under tow by the Flamingo alerted Cuban authorities by radio that they had been taken into custody.

Prime Minister Lynden O. Pindling was in London, but the Bahamas Cabinet met in emergency session Sunday and a government spokesman said, "We view this as a very serious incident."

The U.S. State Department in Washington said it was "aware" of the

incident and was awaiting more detailed information.

"If the facts are as stated by the Bahamian government — Cubans MiGs sinking a Bahamian Defense Force vessel — it appears to be a gross violation of international law," a State Department spokesman said.

The Flamingo was attacked about 30 miles south of Ragged Island, which is the largest and southernmost of a circular 110-mile chain of Bahamas islands some 50 miles off the northeastern coast of Cuba, the Bahamas said.

A Bahamas official said he "expected" the Cabinet to discuss putting the island nation's six-boat Bahamas Defense Force on alert.

"We're in a very delicate position," the government spokesman said. "We're not in a position to wage war with anybody."

Bahamas officials said they had heard, but were unable to confirm, unofficial reports that a Cuban military helicopter landed on Ragged Island after the MiG attack that sank the Flamingo in 60 feet of water.

Bahamas officials said they "also heard, but were unable to immediately confirm" reports that planes with Bahamas officials sent to investigate the attack had been buzzed by the MiGs.

Cmdr. William Swindley, a British

naval officer who is chief of the Bahamas Defense Forces, took a contingent of troops with him by plane to Ragged Island when he went there.

Swindley returned by plane in the afternoon with the surviving members of the Flamingo's 28-man crew, some of whom were bandaged.

The military contingent that accompanied Swindley apparently had been left behind on the island.

A government official said, "In my view, this is a very serious situation. It was a very delicate situation to begin with. There has never been any dispute about the ownership of Ragged Island. Cuba has never claimed it. If they did land, it would be an even more serious situation, for that would be an armed invasion."

The tropics

State College will do its rain forest imitation for the next couple of days, as we will have mostly cloudy skies today and tonight with a few thunderstorms, especially in the afternoon and evening. Today's high will be 67 while tonight's low will be a sticky 61. Tomorrow will be partly cloudy, warm and muggy with some more afternoon thunderstorms. Tomorrow's high will be 77.

USG progresses despite student apathy

Voter turnout still low, misunderstanding, alienation prevalent

By LORRAINE CAPRA
Daily Collegian Staff Writer

Student apathy towards the Undergraduate Student Government is legendary. In the last six years, voter turnout for USG elections has ranged between 20 and 26 percent. Most students do not know what USG does, and they feel alienated from their student government. But although USG does not have the full respect of the students, it has come a long way.

In 1975, president Joe Seuffer was faced with the task of rebuilding USG after the previous president, George Cernusca, became involved in an insurance scandal. The USG Senate claimed Cernusca signed with two insurance companies for student health insurance. USG spent months in an impeachment trial but the impeachment was unsuccessful.

During that time Cluck was a member of the University Coalition, a group promoting student action but not connected to USG.

"We formed to stop increasing tuition because USG never really addressed the issue of tuition," he said. "They had their own group to stop tuition but we felt they never did anything."

Cluck said USG began to address student issues under 1976 president W.T. Williams and vice president Dave Hickton. Williams was "radical but polished in terms of what he wanted and knew how to get," Cluck said.

Williams said students had been isolated from USG in previous administrations and he focused on openness.

"Dave Hickton and myself captured the imagination of the people and we put students back into the student government by being more open," he said.

Jeff Goldsmith, a 1976 USG senator and former coordinator of Students for PennPIRG, agreed that Williams improved relations between USG and the students.

leaders considered University officials their enemies, Cluck said. Ackerman and Rupert worked through these problems and opened the door for today's better communication, he said.

"The tide changed with Ackerman and credibility started. We got some decent work done, mainly in the area of lobbying," Cluck said.

Ackerman's lobbying efforts produced the first student liaison to the federal government.

"We believed in the need for students to work with local, state and federal government to promote student issues," Ackerman said. "That was the beginning of a policy of looking toward Washington."

"We approached problems in a way that was welcomed by University administrators. W.T. led the way to transition and we got students to sit down with the administration and discuss problems fully," he said.

Although student lobbying was effective during that time, USG's programs and services were put aside when the University budget was not released from Harrisburg until late in the year. Rupert said he and Ackerman spent most of their term in office informing students about increasing tuition.

analysis

Seuffer spent most of his year in office putting USG back together. He remained behind the scenes until he and other student leaders signed a letter calling for University President John W. Oswald's resignation. The students claimed that Oswald was insensitive to students' needs.

Bill Cluck, adviser to the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws and a USG senator, has worked with each USG president since Seuffer. He said student leaders were much more radical during 1975-76 than they are today.

"W.T. was by far the best president we've had since I've been here, and Dave was totally trustworthy," Goldsmith said. "W.T. did more for the students than any other president and he was willing to put his neck on the line if he had to."

Williams helped USG gain the respect of the students, but University administrators did not respect USG until 1977 president Grant Ackerman and vice president Denny Rupert took office, Cluck said.

Administrators were wary of USG after the attempted impeachment of Cernusca, and most students

"Most of our time was taken up with making students aware of higher tuition and getting them to write their legislators," he said. "We also tried to start a Pennsylvania students lobbying group, but students from the University of Pittsburgh didn't want to go through with it."

Student leaders recognized the need to better organize the various governments during this time.

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Moslem fundamentalists control Iranian elections

By The Associated Press

The Islamic Republican Party and its hardline clerical allies have won a majority in the runoff round of the Iranian parliamentary election, Tehran Radio said yesterday.

Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini also appeared to be tightening controls over the military and the press.

