

# opinions

The Daily Collegian  
Thursday, Sept. 12, 1985

## editorial opinion Student leader?

Too many promises have been broken. Two years ago, the Student Advisory Board became the University Student Executive Council.

*The name has been changed — to protect the inactive.*

The Board was restructured with the hope of forming a cohesive body of student executives that could be effective in voicing student concerns. As students' "official communication line to the president of the University," it has taken two more years for the council to realize its own ineffectiveness.

A direct, effective student voice was theorized, but today only echoes and whispers leave the weekly council meetings.

It is inconceivable that a council whose members include the presidents of the Undergraduate Student Government, Graduate Student Association, USG Senate, Organization for Town Independent Students, Interraciality Council and Black Caucus can't get anything done. Political games are no doubt one reason for the council's ineffectiveness — but there are others.

Currently a consensus decides what USEC will say to University President Bryce Jordan — all 18 members must be in agreement.

The idea of getting 18 people to unanimously agree on anything, let alone a controversial issue like divestiture, is ludicrous.

"Eighteen people can't decide what to order on a pizza, much less than (unanimously) decide on divestment," said Mary Weaver, vice chairwoman of USEC.

The biggest nemesis that USEC faces today is its leadership.

Lori Maser does not exemplify the leadership qualities necessary for an effective student executive council chairwoman. She has not addressed any of the problems that plagued the Student Advisory Board.

For example, there is still no viable procedure for discussing agenda items. The members of USEC receive a piece of paper with only a list of headings. There is no subsequent description of any of the topics. How can council members be expected to come to a decision on an issue, when the issues are not properly outlined and distributed well in advance?

One of the explicit functions outlined for the executive council is to be "a mechanism for coordinating the concerns and expressions of the student body as manifested in other similar bodies." The board itself is not even coordinated, how can Maser expect it to be able to perform in a unified manner.

In an interview with *The Daily Collegian's* Board of Opinion, Maser said she did not feel she could speak for all members of

the council. Yet, she meets with Jordan and Executive Assistant to the President for Administration William Asbury on an individual basis, supposedly offering the opinion of the students.

If she cannot collectively speak for the council, what then is the purpose of having a chairperson? It is not logical for Maser to believe that she is truly advising the University administration of USEC's opinion, if she herself admits that she cannot speak for the council.

It seems that USEC is, in a sense, playing into the administration's hands because USEC cannot make a unified stand. And as a vehicle for student input, it should take the most direct route to Old Main. However, that route is blocked by the fact that USEC doesn't even know which road it wishes to travel. Strength is in unity, danger is in discord.

Through examining her past actions on council, it is obvious that Maser is dead weight to USEC — a weight that her vice chairwoman Mary Weaver is left to carry.

Weaver is not only an effective speaker, something crucial when dealing with administrators, but she is also able to realize the issues that are at the heart of students' interest — something Maser has not proven she can do. Case in point — earlier this semester, Maser passed off the analysis of General Education Requirements to Jay Clarke of Academic Assembly without facilitating any discussion on the council on the issue.

It was the topic of discussion at Encampment. Obviously administrators believe that it is a very important issue — one that is central to all University students. USEC should have made it a priority discussion in order to advise the administration.

