

opinions

The Daily Collegian
Tuesday, Dec. 14

editorial opinion

Varying the variance procedure

By next fall, many students are going to have many grievances. Of course, there will be the standard I-can't-get-this-paper-done-on-time grievance. And there will be the routine how-could-you-give-me-a-C-grievance. But for many students, there will be the how-could-the-University-change-to-semester-in-my-senior-year grievance.

Many students caught in the transition between terms and semesters may find their credit balance awry or their course sequence no longer in sequence as blue books, course titles and core requirements undergo a massive upheaval.

Rather than stay an extra semester, these students will probably seek variances — an official University procedure — that, in effect, allow students to graduate without their three-credit hour cultures requirement or their one credit Phys.Ed. requirement.

Granting a variance is a routine matter in most colleges, hardly something that deans tremble about. But under semesters something more than the usual might be needed.

To allow students to voice academic complaints, the Calendar Conversion Council has unanimously approved the need for a grievance committee. The council has proposed setting up the grievance committee as a standing committee of the council.

Of course, the council members have waded through the calendar transition material more than anyone else at the University. But to be objective, the grievance board should be an independent body.

Also, if students are to receive a fair, impartial hearing, the composition of the board should be fairly divided between students, faculty and administrators. Under the original proposal, the five-member grievance board would have been selected from a pool of 22 undergraduate students, 10 faculty members and 10 administrators appointed by the provost.

Members of this original board would be selected on a case-by-case basis. For exam-

ple, graduate students would hear graduate students' complaints and when feasible, the faculty members would be from the same college as the students.

But calendar conversion members found this board to be too... Well, maybe it was just too democratic.

The grievance committee that will probably be approved by the Calendar Conversion Council consists of five to seven members with a minimum of three alternative members. While the board has not been selected yet, the council should appoint several students.

But before the grievance board can ever be truly effective, the University must adopt a coherent, rational plan to deal with the avalanche of student requests for variances. Council Secretary James R. Dungan, who bet his money that not more than 25 cases will be heard, might be surprised when 1,000 rioting students line up outside his door.

