

opinions

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The Daily Collegian
Friday Sept. 2, 1983

editorial opinion

A sad tribute to inhumanity

The United States' participation in World War I was triggered by a German U-boat sinking of the Lusitania, a civilian luxury liner carrying 128 American passengers and 1,070 other passengers.

Today, most of the free world is probably watching in shock, awaiting the Soviet Union's explanation of why it shot down a Korean 747 that flew into Soviet airspace Wednesday.

The parallels between the two incidents make one stand back, mouth open in horror, and wonder "what's going to happen now?" Both involved the slaughter of innocent people under the guise of military protection. Both involved nations whose relations were strained at best.

However, this is not the first time the Soviets have fired on civilian aircraft. In April 1978, another Korean aircraft wandered into Soviet airspace en route to Paris from Seoul. It was fired upon and forced to land on a frozen lake in the Soviet Union. Two people were killed and 13 more were injured.

Perhaps that was supposed to have served as "fair warning" to the world not to get lost over the Soviet Union because, this time, the Soviets left no survivors. Two hundred sixty-nine passengers reportedly perished because of the Soviet Union's disregard for human life and its paranoia concerning the secrecy of its air and naval positions.

One of them was U.S. Rep. Lawrence P. McDonald, D-Ga., on his way to a ceremony in South Korea commemorating the 30th anniversary of the U.S.-South Korea defense pact. While no official counts are available, another 29 Americans may have been on board.

This atrocity is even more gut-thumping considering the consequences of the shoot-

ing. The decision to destroy the civilian jet wasn't made on the spur of the moment by an inexperienced fighter pilot. News reports say the eight Soviet fighters tracked the aircraft at alternate times for nearly two and one half hours, remaining in contact with ground control.

Reports also say at least one of the Soviet fighters was close enough to visually identify the plane as civilian. The 747 was coldly eliminated as it left Soviet air space.

Although the Soviet news agency Tass said the aircraft ignored "warnings and signals," it gave no indication of what those warnings and signals were.

For now, the decision that must be made is how to retaliate, if at all. Military retaliation, like that which followed the Lusitania, would be out of line in this age of nuclear one-upmanship.

Some congressmen say the United States should pull out of our recent grain agreement with Moscow. But this move would be unfair to American farmers, and its past ineffectiveness does not indicate that it would safeguard against future incidents of this kind.

And nothing the United States decides to do will bring back the 269 who died.

If there's a lesson to be learned from the Soviets' erasure of a Korean Airlines mistake, it may be in the fact that while weapons systems have become more mature since 1915, international brotherhood has not.

And while this probably will not go down in history as the incident that started World War III, it will go down as a sad tribute to the fact that the same mentality that sank the Lusitania still existed 70 years later.

Of tenants, landlords, neighbors

The ongoing saga of student renters and their neighbors in the community finally opened a new chapter this week, a chapter full of dialogue, promise and compromise.

At the inaugural meeting of students and State College residents to discuss student housing in single-family neighborhoods, both sides came away with hopes that some long- and short-term solutions to controversial issues like the three-person occupancy limit aren't just pipedreams.

Students claim that the shortage of housing and the astronomical rates some landlords demand force them to break the three-to-a-unit ordinance. Other students insist that because some apartments can easily accommodate more than three renters, it should be allowed.

Despite the differences of opinion among students and townspeople, there should be some resolution in the offing, provided that students help to see it through.

The Centre Region Council of Governments' Rental Housing Advisory Committee is compiling data on the total holding capacity of downtown apartments. Also, the State College Planning Commission is examining student housing in single-family neighborhoods as part of a report on municipal housing ordinances.

These are first, and crucial, steps to determining if the limited occupancy ordinance itself is valid. Likewise, the hearing on a housing case by District Magistrate Clifford Yorks on Sept. 13 may set a precedent in the limited occupancy controversy.

In the past few weeks, code enforcement director James Quigley has received about 15 complaints regarding more than three students living in a housing unit. Before the controversy surfaced a couple of months ago, complaints were sparse.

However, due to what Quigley terms "the complete urbanization" of State College, residents are forming neighborhood groups, "a natural tendency of urbanization," he said. And these groups have started talking

more lately about their concerns that too many student renters will downgrade their areas. These fears may account for the seemingly resurfaced anti-student attitude in the community.

And despite the fact that more apartments are available, students are still trying to pack more than three people into apartments in order to cut costs. Those costs, of course, keep increasing because students have continually been willing to pay them.

Any uneducated consumer is easily exploited — and few students have made any effort to educate themselves.

Only by banding together and vocalizing their opinions and strength can students protect themselves.

"If students get involved in the process, they will have a voice," Quigley said. "If they have a voice, they will get the government to respect their suggestions."

If they sit at home with their two roommates, however, students will accomplish nothing at all.

University students who contribute such a great deal economically to the community aren't exercising their potentially powerful voice as they should.

For example, COG's Rental Housing Advisory Committee has yet to receive any applications for its advertised student representative position.