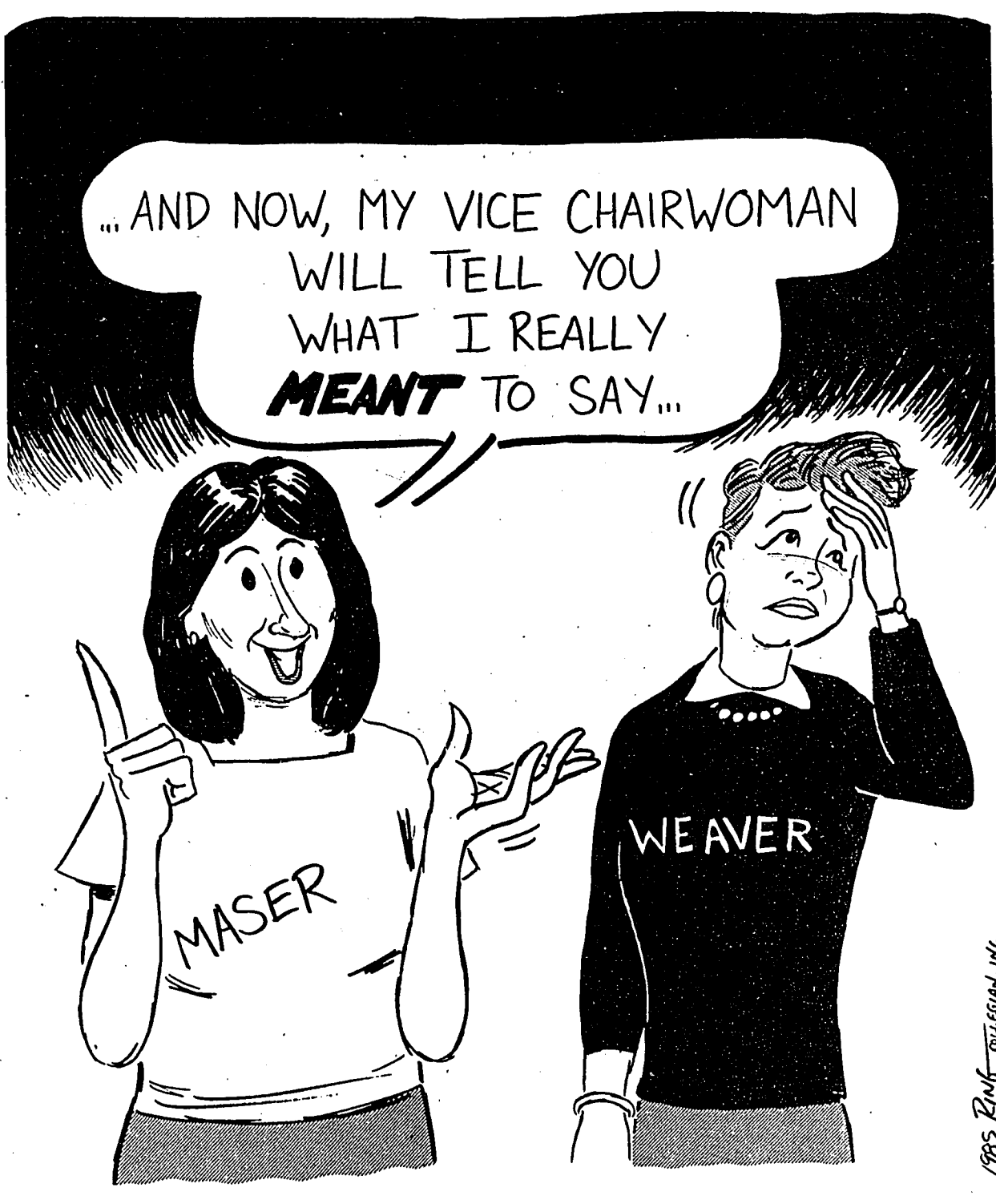
During the interview with Weaver and Maser, Weaver directly addressed issues and seemed willing to examine a USEC policy if it was not in the best interest of students. Maser, on the other hand, avoided issues and seemed locked into the ideology that policy takes precedence.

The *Daily Collegian* calls on the members of the University Student Executive Council to examine the qualifications and past actions of its chairwoman. Further, it calls on members to take a vote of confidence as to Maser's performance.

If necessary, the vote should be by secret ballot to ensure that no member will be castigated for an honest opinion.

USEC needs to stop breaking promises.

It is time for the executive council to examine its role in relation to the University. Its members must take any and all necessary action to protect the best interests of the student body that they supposedly represent.



1985 Dave Tressel, Inc.

**the Collegian**  
Thursday, Sept. 12, 1985  
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reader opinion

**In control**

I'd like to comment on the editorial written by John Orr for the Sept. 3 *Collegian*. The article, as you'll recall, dealt with claiming "squatters' rights for humanity." Mr. Orr, no one is forcing you to receive Christ as your Lord and Savior. You as an individual can do what you want, and, as you said, you'll take responsibility for your actions. You alone will have to deal with the consequences of your actions (good luck). But be satisfied with your decision as it is, and don't try to justify your unbelief by calling Christ a Hitler. As a Christian, I know that Christ is a loving Lord, and I have an enormous amount of freedom in my life.

Hitler didn't die on a cross to pay for my sins, and Hitler didn't rise from the dead to insure my own resurrection; but Christ did, and that's why I received Him into my heart. You can believe what you want, Mr. Orr, but don't try to sell a lie to the readers of this newspaper. If you are secure in your philosophy of life, why must you justify it in the face of an unbelief. Show us that you are really in control of your life.

D. Timothy Meyer  
senior-english

**Serious intentions?**

Dear Mr. Meyer:  
I don't know whether you wrote your column with any serious intentions or if you meant it to be the poor joke it is.

actually. You write with all the eloquence of a high school sophomore preparing an essay for an American Nazi Party membership drive. Your ignorance of history is only overshadowed by your very dangerous sense of nationalism. What really surprises me is that a major collegiate newspaper would print that piece of literary trash. As a veteran of the U.S. Army, I understand there are many things worth fighting for. However, your "apple ideology" doesn't happen to be one of them. We need to do all we can to ensure that we are right before we act, and that if we must act, that we are doing so with the intentions of bettering things, not seeking power or reasserting ourselves." Go wrap yourself in the flag, Mike, and let the rest of us speak for ourselves!

