

Running on empty

Problems of disorganization, lack of unity plague USG

Editor's Note: This is the first of a two-part series examining the Undergraduate Student Government. Today's editorial will deal with some of the problems within USG; tomorrow will offer possible solutions.

Problems at the Undergraduate Student Government are like tribbles from "Star Trek" — they keep multiplying and never go away. During Hal Shaffer's administration last winter, USG executives made a hasty merger of JEM productions with the department of programs and services, and another hasty merger of the department of women's affairs with the department of minority affairs.

A weak transition complicated problems of communication, structure and priorities in Joe Healey's administration, which has been punctuated by sharp divisions of opinion. Although Healey claims inter-

nal chaos has subsided, there is no strong evidence that USG has put effective government ahead of petty political battles. Healey says USG's priorities are twofold — serving students and mending the internal structure and dissension in the organization. Healey does not believe that tackling both priorities simultaneously is unwise. But the problem is like riding two horses at the same time; Healey's idealism has unintentionally led USG off the track.

For example, the Senate Appointments Review Board and Healey bucked and bickered about some Fall Term appointments that should have been made months ago, but that were approved only this week.

Some department directors began working without proper Senate approval, a blatant violation of a bill revising appointment procedures for executive departments and a dangerous bypass of basic checks

and balances crucial to democratic government.

The USG calendar is also taking a licking because of "illegal acts" and poor coordination. McDonald's Corp. is justified for requesting compensation because of the lack of copyright marks on its advertisements and the added cost from an extra free Big Mac coupon in the calendar.

Ernie Hicks, former JEM manager, resigned this summer and left the chores of producing the calendar behind without passing on any procedures. Past procedures should have been documented, and Hicks, whom Healey claimed would rather work alone than with other people, should have stuck with the calendar from the first day of planning to the first day of distribution.

Poor communication and lack of structure in business proceedings is another sign of disorganization. A

perfect illustration is the \$12,000 in unexpected, unpaid bills from Shaffer's administration — bills that USG could not immediately pay because of insufficient cash reserves. These ghost bills were eventually paid using funds from a money market certificate.

A double standard of communication with the news media also exists. USG would like The Daily Collegian to look the other way during meetings so members can bicker in peace, but some of those same members don't mind airing their "dirty laundry" against USG anonymously.

Moreover, USG is hampered in its effort to serve students by a continual stream of resignations.

But North Halls senator Ray Zarczynski gave a more vivid reason for his resignation, saying he was

disillusioned with USG and that some people "are too politically oriented" and are in student government "for their own good."

Other resignations from departments have severely hampered effective student government. Bill Cluck and Vic Dupuis resigned this summer as directors of the voter registration drive over a misunderstanding with Healey concerning keywords to the USG office. Business Manager Tim Noonan was the latest fatality on Oct. 20, attributing his resignation to "academic and time constraints."

A captain must be ultimately responsible for the sinking of his ship, but Healey's lackluster leadership is only partly at fault. Healey does not and may never have a firm base of support in USG because senators and other members consider him an outsider instead of a leader with fresh ideas.

Letters to the Editor

Check the facts

As an historical researcher currently working on a project designed to place the Penn State fraternities on the National Register of Historic Places, I couldn't help noticing some inaccuracies in The Daily Collegian's Homecoming tabloid article "Fraternity houseful of tradition... and ghosts."

The Phi Delta Theta house is not necessarily the oldest fraternity house at Penn State, depending on how one defines "fraternity house." While it is the oldest house originally built as a fraternity and still in use as a fraternity, the Delta Upsilon house on Locust Lane (which was built as a private residence in the spring of 1881) is the oldest house being used today as a fraternity.

Either the old Phi Delta (24 S. Allen) or the old Sigma Chi house (22 S. Allen), both built in late 1881 or early 1892, would be the oldest houses built specifically for fraternity use still standing. Both are among the oldest extant buildings in town. The original Beta Theta Pi house, identified in the article as the "first... at the University," was several years younger than these two houses. Also, the "new" Phi Delta (1915) is the third oldest of current fraternity houses, not the second as stated by the article; if all houses still standing which were originally built as fraternities are considered, the Phi Delta ranks about 15th. Similarly, the Alpha Chi Rho house is not the fourth oldest of current fraternities.

The top five are Delta Upsilon (1881), Phi Delta Theta (1894), Phi Gamma Delta (1915), Sigma Phi Gamma (1916) and Phi Mu Delta (1918).