The Iranian revolutionary leader has said the new Parliament will decide the fate of the American hostages. Many Islamic Republicans say the captives should go on trial as spies if deposed Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, in exile in Egypt, is not returned to Iran to face charges of murder and corruption.

The Islamic Republican Party won 50 of 98 seats in the Parliament that were decided in the first round of voting March 14. Returns from Friday's second round showed that the IRP had won 60 of the 124 seats decided as of midday yesterday. Most of the other winners were independents, including Moslem fundamentalists expected to support the IRP. The radio report of a majority appeared to include some of these fundamentalist winners.

The second round of voting in 23

districts has been postponed because of anti-government unrest in those areas. But the constitution allows the 270-seat Parliament to convene once 180 members are elected.

A Beirut-based newsletter reported yesterday Iranian Foreign Minister Sadegh Ghotbzadeh expressed fears to Arab leaders that a long economic blockade by the West could force Tehran to turn to Moscow for help.

An-Nahar Arab Report said that during a recent Mideast tour, "Ghotbzadeh belied the air of self-confidence which he assumed in public once he was alone with his Arab hosts. The Arab leaders adopted an ambiguous attitude to Ghotbzadeh's pleas for help."

The United States has cut diplomatic and economic ties with Iran to pressure it into releasing the 53 American hostages. America's allies have promised to step up pressure on Iran by May 17 if "decisive progress" is not made toward releasing the captives.

Ghotbzadeh was quoted as saying Iran "cannot withstand an economic boycott imposed by the United States if it is supported by Western Europe and Japan."

Backseat Van Gogh: high energy and enthusiasm

Editor's Note: Backseat Van Gogh was the result of a strange twist of events. Bassist Kenny Mathieu and drummer Rocco Fortunato were members of Tommy Wareham's band, The Intrigues, which was popular as the Phyrst's happy hour attraction. Wareham suddenly decided to disband the group, leaving The Phyrst without a Friday afternoon act. Needing another band to replace them, the Phyrst's bar manager suggested that Mathieu and Fortunato team up with Jamie Rounds and David Fox, who were playing as a duo on weeknights. Billed as The Rockets (the name was eventually changed due to copyright problems), their first appearance was performed without any rehearsal. But the enthusiasm and energy which the band generated more than made up for its lack of polish. Since that time they have

The Intrigues. What can you tell us about those days?
MATHIEU: The band was a necessary step in our evolution as musicians, but not as far as this band is concerned. Probably the main thing is that Rocco and I became known here and that gave impetus to what we are doing. The Intrigues played weddings, Holiday Inns, bars, private functions — the band played everything. Wherever we played, we remained as bizzare as we could.
FORTUNATO: Our ability was to be bizzare, or, to give them anything they wanted. We could play anything. We could go play a wedding and play polkas, then turn around and in the same night play rock 'n' roll.
COLLEGIAN: Considering the band's unusual beginning, your debut was quite successful.
MATHIEU: We had minimal rehearsal.

out of The Rockets, before we were Backseat Van Gogh, was just the enthusiasm. . . it was fun, the crowd loved it.
COLLEGIAN: So, you decided to change, to become more professional. How did this come about?
ROUNDS: We put in a couple of original songs. I remember being scared at making the transition from playing Beatles songs to doing something that people couldn't automatically sing along with. But then we found out that people were singing along to it after the first couple of weeks, and that's what really turned my head around.
COLLEGIAN: Was this the originals or the new wave songs?
ROUNDS: Both. We started filtering in some new wave things at about the same time we came up with some of our own tunes. And so our image changed bit by

bit, you focus on that.
COLLEGIAN: Are your songs written individually, or collectively as Backseat Van Gogh?
MATHIEU: Jamie and David have been our principle writers so far. We usually take a raw product that's been written by one of the members. Then we sit down with it and work real hard, and collectively create an arrangement from that.
COLLEGIAN: Polish it up?
MATHIEU: More than polish, we form it, we create it.
ROUNDS: I know how good Kenny and David sound together on lead parts. I know the notes they can hit, I know the notes they have trouble with, and it's a

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inspiration for writing because it's almost like a goal: Let's give this vehicle another chance to express itself.
COLLEGIAN: What is this sound that's evolving? How would you define it?
FORTUNATO: Probably, we're the last people in the world who can define that sound. We do it; we can't see it, we can't hear it. We are it.
MATHIEU: Well, we do have a handle on it finally. At the beginning we couldn't hear it at all; it really is hard to know what your sounding like out front.
ROUNDS: We know how to make it, but we don't know how to describe it.

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Interview

worked hard, building up a repertoire of original songs, while simultaneously gaining an ever-increasing following in town. Collegian staff writers Jon Brian Peterson and Mary Jo Santilli interviewed Backseat Van Gogh last month at David Fox's apartment. The following text has been edited for length and clarity.

COLLEGIAN: From what we understand, Kenny and Rocco were members of Tommy Wareham's band,

We did it as a lark to see if it would work. It beganto work as soon as we realized that's what we wanted to do. . . At first it was fun, but not professional.
COLLEGIAN: You weren't taking it seriously?
FOX: Not really. It was high energy, a lot of enthusiasm and excitement, not a lot of finesse. In fact the first job we played was without any rehearsal. It was basically songs that we all agreed we knew.
FORTUNATO: The energy that came

bit. I'm not even sure if the people knew that the new wave songs were songs that we wrote or songs that they hadn't heard before — whatever.
COLLEGIAN: It's obvious that classic rock 'n' roll is at the heart of all your shows. Who were your early influences?
MATHIEU: Wayne Newton, Mel Torme. . . No, seriously, I think it would be hard to find someone who hasn't influenced us. We're all old enough to remember the beginnings of rock 'n' roll. . . well, Jamie is a little younger,



Backseat Van Gogh

Photo by Nick Ostrosky