Jeff Small, sophomore-business

**A man's view**

In his Sept. 3 article titled "My sins," John Orr presents his terms "one hell of a case for our own independence from our Creator." Yet he looks at it from a slightly short-sighted viewpoint, that is: man's.

Throughout his article Mr. Orr asked several questions, the first one of which was "So what if God exists?" The reality of God's existence has radically changed my outlook on life; as the apostle Paul says in Romans 11:36, "For from Him and to Him and through Him and to Him are all things." What could be more thought provoking?

I think that, since God knows the number of hairs that we each have on our heads, that He is also for individuality — there are numerous other citations possible but I will refrain in the interest of space (Psalm 139). As for equality, God says that all men are in the same position for Psalm 14:3 says "There is no one who does good, no one" but yet he wants to "show mercy to them all" (that is, mankind, Romans 10:2). I would say that God is also interested in equality.

I would say that God is pro-freedom, too.

John N. Dally, senior-theater-production

**For social change to occur, it must first occur in the individual**

The world won't get no better, if we just let it be... we've got to change the world, you and me. — Harold Melvin and the Blue Notes

John D. Buecker

Even before he stepped behind the curtain, it was determined that Abbie Hoffman — civil rights activist, political gadfly, former fugitive, successful author — would receive a standing ovation at the conclusion of his speech in Schwab Auditorium.

It was determined by the SRO crowd that was largely comprised of hippies, neo-hippies, pseudo-hippies, ex-hippies, and soon-to-be hippies. There were even a few Reagan-worshipping yuppies on hand to boo the present administration's involvement in the savage and shameful Nicaraguan civil war.

Hoffman spoke and the audience listened. But somehow the essence of his message — indeed, the essence of his purpose since he began protesting — was lost, or at least diminished, by what has become the image of Abbie Hoffman. He is considered a rabble-rousing, left-wing, mythic hero by the millions of individuals who have heard of, but have never experienced, Abbie Hoffman. Abbie spoke, the individuals listened, but only a week later his speech is all but forgotten and his message obscured.

It's sad to think that this society — our society — could change such an influential advocate of social repair into some sort of celebrity whose words and convictions mean less than the publicity that advertised his arrival at Penn State. Many members of

the audience were more interested in seeing the "radical from the sixties" than in hearing his educated views on war, economics, and the environment.

He spoke — and occasionally yelled — about issues and events that affect all of our lives, directly and indirectly, but where did his message go?

Hoffman spoke about peace, not only between nations, but also of the mind. He wants peace, and I'm willing to bet that you would say the same.

But he's doing something about it and has been for two-and-a-half decades. Most of us are content to sit back and watch the Abbie Hoffmans of the world on CBS News, not fully understanding the "trouble" they cause, but hoping somewhere inside ourselves that they achieve their goals.

By sitting back passively, are we not encouraging the perpetuation of both international and domestic conflict? Inaction, it would seem, is tantamount to encouraging the self-destructive tendencies which Hoffman implicitly blamed for causing "illegal, immoral, and unwinable" wars.

The Reagan administration could be easily and conveniently blamed for the political and social problems we face in this country, and it often is. But blaming Reagan and his political crutches is too easy. We've got to look at ourselves first and ask what we, as individuals, are doing or not doing to effect change.

Hoffman exhorted the audience to band together and organize an assault on the various injustices of the day; but the interest, the caring, the need to stop these

injustices is low on our isolationist, materialistic, and myopic list of priorities.

If we — and I speak of our government inclusively — allow these atrocious, sub-human injustices to continue, and if we allow the government to perpetuate them as it has (under the cloak of democratic peacemaker, no less), we must point the finger of blame not only at the government, but also at ourselves. This, I think, is and has been Abbie Hoffman's main thrust in his quest for social change.

For social change to occur, it must first occur in the individual. It requires introspection and the realization that every one of us has an effect on the world, however small. Think about it.

Do something about it.

John Brodeur is a senior majoring in English and a columnist for *The Daily Collegian*. His column appears every Thursday.

## opinions

### Sad comment

At first I wasn't quite sure Mr. Moyer was serious. Sadly, I think he is. It must feel really great to be so sure he is right... to feel that red American blood pumping through his veins. I guess he feels there is something special about that.