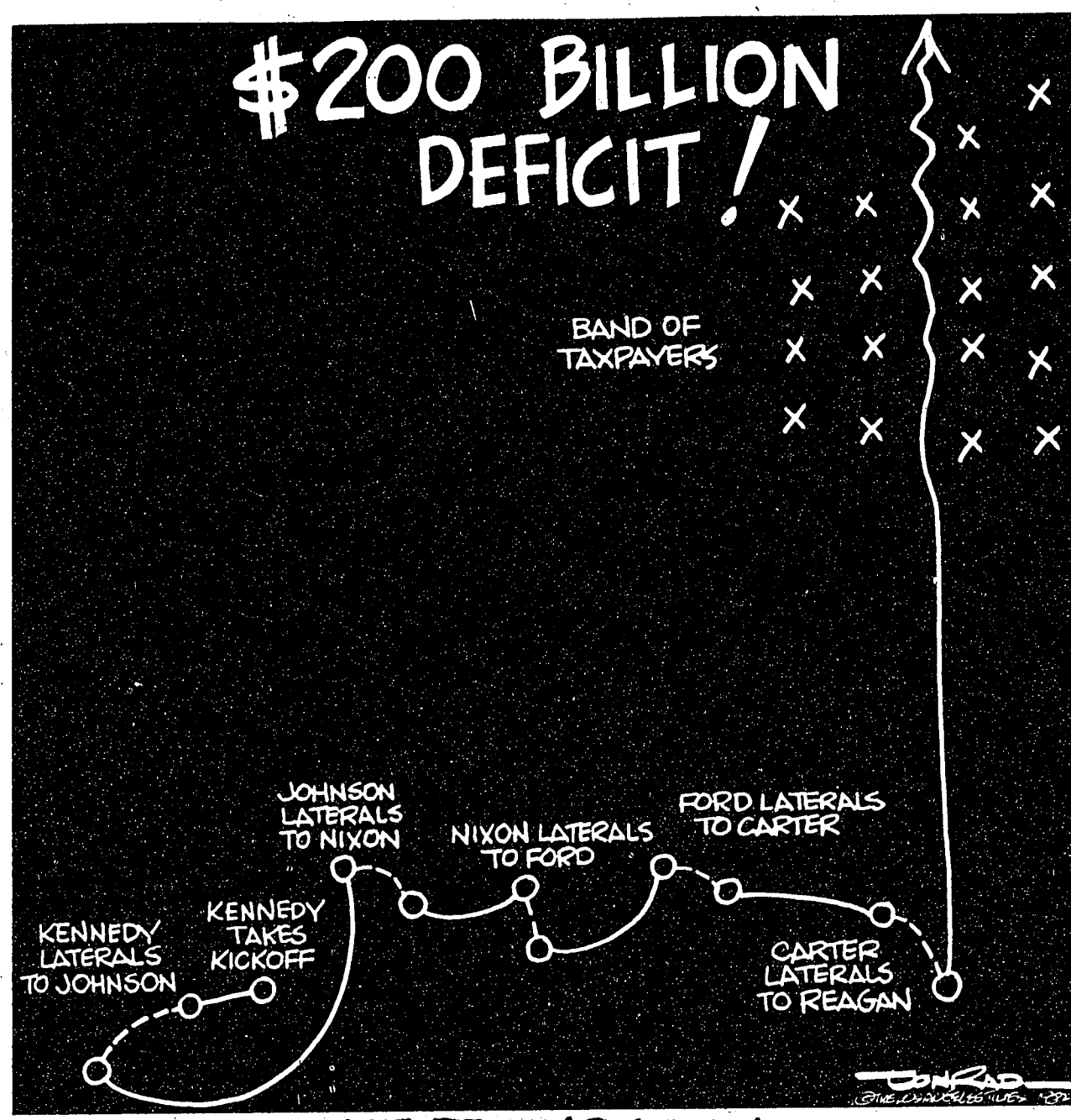
As it stands now, no one knows where those 1,000 students would go.

Some colleges in the University might have grievance boards. But other colleges might not. The only thing any one really knows is that the grievance committee will hear a complaint after it has been reviewed by the college dean. If the dean and the committee disagree, the grievance will go to the provost.

Either the University should have one comprehensive, independent board to hear student grievances or each college should have an autonomous board to hear student grievances.

Uniform, fair standards need to be enforced when an impersonal board is dealing with a student's future plans. If some of the colleges have their own mechanisms, and the University has another, that won't happen.

But most of all, the University needs something more than Dungan's "partially symbolic effort" to relieve problems caused by the calendar conversion.



the Collegian
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Tuesday, Dec. 14, 1982
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Editor

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Complaints: News and editorial complaints should be presented to the editor.

reader opinion

Journalism?

I was quite surprised to see Bonnie Morter's "news story" in The Daily Collegian on Nov. 12. "Groups still waiting for abortion bill injunction." I was surprised because when I read the headline, I thought she was referring to groups who both favored and opposed the new law.

However, as I read the article, it soon became apparent that Ms. Morter was only referring to — and had only talked to — groups that are trying to stop the new law.

I'm sure those who support the new law also have some feelings and comments about it. I'm sure the lawyers for the state who are defending the law might have some predictions about the likelihood of an injunction, too.

As a newspaper reporter for nine years prior to coming to the Catholic Conference, I was taught to cover both sides of a story, no matter what my personal feelings about the issue.

And as a self-confessed "news junkie" who still devours newspapers by the pound and is still concerned about the journalism profession, I am pained to discover that the Collegian has reporters who don't seem to know or appreciate that basic tenet of journalism.

I assume that at least some of the Collegian writers are enrolled in the journalism program at the University. I would hope that the journalism department is attempting to instill in its students a respect for dedication to fairness in journalism. A propaganda piece masquerading as a news story does not meet

that standard, I'm afraid.