I would also like to call attention to some inaccuracies in the Collegian article of Oct. 2 on our fraternity nomination, which only came to our notice recently.

We are the Historic Registration Project, not Historic Register Program as stated. Also, the National Register of Historic Places was referred to as the Pennsylvania National Historic Register.

The National Register, administered by the Department of the Interior, is an official listing of our nation's architectural heritage; inclusion on the National Register affords protection for historic buildings through various means.

I feel that the writer of the article over-emphasized my concerns about this fraternity nomination. There is an excellent chance that the Penn State fraternities will be duly enrolled as buildings of significance to our community.

Douglas McMin, researcher
Oct. 20



Accusations

The Nader Vakili Forum printed on Oct. 23 cannot hide his animosity toward the United States behind a facade of fallacies and nebulous accusations.

In the first place, how is the United States responsible for the declaration of martial law in Turkey? Although Turkey is a

NATO member, NATO countries, best illustrated by the headstrong France, do not have a history of blindly following United States dictates.

Second, the delivery of AWACS airplanes to Saudi Arabia was deemed necessary to protect that country from an expansion of the hostilities. The United States does not want them to be used to monitor Iranian air missions for the use of Iraq.

Vakili seems to ignore the 1972 cooperation treaty between Iraq and the Soviet Union. The Iraqi army has been equipped and advised solely by the Russians. It is thus against United States interests if Iraq conquers Iran, spreads its form of socialism in the Mid-East, and leaves Iran vulnerable to a Soviet invasion.

Concerning the hostage issue, what guarantee does the United States have that the hostages will escape the war unharmed and be released by the Iraqis?

With the Iranian Parliament finally deliberating on the hostage problem, the United States must tread carefully and not disturb President Carter's policy of "watchful waiting."

As to Secretary of State Edmund Muskie's remarks concerning the hostages, although I do not have his exact words, our own presidential election shows how statements can be twisted and taken out of context.

The Iran-Iraq conflict must be seen for what it is: a territorial dispute between two Muslim neighbors and not a United States plot to subjugate the people of Iran. Vakili has a right to his opinions, but that is what they are, opinions and not believable hypotheses.

Alan S. Weber
Oct. 21

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Betsy Long
Editor

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Business Manager

Paterno has rights like everyone else

I am not Joe Paterno's No. 1 fan. In fact, I'm not even close.

But, Joe Paterno has the right to speak his opinion — just like you and I do.

Paterno has been viciously attacked this week by both The Daily Collegian and students for speaking his opinion — an opinion that came in his endorsement of the Republican presidential ticket.

Paterno was criticized by his critics who did not do their homework, and now may be the time to pose some questions to these critics.

Let's start at square one. The United States Constitution says every person in this country is entitled to the right of freedom of speech. Paterno qualifies for this right. In this case, the Collegian and some students did not think so. It is tragically like this: "Hey, you, the media, which live by this freedom of speech doctrine, choose to lambast a man for exercising his Constitutional right."

If the media think it is so unethical for Paterno to use his name to support a political party and, in turn, influence voters in next week's general elections, then why did both the media print the stories on the press conference? Nobody forced the media to publish these stories.

If the media disagreed with Paterno's motives, then why did both local daily papers give the Paterno-Bush press conference front page coverage?

The media also failed to do its homework on Paterno himself. Paterno is one of the leading Republicans in the state, according to David Winkler, a former chairman of the College Republicans.

Evidently, the Collegian believes this does not qualify Paterno to endorse a member of his own party. Does the Collegian know any more than Paterno on the major political issues?

"Famous" people have been endorsing candidates for many elections now. And not so famous" people have been endorsing candidates by their votes on election day. Paterno's endorsement is not likely to sway the opinion of the informed voter.

The media claim Paterno is using his name to sway voters toward a candidate for political office, but is it not hypocritical of the media to use their reputation to also influence voters by endorsing a political candidate on an editorial page?

The media, in this case, want to suppress an individual's right to freedom of speech. The story line goes something like this: "Hey, you, the people, can't say that; only we, the media, can say that."

Andy Linker is an 11th-term journalism major and a copy editor for The Daily Collegian.

Politics beyond big business

This is part one of a two-part series on Barry Commoner, the presidential nominee of the Citizens' Party, and its Pennsylvania affiliate, the Consumer Party.