I had the privilege of attending an international summer school in Norway some years ago. On one evening of international celebration, we listened to representatives of each nation. The Americans waved their flags, and praised their nation, their people, and yes even their dollars. There were some people there from third world nations, nations which could not boast great power or wealth. One particular representative left a deep impression on me. A tall and slender man from Kenya strode to the podium and said, "I have only one small message for you this evening. It is petty nationalism which has brought misery, pain and death to so many on this earth. If we wish to live in peace, let us rise above our nationalistic pride and meet each other as brothers.

From that day to this, I have never saluted any flag. From that day to this I have listened to the Arab, Israeli, Irish Republican, Russians, Americans, Englishman, Vietnamese, South African, etc., proclaim their national message, they all sound the same, and just as hollow as Mr. Moyer. What a sad comment on our planet.

Roberta Kurland, State College resident  
Sept. 3

### Something funny?

Your recent editorial "My Sins: A Divine Being or Personal Freedom? Let's claim squatter's rights for humanity!" was very much a disgrace to God and to who firmly believe in Him. Obviously, it was an atheist's opinion tearing our beliefs apart.

Throwing sarcasm into the face of our Creator and shrugging your shoulder with such a pitiful opening statement as "So what if God exists?" was purely satirical. We might be "the only race there is" and we should believe in making our civilization work; and we might be "cold," "cruel" and "without love" but who gives you the right to blame this on God? We bring it upon ourselves and yes we have the power to change that, but this does not mean that God is the evil one. All I read was an "I'm for me" column that shows what little love you really do have for mankind. Truthfully, this is a hard one did you ever actually read the Bible? Celebrate Easter? Christmas? Easter is the resurrection of Christ and Christmas is the birth of Jesus. You should also remember that he who created us can and will destroy us if he wants to. Remember the Great Flood (that involves someone named Noah, sound familiar?)

Claudia E. Davis, Junior-art

### Hitler again?

In response to "Don't tread on the U.S.," by Michael A. Moyer, in the Sept. 3 issue of *The Daily Collegian*. Reading this column, we hardly could believe our eyes. We are well acquainted with the spirit of such words. Fifty years ago, national chauvinism in Germany was expressed quite similarly. "We are Germany and from here on, in right or right or wrong, WE ARE RIGHT." Meanwhile we all know for sure we were wrong!

The author's understanding of such principles of democracy, freedom, tolerance and the right of self-determination of the nations seems to be very obscure.

Doesn't the United States define its national power and justify its aggression in Afghanistan with the same words used in this article? "Whenever a country cries out for help, who is always the first to run in and give assistance?" Well, that depends on which part of

### Land of the free

First of all, I would like to congratulate everyone who wrote to the *Collegian* concerning John Orr's first column.

Freedom of the press is a wonderful thing. So are all of the other elements of our Constitution. As Americans, we sometimes forget our rights to freedom. Just reflect for a moment upon all of the freedoms which we take for granted.

Mr. Orr — you even quoted the first amendment of the Constitution of the United States in your most recent column. So you obviously know some of our rights. But in your conclusion, you claim it to be "wrong, stupid, evil, and infantile" to follow any form of authority of our great nation?

You say it's a laugh that we are the land of the free. I dare you or anyone else for that matter to publicly slander the Soviet Union if you were in Russia. You would be taken away so quickly that you wouldn't be able to read what anyone else would have to say about your column.

P.S. Want to hear something funny? A



John Collins senior-architecture

nearby column stated "We are America-one nation under God."

Brian Kimler, sophomore-foreign service

### Naive

Michael A. Moyer's recent article "Don't tread on the U.S." is perhaps the most naive and intellectually shallow article that has appeared in the *Collegian* in the last three years. His unconvincingly constructed model of American history is nothing less than absurd. After reading his work once, we thought that his words were written in jest. Upon further examination, however, we realized that his piece was a serious argument and not an attempt to engender mirth.

"It was all uphill but we worked for everything we got; no one gave us anything." Not quite, Mr. Moyer. Your smarmy prattles overlook the numerous injustices perpetrated

by the U.S. government against innocent people throughout the world. The ethnic pogrom of the American Indians and the confiscation of their lands; The CIA's covert activism in Central and Latin America that introduce the terms "strawberry imperialism" and "banana republic" into our political vocabulary; and the harboring of Nazi war criminals after World War II. Our criticism of your article Mr. Moyer, does not mean thought that we are packing our bags and leaving the United States. It does mean that we consider your work one-sided, dogmatic, and naive. This letter is written in the hope that your readers will reconsider your propositions and see how propositious your statements are that constitute your admonition. "Don't tread on the U.S."

David Tobbs, senior-political science  
John Collins senior-architecture  
David Alessi senior-architecture  
Sept. 5

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