Going beyond the basic unfairness of the story itself, the article is filled with factual errors. The abortion "bill" referred to by Ms. Morter in her first paragraph is not a bill at all, but a law, because it was signed by Gov. Dick Thornburgh this past summer. Since it is a state law (it was passed by the State Legislature, the regulations will not be structured by the U.S. Department of Health and Welfare, but by the Pennsylvania Department of Health.

"We believe there was no immediate action taken on the bill because the state predicted the injunction request," Ms. Morter attributes to Pat Monteth, president of the local NOW chapter. But if Ms. Morter had taken the trouble to look into the matter, she would

have found that it normally takes state agencies several months to draw up regulations to implement a law. In fact, the abortion regulations have now been drawn up, published and there is a 30 day period for the public to comment.

There are a lot of other unexplained details in the article and the lack of transitions does not help a person unfamiliar with the story to grasp the issues. My letter is not directed at Ms. Morter personally, but my hope is that all the people involved in journalism at the University will learn how to write a balanced, informative news story and not allow themselves to be used by one side or another when reporting on a controversial issue.

Bernard F. Shire, information officer
Pennsylvania Catholic Conference Dec. 13

It's your turn

Where do you fit in the MX missile debate? Do you think we should spend more on a missile we don't need, or do you think we need to catch up to the Soviet Union militarily? Or should we work at eliminating war altogether?

Let us hear your opinions on one of the most crucial issues of our decade. On Tuesday, Dec. 21, The Daily Collegian will devote its Op-ed page to the MX missile question. Submit letters (two-pages typed) and forums (three-to-four pages typed) to the editorial editors, 126 Carnegie, no later than Dec. 17.

John Glenn's got the right stuff for the race

He is the man Republicans fear most. He may have been a key factor in Ted Kennedy's decision not to run. Friz Mondale, no doubt, would like to see him simply go away. But John Glenn is in for the long haul. He may be our next president. He has the right stuff.

"The Right Stuff," Tom Wolfe's book on the original seven Mercury astronauts, examines what it takes to ensure survival in the competitive and sometimes reckless world of the early space program. What is the right stuff? It's a combination of raw courage and control, dedication and ambition and skill and self-reliance.

his preachiness, his pilot's mentality and his fame... Sturdy horse Glenn is. He jogs, sits, flies. His mind is our there on the next wave of high technology while much of his heart still is rooted in his own deep faith.

The right stuff does not always guarantee immediate success. In 1961, Glenn was denied the opportunity to become the first American in space. In 1970 he lost his first bid for statewide office in a bitter primary fight with Howard Metzenbaum. At the Democratic National Convention in 1976 he destroyed his chance to be Carter's running mate by delivering a keynote address that was, to be kind, awful.

To make matters worse for Glenn, the

other keynote speaker, Barbara Jordan of Texas, electrified the convention with her eloquence and style. Also, word spread that some of Carter's key aides (i.e. Rosalynn) objected to Glenn because his wife, Annie, had a serious speech impediment. But John Glenn's right stuff has enabled him to make defeats work for him.

Had he not been passed over for Alan Shepard in 1961, he would never have been selected to make the first American orbital space flight in Friendship 7 on Feb. 20, 1962. He returned as a more beloved hero than Shepard, and was given a Broadway ticker-tape parade second only to Charles Lindbergh's.

His defeat in 1970 also taught him some valuable lessons about harsh political realities. Again running against Metzenbaum, Glenn fought a tougher campaign. During the Cleveland City Club debate, Metzenbaum hinted that Glenn "had never met a payroll" during his years in the military and that he really "never held a job."

Glenn responded unmercifully. "It wasn't my checkbook, it was my life that was on the line. You go with me to a veteran's hospital, see their mangled bodies and tell them they didn't hold a job. Go with me and tell a Gold Star Mother her son didn't hold a job. Go to Arlington Cemetery, stand there and watch those flags fly and tell me those people didn't hold a job."