"That disappoints me," Charlene Harrison, committee chairwoman, said, "because here is a place students can voice concerns. Clearly, there is an opportunity that exists and no one is picking up on it."

The committee, which is composed of residents and municipal representatives, wants to look at non-governmental solutions to housing problems — using hearing boards instead of ordinances.

Someone is ready to listen, but save a few student leaders, most students aren't saying much.



reader opinion

Different strokes

I've noticed recently that about half the students here at Penn State are somehow different. They live in their own dorms, use separate showers and dress differently. Something they even look different. I'm not sure, but I really think I'm on to something here. I'll keep you posted.

Charles Canning, senior-computer science
Sept. 1

Pump protests

Thank you very much for printing the picture and story about the anti-pump activities on the Delaware River in Bucks County. As a former resident of Bucks County (this is my first semester at University Park), I voted for the referendum last May to stop the building of the water

Professors must be introduced

Today marks the completion of one week of classes under the new semester calendar. By now everyone has learned that having 50-minute classes is heaven while having only 15 minutes in between puts a damper on one's social life. Most students have been to each of their classes at least once and know the office hours of their professors. In some cases, this is all they know of their professor — his office hours.

received the University's 1983-84 Course Selector. This booklet contains information on 350 courses, baccalaureate degree requirements, evening division courses, independent study by correspondence and study abroad.

However, it does not elaborate on any professor beyond listing his name with the course description. Likewise, the University Bulletin for undergraduates (the blue book) fails to mention professors, and the Graduate School Bulletin stops with a listing of professors and their degrees. Professor information placed in each of these publications or added to each semester's schedule of classes would provide students with at least some idea of their would-be instructors.

To supplement printed background information, professors should tell their students about themselves, especially during the first class meeting. From a student's point of view, nothing is worse than a professor who begins without any introductory remarks. The student may never even learn the proper pronunciation of the professor's name.

Many professors do realize the need to convey information about themselves to their students. One professor went so far as to remark at the beginning of class that he remembers what it was like to be a student and be curious about a professor's background. He then described his background in detail and included where he did his undergraduate and graduate work, his special interest of study and his notable accomplishments in the field. Such an introduction establishes a professor's credibility, sets him apart from other professors in

his field and makes him seem more human. Other professors, however, stick to the prisoners of war motif — name, office hours and telephone. A few choose to say nothing.

The average student's penchant for a syllabus may be partially to blame for the extreme cases where a professor relates no background information. Perhaps the professor did give a detailed introduction once, only to have a student in the third row interrupt by raising his hand and requesting a syllabus.

Class size may also determine whether a professor gives a detailed introduction. Some professors may feel that the larger the class, the less contact they will have with individual students, so they make fewer introductory remarks. In these Forum-sized classes, however, just the opposite holds true. The less chance a student has of personal communication with a professor in a class, the more detailed should be the professor's introduction.

Often a student is advised to take professors, not classes. And yet, without a written guide or first hand knowledge of professors, the selection is a stab in the dark. However, can know something more about their professors than just name, office hours and telephone. Students and professors need to communicate with one another. They need to be introduced.

Karen Kmetz is a senior-biology major and columnist for The Daily Collegian. Her column appears on alternate Fridays.

reader opinion

Laps for sale

This is in response to the article, "Swimmers must pay fee at Nat and White Building." Without sounding insensitive to the University's need of funds for the aquatic facilities, I would like to say that I find it unfair to charge students for an activity that was once offered to them free as part of their affiliation with the University.

John Holt's article on swimming pool fees quotes Lou MacNeill, director of aquatic programs, as saying, "I don't know who has been supporting us, maybe it's athletic money from the football program."

It seems a little strange that the director of the department in need of funds does not know where the funds are coming from, and if it has been from

football athletic funds, one would think that after winning the national championship last year, funds would increase, not decrease.

Money is scarce for other athletic programs as well. As a member of the track team I am aware of the problem there, but I wouldn't want the University to resort to charging 50 cents per lap to run on the track. It may sound more ridiculous, but it is the same concept: taxing students for University facilities that in the past (and rightfully so) have been considered a benefit of being a Penn State student. With the recent rise in tuition, it appears unreasonable to ask this to become routine for all athletic facilities on campus.

Sharon Greene, sophomore-ecology
Sept. 1

Trilling tibitids

An open letter to Lisa Ventura and those members of the Undergraduate Student Government who are responsible for this year's Penn State Calendar — a most informative publication.

I would like to compliment you on the completion of a tabloid which is a veritable wealth of information — a tabloid which transcends the usual gamut of boring dates to remember. After all, who needs to know when the Drop/Add and Preregistration deadlines are when they can be filled with tidbits such as the dates of Sorority Post Offices and the Management Science Club's first meeting.

Colleen M. Young, executive vice president, Liberal Arts Student Council
Sept. 1

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the daily Collegian

Friday, September 2, 1983
Suzanne M. Cassidy
Editor

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Judith Smith
Business Manager

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