Eugene McCarthy asked people to vote a "protest" vote when he was on the ballot in 1968. Last week he came out in favor of Ronald Reagan. Unless he intends this as a protest against rationality, I have trouble understanding his reasoning.

Before this bizarre development, McCarthy told a Daily Collegian reporter that affirmative protest votes might make it "... possible to put together a new political movement by 1984."

Barry Commoner's speech at the HUB Oct. 23 showed that this new political movement has already begun.

Commoner, the presidential nominee of the Citizens' Party, laid out his basic positions in a forceful, well-reasoned manner. His was a voice of sanity and clarity, one that stood in sharp contrast to the insane saber-rattling and muddled economic soothing of mainstream politicians.

Commoner claims that the Citizens' Party is a truly new movement because it brings up fundamental issues, ones the mainstream parties refuse to address. These issues revolve around the fact that certain huge corporations have such an effect on our lives that they no longer deserve to be treated as private entities.

Due to several Supreme Court decisions of the late 1800s, corporations enjoy constitutional protections originally intended for individuals. These huge economic machines, with influence unrestrained of the federal government, have the power to create and destroy jobs, manipulate public opinion, with words like "freedom," "rights," and "government harassment."

Corporations have rights, but these are the "rights of capital," not the political rights of individuals. In mounting their subtle public relations campaigns — either directly through their cynical advertising, or indirectly through the pathetic nostalgia of people like Ronald Reagan — corporations rely on people confusing rights of capital with the Bill of Rights.

Rights of capital entitle corporations to put their money wherever it will yield the highest return, with no one having outside the corporation having access to the decision-making process.

Agencies like OSHA and EPA can chase around after violations, but the result is a huge bureaucracy that can be outflanked by the brains in big corporations and doesn't have the flexibility to deal with small outfits, too often clumsily bumbling them in the process.

The rights of capital insure that the only people with any say in corporate decisions are the managers. In formal terms stockholders have power over the

managers, but in practice their most significant involvement lies in cashing their dividend checks. Consumers, whose miraculous "invisible hand" is supposed to be the ultimate arbiter, are more like passive cash-flow conduits manipulated by advertising and intimidated into apathy by the confusing jargon of "experts."

The truth is that managers are responsible for corporate decisions; and these people are judged solely on the "bottom line" — the maximization of profit in a relatively short time.

And what happens when the bottom line conflicts with social good? Need you ask?

Ideally, the bottom line should never conflict with social welfare. In Adam Smith's idealized free market the end results of thousands of selfish decisions was supposed to yield the greatest public good. But we no longer live in the 1700s — Exxon is not a harmless little pig factory, and there is no free market in our major industries, but rather multi-national oligopolies.

The same unacceptable corporate influence does place in domestic affairs. In "The Poverty of Power," Commoner gives many examples of the far-reaching impact of the decisions made by a handful of executives after World War II.

The ecological balance, the health of millions of people, and the economy, both in terms of inflation and unemployment, were all adversely affected by these private decisions.

After World War II the petrochemical industry exploded, resulting in a flood of non-biodegradable plastics and inorganic chemicals being released into the ecosystem. The long-term consequences of these ongoing practices are unknowable in principle. How many more ozone layer problems, how many more PCB scares are in store for us? No one knows, and no one can know.

The electrical utilities moved into nuclear power and we all know the expense and potential disaster associated with this move.

The automobile industry shifted to bigger, heavier cars and the results were decreased fuel efficiency and the formation of smog.

The Citizens' Party's basic point is this — as shown by these examples, corporate influence is now so pervasive that it can no longer be made solely on the basis of maximizing profit.

Will we have the courage and vision to move beyond the outdated notion of the "rights of capital?" Or will we hang on to it as the Democrats and Republicans want us to, and continue on our slide into the twin suicides of ecological degradation and nuclear war?

But is it so paranoid? Let's examine the situation without the distortions of preconceived notions like "free enterprise" or "the rights of capital."

Isn't it the truth that our foreign policy to a large extent follows along after corporate decisions?

In the 1950s, oil company executives decided to shift their production to the Middle East. This move has tied us into an extremely volatile area for the past 25 years, with no way to disentangle ourselves visible in the near future.

Meetings are closed

USG business board bars public, press

By DAVID MEDZERIAN
Daily Collegian Staff Writer

The board of directors of the Undergraduate Student Government's business department yesterday unanimously voted to bar the press and the public from attending its weekly meetings.