"I tell you, Howard Metzenbaum, you should be on your knees every day of your life thanking God that there were some men, some men who held a job."

Metzenbaum apologized. Glenn won the election.

Glenn may even be able to view the botched keynote speech as a blessing. Had he been given the No. 2 spot, he would now be facing the problem Mondale can't seem to shake — close association with former president Jimmy Carter.

Even Annie Glenn's disability has turned from a liability to an asset. Since the 1976 convention, she entered the Communications Research Institute at Hollins College in Roanoke, Va., where she overcame her stuttering. She has generated some very positive press by this personal victory. Add the fact that she often co-pilots her husband's twin engine Beechcraft Barron. She, too, has shown "the right stuff."

Demonstrating the ability to make lemonade from lemons or being married to a

woman who can attract voters are helpful when running for president, but eventually the people start asking about policy. What has John Glenn done as a U.S. senator? Where does he stand on the issues?

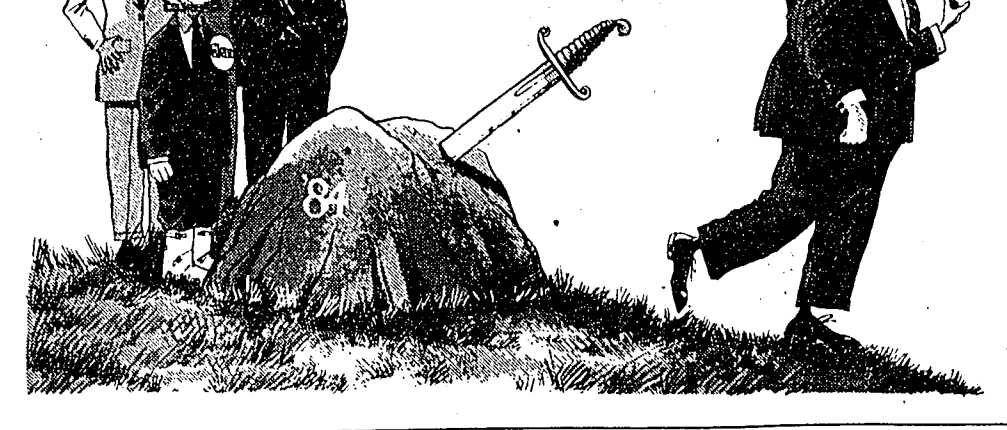
Glenn sits on the Governmental Affairs Committee and on the Special Committee on Aging. He is pro-choice and favors funding abortions for poor women with Medicaid monies. He has long supported the Equal Rights Amendment, and opposes the cuts to student loan programs.

But Glenn's area of expertise is in military and foreign policy. He sits on the important Foreign Affairs Committee where he is "known as a committee workhorse." Glenn supports the B-1 bomber, but opposes the MX missile. He opposed the transfer of the AWACS radar planes last year, but in 1979 he favored the sale of the F-15 fighters. Glenn has changed his position.