"Board of directors' meetings are never open to the public," Andrea Solat, president of the USG Senate, said.

As an example, Solat said even the Board of Directors of Collegian Inc. — publishers of The Daily Collegian — closes its meetings to the public. (Editor's Note: Collegian board of directors meetings are open to the public except for discussions on personnel matters.)

In support of closing the meeting, board chairman Gordy Beitenmiller said although the board is part of a student organization and not a corporate board of directors, "these are business decisions."

Senate appropriations committee chairman Ellie Sternberg said since decisions made by the board are not kept secret there is no need for its meeting to be open.

"When we make decisions, they come out (in reports to the senate)," Sternberg said.

USG President Joe Healey, who was not present at the meeting, said yesterday that the board voted to close its meetings because opening them could hurt competition between USG projects and other organizations. Healey used the Computer Date Match program as an example.

"The same reasons we used to close the meeting are used in society," Healey said. "Society or later, (the press) will find out what went on — hopefully sooner."

Healey said previous board meetings were not closed to the public because no one had ever attempted them.

"It never came up," he said.

After the meeting, Sternberg said the board had voted to postpone the Date Match program until at least Spring Term. On Monday, the USG Senate approved the appointment of Ron Specter (9th administration of justice) as coordinator for the Date Match program.

Other items on the board's agenda were a report by USG treasurer Larry Atwell on any unusual profits or losses by the organization last week; discussion of executive projects; update on the USG movie and term break bus programs; and a report on the selection of a new business manager to replace former business manager Tim Noonan, who resigned last week.

Of six voting members, three were present when the vote to close the meeting was taken. In addition to Sternberg and Solat, town senator Anne Weidner also voted to close the meeting. Absent board members were Healey, vice president Andy Weintraub and former business manager Ernie Hicks.

The board was formed by the USG Senate Spring Term to help solve organizational and communications problems in the department.

Highly radioactive waste to be routed through county

By DENISE LAFFAN
Daily Collegian Staff Writer

The Pennsylvania route for the shipment of highly radioactive waste runs through Centre County, a recent Nuclear Regulatory Commission report has announced.

The report named routes in 33 states — including Interstate 80 from Youngstown across Pennsylvania.

Gary Sanborn, public affairs officer for the NRC, said there is almost no shipping of spent nuclear fuel going on at the moment.

"In 1977, President Carter halted the reprocessing of spent fuel so that reprocessing is not occurring with commercial reactors," Sanborn said.

"Instead, it's being stored in spent fuel pools at the sites of the reactors."

"This policy may change, however, when the spent fuel pools become full, he added. The routes have been established for possible future use.

The waste material is extremely radioactive, Thomas Gersky, director of the Bureau of Radiation Protection for the state Department of Environmental Resources, said. In fact, the level of radiation is higher in the nuclear waste than in the fuel before it is used, he said.

Despite the high radioactivity of the spent fuel, Gersky said the transportation of such waste is relatively safe.

"The fuel is shipped in casks which have to undergo a variety of tests before they are approved by the NRC," he said.

These tests include: having a train traveling at 80 miles per hour crash into the east; a truck towing a east and traveling at 80 miles per hour and crashing into a corner embankment; and a variety of tests testing resistance to fire, water and falling off cliffs, Gersky said.

In all cases, the worst result was the east was dented but nothing escaped, he said.

"I can't say there is no possibility of an accident," Gersky said, "but I'd say they're safe for 99.99 percent of all accidents that could occur."

Sanborn said the NRC is also concerned about safeguarding the casts against sabotage.

The shipments are escorted then and the vehicles are plainly identified," he said.

John Spearly, director of the Centre County Emergency Management Agency, said if the route had to go through Centre County, the I-80 route was probably the safest because it is a four-lane highway with little traffic.

"There have been shipments of radioactive materials through Centre County, but nothing with as high a level of radiation as spent nuclear fuel," Spearly said.

"The shipments are escorted then and the vehicles are plainly identified," he said.

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Halloween 'treat' walkers

Children of all ages gathered downtown last night for State College's annual Halloween parade. The State College Area High School Band, above, led the paraders along College Avenue on their way to Memorial Field on Fraser Street near the State College Post Office. At right, a young "Bug" gets a lift from a fellow parader.

Photos by Janis Burger

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