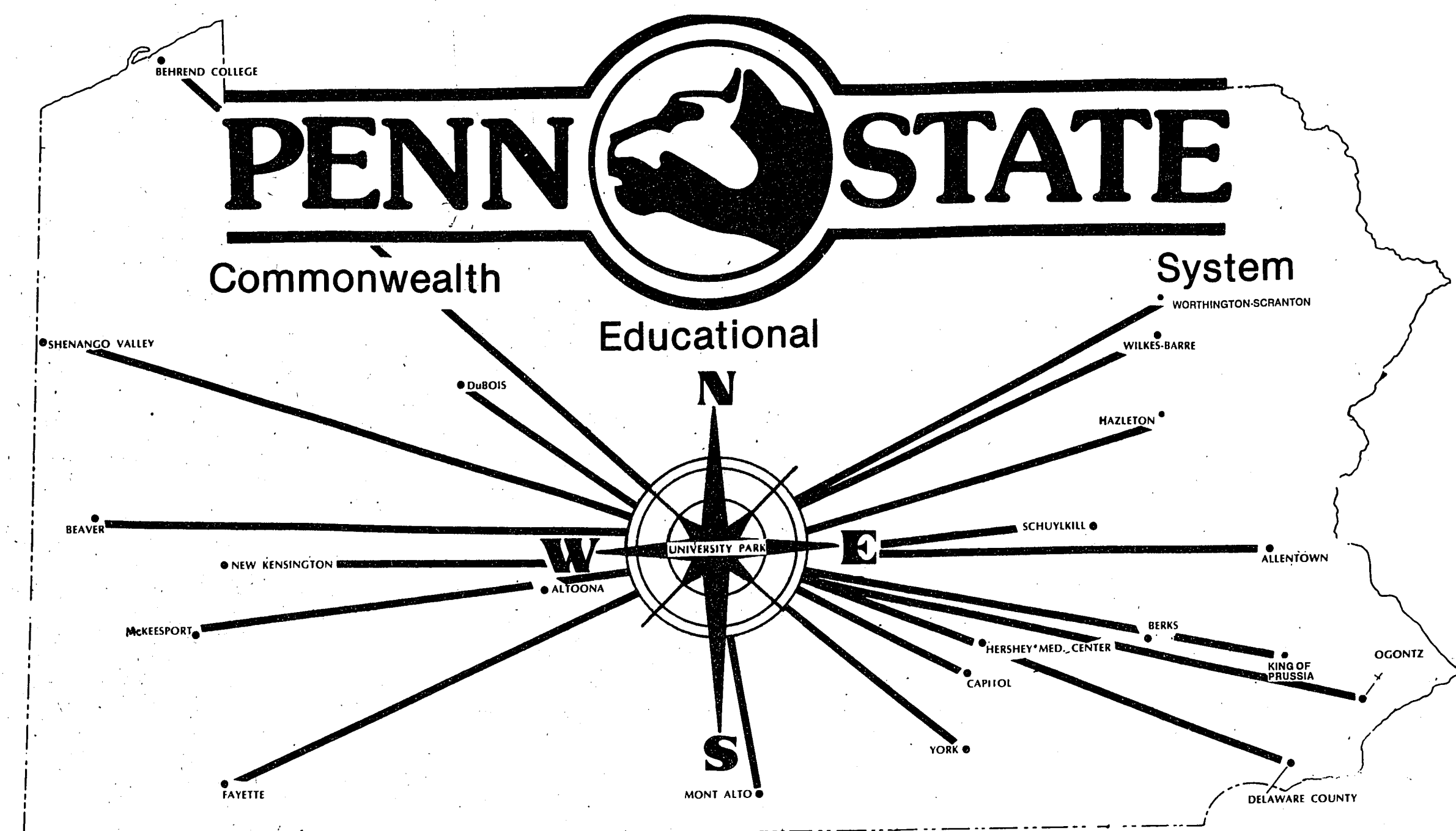
It may be too early to make guesses as to who will be occupying the White House in January 1985. But it is not too early to start considering what kind of qualities we as a nation want in our next president. Perhaps those qualities are possessed by the Eagle Scout-turned-astronaut-turned-senator from New Concord, Ohio, John Glenn has "the right stuff." But in our system, unfortunately, that's not always what we get.

Eagle Scouts, for the most part, have it. Bullies don't. For Marines, it's required. But not for peace demonstrators. Leaders who tape conversations of their illegal activities quickly lose it. Leaders who drive Oldsmobiles off bridges never had it to begin with.

If one possesses "the right stuff" he can still do well despite a lack of charisma. Time magazine's Hugh Sidney characterized Glenn as "solid, reasonable, cautious, collected, steady, sure. He is not flamboyant, dazzling, sparkling, soaring, riveting, mighty or super. He is not the product of a political fluke or miracle. He struggled to overcome



John Lord is a 12th-term political science major and a columnist for The Daily Collegian.



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Watch for announcements in the Collegian